

CLEMTON PARK PS



Anti-Bullying Policy

Reviewed March 2017

Clemton Park Public School Anti-Bullying Policy

RATIONALE

Bullying is anti-social. It has no place at Clemton Park Public School.

Clemton Park Public School is committed to providing a safe and caring environment, which fosters respect for others. All people entering the school have a right to feel respected and free to express themselves without fear of harassment.

It is the responsibility of every member of the school community to be proactive in ensuring that bullying is not tolerated.

This policy will:

- Define bullying.
- Identify strategies for all members of the school community to prevent and combat bullying within the school.
- Outline the school's process of responding to bullies and bullying.

DEFINITIONS

Bullying is defined as repeatedly hurting another person who is less powerful – physically, verbally or psychologically.

Bullying can take many forms. Listed below are some examples of behaviours that may be considered as bullying if they repeatedly take place. Obviously, the listed behaviours are only examples and not all inappropriate behaviours are listed.

Physical – repeated incidents of:

- Hitting, kicking, and punching.
- Pushing, shoving, spitting.
- Making rude gestures.
- Taking or damaging something which belongs to someone else.
- Forcing others to hand over food, money or something else which belongs to them.
- Making someone do something they don't want to do.

Verbal - repeated incidents of:

- Name calling.
- Teasing.
- Threatening.
- Making fun of someone because of their appearance, physical characteristics, gender or cultural background (including racist comments).
- Making fun of someone's actions.

Psychological - repeated incidents of:

- Excluding others from the game or group.
- Spreading untrue stories about others.
- Being sent hurtful notes.
- Graffiti being written about them on desks, books etc.
- Ignoring them.
- Hurtful or inappropriate email or electronic communication.

The issues above are all examples of inappropriate behaviours, and isolated incidents will be dealt with through Clemton Park PS "Discipline/ Awards" and "Welfare" Policies. As standalone incidents, these behaviours do not necessarily constitute bullying.

AIM

To adopt a whole school approach to the management of bullying

OUTCOMES

The school is an environment where everyone is free from harassment.

- Everyone has the responsibility to support more vulnerable peers.
- Students are encouraged to identify ignoring bullying in the same negative way as the bullying behaviour itself.
- Classrooms are free from ridicule, harassment and isolation.
- Bullies are encouraged to change their behaviour by processes of support and education.
- Cooperation and tolerance between all members of the school community will be promoted.
- All students will gain skill underlying the practice of positive social skills.
- Removal of the secrecy of the bullying act –‘yes it is okay to tell if you are being bullied or someone else is being bullied’.
- Improved communication between students, parents and staff to develop procedures and practices to successfully manage bullying.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Bullying is antisocial. It has no place at Clemton Park P.S. It is the responsibility of every member of the school community to be proactive in ensuring that bullying behaviour is rejected.

At Clemton Park P.S. we will:

- Openly talk about bullying – ‘what it is, how it affects us and what we can do about it’.
- Teach our children the skills that will build their self-esteem and empower them to take the responsibility for themselves – and give them the opportunity to practice these skills.
- Implement a policy that clearly states what actions we will take to deal with bullying behaviour.

We will do this using the following strategies:

- Explicit teaching – activities focusing on social skills, raising self esteem and addressing conflict resolution are a part of the school curriculum in Health and Personal Development.
- Establishing a register of bullying incidents.
- Including articles and information included in the School Newsletter at regular intervals explaining the sort of behaviours that are categorised as bullying, and reminding the school community that bullying is not acceptable.
- Reminding students at assembly of the policy.
- Establishing a buddy system.
- Encouraging children to tell someone if they are being bullied.
- Continuing to explore other options – Peer Support, Mentoring Program.
- Reviewing the policy annually through an evaluation survey at the end of the year.

Reporting of Bullying

Children, their parents and staff can report incidents of bullying to any teacher or the Principal. They may be reported directly, or through written statements placed in the “Bullying – No Way” box located in the Administration Office. Any bullying incidents that are dealt with will be recorded. The staff will be responsible for implementing the program and ensuring that incidences of bullying are dealt with in a manner consistent with the Policy and as soon as possible after it is reported or observed

Cycle for Dealing with Bullying Behaviour at Clemton Park PS

Bullying Behaviour is observed or reported

Student being bullied is asked about the incidents
(details recorded)

Student being bullied is presented with strategies for dealing with the Bully and their behaviour

Student being bullied and the student displaying bullying behaviour participate in a Restorative Conversation with the DP and a supportive peer if they wish.

