



Karingal Heights Primary School

BULLYING AND HARRASSMENT

Karingal Heights Primary School is committed to providing a safe and caring environment and culture which enables positive relationships to be formed amongst all students and staff and which promotes personal growth and positive self-esteem for all. A clear policy on bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment will inform the community that bullying and harassment in any of its forms will not be tolerated.

Aims

- To develop a secure environment where everyone feels safe.
- To protect the rights of children with respect to bullying at school.
- To foster the responsibilities of children who witness incidents of bullying.
- To develop a school community where everyone is treated with care, courtesy and respect and bullying is not tolerated or acceptable. All individuals are to be valued and treated with respect

What are bullying, cyber bullying and harassment?

Bullying

Definition of Bullying

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.

Types of Bullying

There are three broad categories of bullying:

1. **Direct physical bullying** – e.g. hitting, tripping, and pushing or damaging property.
2. **Direct verbal bullying** – e.g. name calling, insults, homophobic or racist remarks, verbal abuse.
3. **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 electronic means 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 with one person becoming targeted repeatedly for 'retaliation' in a one-sided way.

This policy was last ratified by School Council on June 19th, 2014

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 acts of nastiness or meanness, or random acts of aggression or intimidation

- Single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. 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.

Cyber-bullying

Consists of covert, psychological bullying, conveyed through the electronic mediums such as cell-phones, web-logs and web-sites, on-line chat rooms, 'MUD' rooms (multi-user domains where individuals take on different characters) and Xangas (on-line personal profiles where some adolescents create lists of people they do not like). It is verbal (over the telephone or mobile phone), or written (flaming, threats, racial, sexual or homophobic harassment) using the various mediums available.

Harassment

Is any verbal, physical or sexual conduct (including gestures) which is uninvited, unwelcome or offensive to a person.

GUIDELINES

Our school will actively promote a positive and welcoming personal environment for all members of the school community. When people are bullied or harassed some effects might be anger, embarrassment, fear and humiliation, loss of self-confidence and reduced function and potential. Bullying and harassment will be addressed, individual differences will be respected and students and staff will be enabled and supported in their pursuit of learning and teaching.

A school-wide approach will be taken to deal with bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment in a consistent and systematic way.

All new students and staff will be informed of the anti-harassment policy and practices at the commencement of their time at the school.

All complaints of harassment will be heard in confidence and taken seriously.

Our school will organise preventative curriculum programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving.

Staff programs will occur periodically to keep staff informed of current issues/strategies for dealing with these issues.

PROGRAM

Constructive strategies to deal with harassment will include: education in coping strategies; assertiveness training; problem solving and social skills; counselling and behaviour modification. These strategies will be employed in preference to punitive sanctions and negative consequences.

The Anti-Bullying and Anti-Harassment Policy of the school will be widely promoted to students, staff, parents/carers and the local community.

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A summary of the policy will be included in the Student Enrolment Package while new staff will receive extensive documentation as part of the school's induction process.

The school leadership team and the teachers will work together to ensure the safety of all school members in situations of bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment, by thoroughly investigating all complaints while respecting the need for confidentiality, notifying parents/carers and planning interventions.

If a teacher feels a student is at serious and imminent risk from bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment then it is their professional duty to pass on the information to an appropriate person in order to ensure appropriate support for the student. It is important that teachers document fully their interaction with the student and to verify the actions taken.

Student programs will be organised to raise student awareness about bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment, to provide a forum for discussion of matters and to aid development of attitudes. Some matters will be dealt with formally in the curriculum and in leadership programs, extra-curricular programs and occasional activities run by outside experts and workers. The curriculum will include anti-bullying messages and strategies in line with current DEECD materials e.g. 'Bully Stoppers', 'Play Is The Way' and 'Friends for Life'.

Professional development will be provided for staff relating to bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment and proven strategies to address these issues in classrooms will be shared with all staff.

The school will provide specialist resources such as books, videos, kits and off site in-service activities to assist staff in responding appropriately to bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment issues.

Disciplinary consequences for bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment will comply with the school's Welfare and Discipline Policy. The principal or their nominee will provide disciplinary consequences including suspension in accordance with Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) guidelines.

Links which are connected with this policy are:

- DEECD's Effective Schools are Engaging Schools: Student Engagement Policy Guidelines
- DEECD's Safe Schools are Effective School's
- DEECD's Student Engagement Policy Guidelines
- The school's Internet Use Policy (re cyber-bullying)
- DEECD's Respectful Schools