

BULLYING PREVENTION

POLICY

Definition

Bullying is when someone, or a group of people, who have more power at the time, deliberately upset or hurt another person, their property, reputation or social acceptance on more than one occasion. Bullying is when someone keeps doing mean things or saying mean things to another person. It is a way of intimidating someone. Unlike conflict - which is occasional and unpredictable - bullying is deliberate, repeated, negative behaviour that targets another person.

Why would someone Bully someone else?

Picking on someone else makes the bully feel powerful. For the bully, it can mask feelings of inadequacy. Sometimes, the bully does it for attention. Someone might also bully someone else because they are jealous. Bullies often pick on people who are different to them in some way:

- Appearance
- Race
- Religion
- Size or age
- Nationality

It is important to remember that there is no good reason for someone to bully anyone else.

What can a bullied child do?

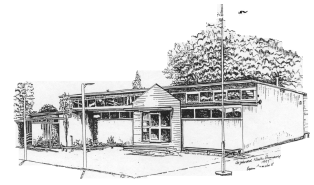
If your child is being bullied, it is important that they do not fight back. This will aggravate the bully and make them more aggressive. At Hazelwood North Primary School, we take bullying very seriously. Incidents of bullying should be reported to your child's teacher or a member of the Principal Team.

Types of Bullying

There are three broad categories of bullying.

- Direct physical bullying e.g. hitting, tripping, pushing or damaging property.
- Direct verbal bullying e.g. name calling, insults, homophobic or racist remarks, verbal abuse, threatening behaviour causing distress.
- Indirect bullying - This form of bullying is harder to recognise and often carried out behind the bullied student's back. It is designed to harm someone's social reputation and/or cause humiliation. Indirect bullying includes:
 - lying and spreading rumours
 - playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate
 - mimicking
 - encouraging others to socially exclude someone
 - damaging someone's social reputation and social acceptance
 - cyber-bullying, which involves the use of email, text messages or chat rooms to humiliate and distress

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Purpose

The school will provide a positive culture where bullying is not accepted, and in so doing, all will have the right of respect from others, the right to learn or to teach, and a right to feel safe and secure in their school environment.

Guidelines

A person is bullied when one or more other people expose them regularly and over time to negative or harmful actions. Bullies are people who deliberately set out to intimidate, exclude, threaten and/or hurt others repeatedly. Bullying is a clear form of harassment.

To reinforce within the school community what bullying is, and the fact that it is unacceptable.

Everyone within the school community is to be alert to signs and evidence of bullying and to have a responsibility to report it to staff whether as observer or victim.

To ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are followed up appropriately and that support is given to both victims and perpetrators.

To seek parental and peer-group support and co-operation at all times.

It is important to speak about bullying and it is emphasised by all staff both in the classroom and in the playground.

Any student can report bullying to their class teacher or to the duty staff member and can expect to be listened to.

Any serious incidents will be dealt with by the classroom teacher in conjunction with the Principal/Assistant Principal

Parents will be kept involved and informed in any issues that involve bullying or anti-social behaviour where their child is either the victim or the perpetrator.

Students can expect that any reports about bullying will be kept confidential.

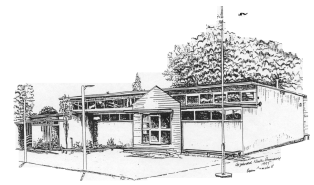
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HAZELWOOD NORTH PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Implementation:

Parents, teachers, students and the community will be aware of the school's position on bullying.
The school will adopt a four-phase approach to bullying.

Primary Prevention:

Professional development for staff relating to bullying, harassment and proven counter measures. The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development program 'Bully Stoppers' will be investigated and elements of the program will be integrated into the current school practices. Bully Stoppers aims to strengthen prevention and empower everyone to make a stand and become a bully stopper, reducing incidents of bullying in all Victorian schools.

Community awareness and input relating to bullying, its characteristics and the school's programs and response.

To provide programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving.

The School values of Responsibility, Resilience, Challenge, Curiosity and Collaboration will continue to be supported across the school.

Each classroom teacher to clarify at the start of each year the school policy on bullying.

The curriculum to include anti-bullying messages and strategies eg: 'The Friendly Schools' and 'No Blame Approach to Bullying' programs.