Buddy is identified for student being bullied

Bully provided with strategies for changing their bullying behaviour

Follow up Meeting with student being bullied
(details recorded)

Consequences as per School Discipline Policy or as appropriate for student displaying bullying behaviour

Letter sent home for repeated bullying behaviours

Follow up Meeting with student displaying bullying behaviour
(details recorded)

SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS BEING BULLIED

Students who have been bullied will be questioned in private. Questioning the victim in front of the bully and bystanders may put the victim in an uncomfortable position. If they are scared of the bully, they will probably deny there is a problem. Instead, teachers will diffuse the situation and speak to the victim in private at a later time. Doing this will assure a more honest response. This process will follow the *Restorative Practices Framework*.

Students will be provided with suggestions to deal with bullying behaviours. Many times, victims of bullying just need a simple suggestion about how to eliminate the bullying. Some victims of bullying may have trouble thinking of solutions on their own. They need an adult to guide them towards some sort of solution. Students who are victims of bullying will be helped to find a solution to their problem. After identifying what strategies they have already tried, staff will provide suggestions to the student.

Some of the strategies that might be suggested to students include:

Hold the anger. *It's natural to get upset by the bully, but that's what bullies thrive on. It makes them feel more powerful. Practice not reacting by crying or looking red or upset. It takes a lot of practice, but it's a useful skill for keeping off a bully's radar. Sometimes kids find it useful to practice "cool down" strategies such as counting to 10, writing down their angry words, taking deep breaths or walking away.*

Act brave, walk away, and ignore the bully. *Firmly and clearly tell the bully to stop, then walk away. Practice ways to ignore the hurtful remarks, like acting uninterested. By ignoring the bully, you're showing that you don't care. Eventually, the bully will probably get bored with trying to bother you.*

Tell an adult. *Teachers, the Deputy Principal, Principal and your parents can all help stop bullying.*

Talk about it. *Talk to someone you trust, such as your teacher, brother or sister, mum or dad, other members of your family, or a friend. They may offer some helpful suggestions, and even if they can't fix the situation, it may help you feel a little less alone.*

Remove the incentives. *If the bully is trying to get you to give them something of yours, stop bringing it to school for a while if it is possible.*

Students may also be presented with some 'What if' situations to assist them in dealing with situations that may arise.

Avoid the bully - *Use a different part of the playground to the bully and make sure you have someone with you so that you're not alone with the bully. Buddy up with a friend on the bus, in the playground, or at lunch — wherever the bully is. Offer to do the same for a friend.*

Restorative conversation. Students will have the opportunity with the support of a friend and their teacher or a member of the school executive to discuss the bullying situation through the Restorative Practices Framework. This will give the student being bullied the opportunity to confront the situation in a supported environment and explain their feelings to the bully. This process may not always be appropriate, depending on the wishes of the student involved.

Use a buddy system. Students who have been bullied will be assisted in identifying another student who can provide the support they need. This is a win/win situation for everyone. Again, victims of bullying generally do not have lots of friends. This is one reason they are targets for bullies. Using the other more confident students at our school to provide support for this child is a great way to build self-confidence into these kids. Not only does this provide them with the support they need, but it also teaches the "buddy" valuable lessons about standing up for those who are less fortunate. It is important that students who are given this support treat their buddy with respect and accept their offer of support if it is going to be effective.

SUPPORT FOR BULLIES

Students who are having specific issues with their social skills will be supported through discussions with their teacher or a member of the school executive. Often bullying behaviour takes place as the student is displaying learnt behaviours and cannot find alternative suitable behaviours. They will be given strategies such as those outlined below.

- Admit that you have been a bully. This is often the hardest thing to do, but the most important if you are interested in changing your behaviour.
- Apologise to the person or people you have bullied. Do it privately and don't be upset if they are still suspicious of you - they just need time to get used to the 'new you'
- Implement practical advice for dealing with particular incidents.
- Stop and breathe when you feel the bullying behaviour coming on.
- Remember that you have a choice in how you behave.
- Remember that you are not a person who feels good about teasing others.
- Remember that you are not a person who feels good about doing things to hurt others.
- Take a chill pill. Chill down your bullying behaviour.
- Feel good about yourself when you choose the appropriate behaviour.

