



# ***Anti-Bullying Policy***

**DATE: March 2013**

**REVIEWED 2015**

**REVIEW DATE: as needed**

## **1. Rationale**

At Oatlands Public School we do 'Our best always' to be safe, respectful learners. Bullying is not acceptable at any time in any form. Students have the right to expect that they will feel safe and cared-for in the school community – while on school grounds as well as while travelling to and from school. Teachers, support staff, students, parents and members of the community have a responsibility to work together to address bullying.

The Department of Education (DoE) is committed to ensuring all staff, students and visitors are treated with dignity and respect and takes action to prevent and respond to bullying in its workplaces in accordance with statutory and regulatory obligations and corporate objectives (DET Prevention of Bullying in the Workplace Policy, 2005).

## **2. Aims**

- To promote positive relationships and behaviours within the school and its community that will enable learning to be maximised.
- To raise the awareness of what constitutes bullying, its effects upon those involved, and to empower students by teaching them effective coping strategies for use in bullying situations (whether they be a victim, an onlooker or a bully).
- To ensure action opposing bullying is consistent with the school's three core expectations/rules and with the *Positive Behaviour for Learning* program.
- To clarify and reinforce the expectations Oatlands Public School has on teachers and support staff, students, parents, and members of the community in reducing bullying.

## **3. Definition**

Oatlands Public School agreed definition of bullying:

**"Bullying is when someone or a group of people repeatedly hurt or upset someone else on purpose."**

Bullying takes many forms:

- Physical (e.g. pushing, hitting, kicking, pinching, throwing objects, spitting, damaging others' belongings etc.)

- Verbal (e.g. threats, name-calling, swearing, racist comments, etc.)  
NB: Verbal bullying can include the use of electronic communications such as email, SMS or web pages
- Social (e.g. exclusion, spreading rumours, drawing/writing demeaning notes)
- Psychological (e.g. ridicule, put-downs, blackmail, staring, rude/threatening gestures)
- Cyberbullying

**"Cyberbullying is when someone or a group of people use ICT to repeatedly and deliberately hurt or upset someone else on purpose."**

#### **4. Roles and Responsibilities**

Students will be strongly encouraged to:

- always do their best to be a safe, respectful learner;
  - ↳ act to ensure the safety of themselves and others,
  - ↳ show respect to others at all times, in all situations,
  - ↳ actively participate in school programs such as Peer Support, Kids Matter and Social Skills lessons, and to learn and implement taught strategies where applicable,
- refuse to take part in any bullying;
- when bullying occurs, take some form of preventative action; and
- report all incidents or suspected incidents of bullying.

Teachers and support staff have a responsibility to:

- model appropriate behaviour for the students at all times;
- teach co-operative learning, play skills and conflict resolution skills through the class personal development program (as part of the PD/H/PE syllabus);
- be observant for signs of distress and suspected incidents of bullying;
- actively supervise students to minimise opportunities for bullying;
- intervene to assist students being bullied by removing sources of distress without increasing the students' exposure;
- support students who speak out and report incidents of bullying;
- consult with students (e.g. individuals and SRC) to identify issues which give rise to concern; and
- report all incidents and suspected incidents to an executive staff who will follow procedures in the *Oatlands Public School Behaviour Policy*

Parents/Caregivers have a responsibility to:

- be role models;
- be aware of this *Anti-bullying Policy* and the *Oatlands Public School Behaviour Policy*;
- watch for signs of distress in their child e.g. unwillingness to attend school, a pattern of headaches, missing equipment, requests for extra money, damaged clothes or bruising;
- encourage their child to adopt learnt strategies to deal with bullying (whether a victim, an onlooker or a bully);
- encourage their child to tell a staff member about bullying incidents;

- inform the school if bullying is suspected whether to or by their child;
- not encourage their child to retaliate;
- encourage open communication about bullying;
- be willing to attend interviews at school if their child is involved in any bullying incident; and
- be willing to inform the school of any cases of suspected bullying even if their child is not directly affected

The Oatlands Public School executive will:

- through the use of a range of means of communication, send very clear messages to students as to what is acceptable behaviour;
- consistently apply the *OPS Behaviour Policy* to incidents of bullying;
- advertise to the students, parents and community that they have an 'open-door' policy in regards to the reporting of bullying behaviours and incidents;
- assist staff in the development of teaching resources used to develop the students' skills in conflict resolution and resilience in bullying situations; and
- establish links between the school and the community so that everyone knows the content of the *Oatlands Public School Anti-bullying Policy*

## **5. Preventing bullying behaviours**

A range of co-ordinated strategies will be implemented annually to teach positive behaviours and interaction skills with the intention of reducing and even totally preventing bullying behaviours at Oatlands Public School.

### Classroom strategies

- Posters of the school definition of bullying behaviour will be displayed in each classroom and learning space.
- Regular classroom discussions are held about bullying, referring students to the school definition of bullying.
- Positive interpersonal relationship skills, co-operative learning and play skills and conflict resolution skills will all be explicitly modelled and taught as part of the PD/H/PE syllabus and Kids Matter program.
- Student behaviour records are maintained by all classroom teachers.
- Students are reminded of their responsibility to report bullying behaviours.
- Each year, students in each class will be appropriately exposed to the *OPS Anti-bullying Policy* by their class teacher.

