

BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY

PURPOSE

Bayside Special Developmental School is committed to providing a safe and respectful learning environment where bullying will not be tolerated.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- make clear that no form of bullying at Bayside Special Developmental School will be tolerated;
- ask that everyone in our school community be alert to signs and evidence of bullying behaviour, and accept responsibility to report bullying behaviour to school staff;
- ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are appropriately investigated and addressed;
- ensure that support is provided to students who may be affected by bullying behaviour (including targets, bystanders and students engaging in bullying behaviour);
- seek parental and peer group support in addressing and preventing bullying behaviour at Bayside Special Developmental School.

When responding to bullying behaviour, Bayside Special Developmental School aims to:

- find a constructive solution for everyone;
- stop the bullying from happening again;
- work on building respectful relationships

Bayside Special Developmental School acknowledges that school staff owe a duty of care to students to take reasonable steps to reduce the risk of reasonably foreseeable harm, which can include harm that may be caused by bullying behaviour.

SCOPE

This policy addresses how Bayside Special Developmental School aims to prevent, address and respond to student bullying behaviour. Bayside Special Developmental School recognises that there are many other types of inappropriate student behaviours that do not meet the definition of bullying which are also unacceptable at our school. These other inappropriate behaviours will be managed in accordance with our Child Safe policy, Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy and Statement of Values and School Philosophy.

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions.

POLICY

Definitions

Bullying

Bullying has three main features:

- It involves a misuse of power in a relationship;
- It is ongoing and repeated; and
- It involves behaviours that can cause harm.

Types of Bullying



There are three broad categories of bullying.

- Direct physical bullying e.g. hitting, tripping, and pushing or damaging their property, including threats of violence.
- Direct verbal or written bullying e.g. name calling, insults, homophobic or racist remarks, verbal abuse.
- 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.

Indirect bullying includes: • Lying and spreading rumours • Playing nasty jokes and other behaviours expected to cause offence, humiliation and intimidation. • Mimicking to upset others and embarrass • 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.

What Bullying is Not

Many distressing behaviours are not examples of bullying even though they are unpleasant and often require teacher intervention and management. There are three socially unpleasant situations that are often confused with bullying:

Mutual conflict

In mutual conflict situations, there is an argument or disagreement between students but not an imbalance of power. Both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution to the problem. However, unresolved mutual conflict sometimes develops into a bullying situation when one person becomes targeted repeatedly for 'retaliation' in a one-sided way.

Social rejection or dislike

Unless the social rejection is directed towards someone specific and involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others, it is not bullying.

Single-episode

Single episodes of nastiness or meanness, physical aggression, random acts of aggression or intimidation are not the same as bullying, eg; if a student is verbally abused or pushed on one occasion they are not being bullied. Nastiness or physical aggression that is directed towards many different students is not the same as bullying. However, since the school has a duty of care to provide a student with a safe and supportive school environment, single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression should not be ignored or condoned.

BULLYING PREVENTION

Bayside Special Developmental School has a number of programs and strategies in place to build a positive and inclusive school culture. We strive to foster a school culture that prevents bullying behaviour by modelling and encouraging behaviour that demonstrates acceptance, kindness and respect.



- We have a positive school environment that provides safety, security and support for students and promotes positive relationships and wellbeing;
- We strive to build strong partnerships between the school, families and the broader community that means all members work together to ensure the safety of students;

Bullying prevention at Bayside Special Developmental School is proactive and is supported by research that indicates that a whole school, multifaceted approach is the most effect way to prevent and address bullying.

We are a School Wide Positive Behaviour Support school with identified and implemented Tier one supports and systems of acknowledgement. Our three expectations are: We are safe/ We are communicators/ We are learners

- We explicitly teach behavioural expectations
- We adopt a targeted approach to address more extreme behaviour through an individual behaviour plan
- We record all Tier 3 behavioural incidents

All students at BSDS have a personalised learning plan that develops skills in students' ability to work and play with each other.

INCIDENT RESPONSE

Reporting concerns to Bayside Special Developmental School

Bullying complaints will be taken seriously and responded to sensitively at our school.