Junior School Council, staff and students to promote the philosophy of 'No Put Downs'. And will also be involved in the investigation and implementation of anti-bullying programs such as 'Bully Stoppers'. The Junior School Council in conjunction with the staff to alter the Assembly pledge to reflect anti bullying sentiments. (Appendix 2)

Electives and structured activities may be available to students at recess and lunch breaks.

Early Intervention:

Promote children and staff reporting bullying incidents involving themselves or others.

Classroom teachers and principal on a regular basis reminding students and staff to report incidents of bullying

Parents encouraged to contact school if they become aware of a problem or incidents of bullying.
Public recognition and reward for positive behaviour and resolution of problems.

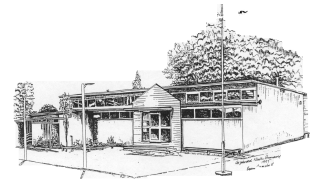
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Intervention:

Once identified each bully, victim and any witnesses will be spoken with, and all incidents or allegations of bullying will be fully investigated and documented when it is found that bullying has taken place.

Parents will be contacted and consequences implemented consistent with the school's Student Engagement policy and Discipline procedures. A behaviour support plan may also be developed using the template from the "Bully Stoppers' program. (See appendix 1)

Students and staff identified by others as bullies will be informed of allegations.

Both bullies and victims will be offered counselling and support.

If staff bullying persists the principal will commence formal disciplinary action.

Post Violation:

Consequences for students will be individually based and may involve:-

- exclusion from class
- exclusion from yard
- school suspension
- withdrawal of privileges
- contained to a designated area of the yard
- ongoing counselling from appropriate agency for both victim and bully

Reinforcement of positive behaviours.

Classroom Meetings.

Support Structures.

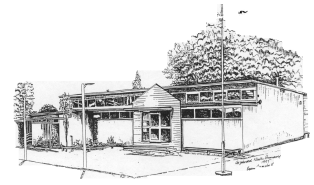
Ongoing monitoring of identified bullies.

Rewards for positive behaviour.

Consequences for staff will be individually based and may involve:-

- counselling
- a period of monitoring
- a formal support group
- disciplinary actions

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Responsibilities

Parent/Caregiver Responsibilities

Ensure child/ren understand what bullying is (Refer to DEFINITION at beginning of policy Pg 1.)

Watch for early warning signs in your child, including a reluctance to go to school, unexplained illnesses or injury, missing possessions, moodiness.

Take an active interest in your child's school and social life.

If you suspect bullying of your child at school, record any details and contact the class teacher or school immediately.

Encourage your child to report persistent school bullying to those in the best position to provide immediate help, i.e. the teaching staff and administration.

Assure your child that seeking help is okay and an assertive response to the situation.

Do not encourage your child to hit back or verbally abuse the bully.

Be prepared to assist the school in modifying your child's behaviour if he or she is identified as a bully. Do not accept personal blame for their actions; instead, support the school in its endeavours to assist your child.

Staff Responsibilities

Identification of Bullying

Watch for early warning signs of bullying in students (e.g. apparent behaviour change, physical injuries, and emotional distress)

Record all incidences of bullying, including action taken.

Offer the victim immediate support and help but avoid 'bullying' the bully.

Discuss bullying in class sessions when the need arises (e.g. after incidents).

Assist the bully – intervention

Monitor all areas of the school during breaks and in between lessons.

Maintain close supervision in class, when lined up etc.

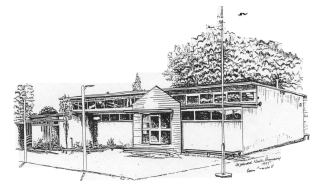
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Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed with whole staff, student, parent and community input. Research* indicates that it is essential Bullying Prevention Policies are reviewed regularly and revised to ensure that the schools' bullying prevention practices remain effective. It is important that schools:

- monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the Bullying Prevention Policy and make adjustments when needed
- review the Policy annually in line with the school's Annual Implementation Plan

The Principal will monitor bullying incidents and prevention activities relative to the policy with an expectation that regular reports are given to the Leadership Team and Staff on how things are tracking. If incidents are high or other aspects of the policy do not seem to be implemented, then the Policy will require an interim review before the 12-month period is up.