### Whole school strategies

- An annual survey of student wellbeing will occur.
- Negative behaviour referral cards incorporate a section for bullying notification.
- The *Peer Support Program* (alternating modules of study) operates annually.
- An 'open-door' policy to encourage parents to report bullying behaviours and incidents to be investigated.

## **6. Managing incidents of bullying**

All incidents of bullying will be handled in accordance with the *Oatlands Public School Behaviour Policy* (see esp. '(Major) Negative Behaviours & Consequences' matrix). It is crucial that allegations of bullying are thoroughly investigated. This should be initiated by the staff member who is contacted at the first instance and referred to an Executive staff member for further investigation.

### Identifying bullying behaviours

- Teaching and support staff use the agreed Oatlands PS definition of bullying. Staff regularly engage in professional dialogue about hypothetical and real situations of bullying to develop a consistent understanding of what it is (and is not).
- Students engage in classroom discussions and learning activities to develop an understanding of what constitutes bullying.
- Parents and the community are informed of the definition of bullying through a range of communication means.
- Staff report situations of concern to executive staff.

### Students who are being 'bullied'

Students who are being bullied will be supported by their teacher, the Executive and, if requested, the School Counsellor. Parents will be involved and a support strategy will be developed jointly to suit the needs of the student.

Support could involve:

- the class teacher discussing strategies to prevent situations arising;
- discussing options available to the student and class if bullying does occur;
- the teacher/Executive conducting group meetings to resolve an issue or develop personal skills required to deal effectively with the issue;
- counselling sessions with the school counsellor; and
- involvement in meetings with the students who are bullying to establish ground rules so that the students can co-exist.

Ongoing monitoring and follow-up will take place.

### Students who bully others

In the initial stages intervention will be participative, focussing on the student developing and implementing solutions to the problem. Parents will be informed at the first instance of confirmed bullying. Students who continue to bully others, will be involved in intensive intervention with full parental involvement.

Intervention may include:

- behaviour management plans supported by itinerant support teacher behaviour;
- participation in specialised group programs (e.g. Social Skills programs) and
- intensive, individual or group counselling.

Consistent with the *OPS Behaviour Policy* and *DoE Suspension and Expulsion of School Students – Procedures*, a Suspension may be imposed at any time.

## **7. Monitoring and evaluation**

Negative behaviour referral data, collected in accordance with the *OPS Behaviour Policy* and as part of the *PBL* program, will be used to assess the prevalence of bullying in the school and alterations to this policy may be required as a result. It is crucial that all staff, students, parents and the community are aware of and committed to the contents of this policy and that it reflects the current needs of the school and community.

## **8. Appendices**

Teacher & Support Staff Resources

- ↳ T1: Suggested teacher and support staff strategies to prevent the likelihood of bullying.
- ↳ T2: "DON'T" – a list of actions that teachers and support staff should endeavour to avoid when dealing effectively with an allegation of bullying.
- ↳ T3: Strategies in managing a student involved in bullying behaviours

School resources

- ↳ P: Oatlands Public School definition of bullying poster.

## ***Suggested teacher and support staff strategies to prevent the likelihood of bullying.***

### **☐ Ensure Quality Supervision**

- be punctual to playground supervision or class
- remember our “Duty of Care”
- maintain effective communication  
(use the Student Welfare section of K-6 Admin Meetings)
- be aware of identified “risk areas” in the school

### **☐ Acknowledge or Follow-Up Incidents**

#### **DON'T**

- ignore
- send children away
- overreact to the incident

#### **DO**

- be accessible
- give children a chance to explain
- treat each incident seriously

### **☐ Follow School Behaviour Policy & Procedures**

- implement consequences consistently according to the negative behaviour matrix
- use the suggested strategies and ideas

### **☐ Implement a Personal System for Recording Teasing & Bullying Incidents**

- use the existing classroom behaviour system
- remember to keep Executive informed

*It is vital that as teachers we are being seen to take action*

*Taking action stops bullying – silence and secrecy nurtures bullying*

# DON'T

- ✘ ignore students' complaints or problems
- ✘ dismiss students as attention seekers or whingers
- ✘ expect students to sort it out, get tough or cope alone
- ✘ be over protective and refuse to allow students to help him/herself
- ✘ overreact to incidents - treat them in context
- ✘ ask why type questions or attempt to assign blame or guilt to the bully
- ✘ play favourites
- ✘ label students / parents
- ✘ make references to other members of the family -just like your brother
- ✘ give additional chances and warnings to offenders

# ***Strategies in managing a student involved in bullying behaviours***

- Refer**                   ➤ Refer the student to the school's three core rules (Safety, Respect & Learning) and the school's Anti-bullying Policy.
- Remove**               ➤ Remove the student to a defined area within the classroom or playground for the remainder of the session.
- Remind**               ➤ Remind the student of positive behaviours and strategies they could choose to achieve their goals in a situation.
- Report**               ➤ Report the incident to executive. Appropriate action will be taken in line with the School Behaviour Policy and the situation will be communicated to all staff to enable consistent monitoring.
- Return**               ➤ Return the student to activity or the playground (possible restricted time).
- Remember**           ➤ Remember, and continue to monitor the situation.
- Restrict**             ➤ It may be necessary to restrict the student's access to his/her peers for a short period of time. This should only be used to allow time for programs and strategies to be put in place.



it's deliberate

dominate

repeated

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misuse of power

intimidate

excluding



text messaging

social media

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blogs

email

Internet