Students who may be experiencing bullying behaviour, or students who have witnessed bullying behaviour, are encouraged to report their concerns to school staff as soon as possible.

Our ability to effectively reduce and eliminate bullying behaviour is greatly affected by students and/or parents and carers reporting concerning behaviour as soon as possible, so that the responses implemented by Bayside Special Developmental School are timely and appropriate in the circumstances.

Parents or carers who develop concerns that their child is involved in, or has witnessed bullying behaviour at Bayside Special Developmental School should contact the class teacher by phone or by email directed to bayside.sds@edumail.vic.gov.au

Investigations

When notified of alleged bullying behaviour, school staff are required to:

1. record the details of the allegations in program of work or incident report
2. inform Department Leader, Assistant Principal or Principal

The teacher is responsible for investigating allegations of bullying in a timely and sensitive manner. To appropriately investigate an allegation of bullying, the teacher may:

- speak to the those involved in the allegations, including the target/s, the students allegedly engaging in bullying behaviour/s and any witnesses to the incidents;
- speak to the parents of the students involved;
- take detailed notes of all discussions for future reference;



Investigations will be completed as quickly as possible to allow for the behaviours to be addressed in a timely manner.

The objective of completing a thorough investigation into the circumstances of alleged bullying behaviour is to determine the nature of the conduct and the students involved. A thorough understanding of the alleged bullying will inform staff about how to most effectively implement an appropriate response to that behaviour.

Serious bullying, including serious cyberbullying, is a criminal offence and may be referred to Victoria Police. For more information, see: [Brodie's Law](#).

Responses to Bullying Behaviours

When the teacher has sufficient information to understand the circumstances of the alleged bullying and the students involved, a number of strategies may be implemented to address the behaviour and support affected students in consultation with Tier 2/3 team, SWPBS Leader, Department Leader.

There are a number of factors that will be considered when determining the most appropriate response to the behaviour. When making a decision about how to respond to bullying behaviour, Bayside Special Developmental School will consider:

- the age and maturity of the students involved;
- the severity and frequency of the bullying, and the impact it has had on the target student;
- whether the student/s engaging in bullying behaviour have displayed similar behaviour before;
- whether the bullying took place in a group or one-to-one context;
- whether the students engaging in bullying behaviour demonstrates insight or remorse for their behaviour;
- the alleged motive of the behaviour, including any element of provocation.

Bayside Special Developmental School may implement all, or some of the following responses to bullying behaviours:

- Offer counselling support to the target student or students, including referral to SSS or external provider
- Offer counselling support to the students engaging in bullying behaviour, including referral to SSS or external provider
- Facilitate a Student Support Group meeting and/or Behaviour Support Plan for affected students.
- Prepare an Individual Plan and timetable restricting contact between target and students engaging in bullying behaviour.
- Monitor the behaviour of the students involved for an appropriate time and take follow up action if necessary.

Bayside Special Developmental School understands the importance of monitoring and following up on the progress of students who have been involved in or affected by bullying behaviour. Where appropriate, school staff will also endeavour to provide parents and carers with updates on the management of bullying incidents.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Statement of Values and School Philosophy



- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Parent Complaints policy
- Duty of Care Policy

The following websites and resources provide useful information on prevention and responding to bullying, as well as supporting students who have been the target of bullying behaviours:

- [Bully Stoppers](#)
- [Kids Helpline](#)
- [Lifeline](#)
- [Bullying. No way!](#)
- [Student Wellbeing Hub](#)
- [Office of the eSafety Commissioner](#)
- [Australian Student Wellbeing Framework](#)

EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed on a 2 year basis or earlier as required, following analysis of school data on reported incidents of, and responses to bullying to ensure that the policy remains up to date, practical and effective.

Data will be collected through:

- discussion and consultation with staff, students and parent/carers;
- assessment of other school-based data, including the number of reported incidents of bullying in each year group and the effectiveness of the responses implemented;
- [Parent Opinion Survey](#).
- [Individual student data](#)

Proposed amendments to this policy will be discussed with staff representatives (SWPBS PLT)/ school leaders and school council.

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last updated in August 2019 and is scheduled for review in August 2021.