- The school community will convey the view that the Policy is not written and then left to sit on a shelf until the next review - the Policy needs to be regularly revisited and change with the schools as it moves forward.

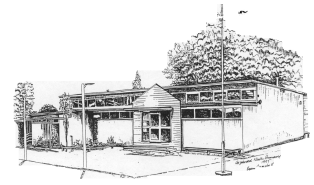
References:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers/Pages/default.aspx>

DEECD Bully Stoppers Program

www.bullyingnoway.com.au

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Appendix 1

Behaviour Support Plan guidelines

Why make a Behaviour Support Plan?

A Behaviour Support Plan (BSP) is a school-based document designed to assist individual students who have experienced harm, are at risk of harm, or have caused harm to others.

Targeted plans can be developed for students who have been diagnosed with severe behaviour disorders; students who have bullied others; students who have been bullied; students who require additional assistance because they display difficult, challenging or disruptive behaviours; as well as students who can benefit from additional wellbeing support.

A BSP can help ensure that students and staff feel safe, valued and connected to their school community. An effective BSP contributes to building respectful relationships, resilience, and well-adjusted students who are able to learn effectively.

Who benefits from a BSP?

Students and schools can benefit from an effective BSP in the following ways:

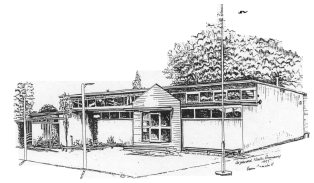
- clearly stating expectations and planned support for a student in writing, demonstrates the commitment of the school to the student's wellbeing needs
- behaviour change in the student occurs more readily when the focus is on support, building the skills needed for pro social behaviour and increasing the student's wellbeing
- problem behaviours are gradually reduced as triggers and cues preceding the unwanted behaviours are identified and addressed
- previously unknown causes or triggers of problem behaviour may be identified while gathering information and writing the plan, issues can then be effectively addressed
- specialised guidance indicating how to respond to a student's challenging behaviour, helps to provide boundaries, consistency and consequences for the student, reducing the need for punishment and in turn reducing stress for teachers
- a sense of harmony and safety to a classroom and school may be restored.

Who is responsible for BSPs?

The Principal will be responsible for making, monitoring and reviewing all BSPs.

This BSP Coordinator initiates and coordinates the steps below. The Principal will lead any Student Support Group (SSG) meetings held under the BSP.

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Guidelines for writing an effective BSP

The most effective BSPs are developed when these eight steps are followed:

1. Gather relevant information about the student.
2. Convene a meeting of relevant school staff and the student's parents.
3. Convene a meeting of relevant school staff to draft the BSP.
4. Refine the BSP.
5. Sign the BSP.
6. Provide a copy to staff.
7. Review the BSP.
8. Conclude the BSP.

Templates

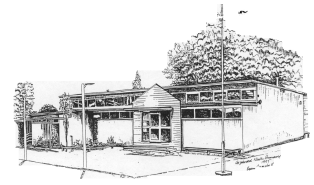
- [Guidelines for Writing a BSP \(PDF - 925KB\)](#)
- [What is a Behavior Support Plan? \(PDF - 345KB\)](#)
- [BSP Student Questionnaire \(PDF - 587KB\)](#)
- [Behavior Support Plan Template \(PDF - 196KB\)](#)
- [Behavior Support Plan Template - Printable \(PDF - 221KB\)](#)

Caution

The effectiveness of a BSP relies on identifying the underlying causes of the student's problem behaviours. School staff should consult their student services support officer, the student's parents or guardians, psychologist or other appropriate specialist, or professional involved with the student. The failure to identify the underlying issue or issues can lead to problem behaviours continuing, escalating or being replaced by other problem behaviours.

It also needs to be understood that a student's behaviour will often deteriorate before it improves when a BSP is introduced. Rewards and reinforcements used to promote pro social behaviour must be immediate and at a high frequency in the early stages of a BSP for maximum success, especially with younger students.

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Appendix 2

Assembly Pledge.

I am proud I live in this country.
I respect the Australian Flag.
I will follow the rules of the school.
And co-operate with the people around me.

I am proud I live in this country and respect the Australian Flag.
I will follow the rules and values of the school.
I will Challenge myself and Collaborate with others.
I will be Resilient, Curious and Responsible.

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