Or

Before you say something cruel or unkind

- Count to 10
- Think before you act and ask yourself
 - Is what I am going to say true?
 - Does it need to be said?
 - Would I like it if someone said it to me?
- If the answer to any of these questions is NO, say nothing.
- Walk away from the situation
- Ask yourself "How do you feel?" Do you need to talk to someone about your feelings?

SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES OF A STUDENT WHO HAS BEEN BULLIED

If your child tells you they have been bullied, it is important that they are supported and listened to in a calm and supportive way. Some ideas to help this process are outlined below;

- Believe your child because it is important that your child feels confident to talk to you about problems. Please remember that this is your child's perception of the situation and it's important to find out all sides of the story before making any judgements about others who are involved.
- Take the child's concerns seriously without being over protective.
- Listen to your child. Show you understand that they are upset by the bullying.
- Encourage your child to talk about the situation.
- Tell your child that bullying is wrong and remind them that they have the right to feel safe and happy.
- Keep in mind that there may be other factors involved in the situation that you may not be aware of, such as other people that have been involved or other things that have happened in the past.
- Be aware of your own responses and react in a calm, helpful and supportive manner.
- Make sure your child knows how to get help and support at school and support them in doing so.
- Help your child enhance their friendship skills (having more than one good friend has been shown to reduce the likelihood or impact of bullying).
- Encourage your child to participate in activities other than those related to the school so they have other friendship groups.
- Help your child reflect on what has been done to resolve the situation so far.
- Work with the school to help your child develop a plan of what they could do to help make the situation better.

SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES OF STUDENTS DISPLAYING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

One of the worst things a parent can hear is that their child is causing problems at school. Getting a call from a teacher or administrator saying that your child has been observed bullying other students is sure to bring about a number of different emotions. Immediate denial might be the first emotion, followed by a variety of other feelings. There are a number of things that parents can do to deal with this situation and still support their son or daughter.

Your reaction to the school's report that your child is bullying will play a major role in your child's future behaviour. Try not to defend your child or make excuses when the school contacts you with concerns that your child is bullying other students. Defending and making excuses only encourages aggressive behaviour in your child. Your child will feel empowered and their negative behaviour will continue because they know you will defend them. You are setting your child up for future trouble. Instead, listen with an open mind. If your child has been observed a number of times bullying other students, then it is probably happening. Accepting that your child is a bully is the first step in changing their behaviour.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?

Schedule an appointment to talk with school staff such as your child's teacher(s) and the school counsellor. School staff that work with your child every day may be able to help you understand why your child is bullying and provide you with some tools to work with your child.

Explain to your child that this kind of behaviour is unacceptable. Stop any show of aggression you observe, and talk about other ways your child can deal with the situation. Establish appropriate consequences for their actions such as taking away privileges and allowing your child to earn them back with appropriate behaviour.

Examine behaviour and interactions in your own home. Is there something at home that is encouraging this type of behaviour, such as violent media of some kind in the form of video games, television or movies? Are there interactions that may lower your child's self-esteem such as constant teasing or taunting by a sibling? When you discipline your child, are you focusing on how the behaviour is unacceptable rather than your child?

Talk with your child about who his/ her friends are and what they do together. Peers can be very influential. If your child is hanging around with kids who bully and encourage bullying behaviour, you may want to talk with them about getting involved in activities that will help him make other friends.

Model respect, kindness and empathy. You are your child's role model and they will learn to treat others with respect by watching you.

Be realistic. Your child's behaviour will not change overnight. When you are talking with your child, try to focus on how the behaviour is unacceptable, not your child, and show your support for your child with praise for appropriate behaviour.

Continue to work and communicate with school staff as long as it takes. They should be your allies; working with you to not only put an end to your child's bullying, but also to prevent any bullying in the school.

Access and utilise available resources. There are numerous publications and support material available to parents. One fantastic resource for students and their families is the Bullying – No Way! Website. It can be found at www.bullyingnoway.com.au