



**Government of South Australia**

Department for Education and  
Child Development



**Bridgewater**  
PRIMARY SCHOOL

# Anti-Bullying & Harassment Policy

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Review Term 3 2018

# Anti-Bullying & Harassment Policy

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# Bridgewater Primary School Anti-Bullying & Harassment Policy

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## 1. Statement of Expectations

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**Bridgewater Primary School is a safe place for children.**

Bridgewater Primary Schools is a safe and supportive school community that promotes student wellbeing and develops respectful relationships. It is a place where all members of the school community feel secure from harassment, aggression, violence and bullying. This is a culture and a philosophy underpinning all that happens in our school.

***Bullying and harassment can have long term, harmful effects on everyone involved, including bystanders.***

## 2. Definitions

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### Harassment

Harassment is behaviour that targets an individual or group due to their identity, race, culture or ethnic origin; religion; physical characteristics; gender; sexual orientation; marital, parenting or economic status; age; ability or disability and that offends, humiliates, intimidates or creates a hostile environment.

Harassment may be an ongoing pattern of behaviour, or it may be a single act. It may be directed randomly or towards the same person/s. It may be intentional or unintentional (i.e. words or actions that offend and distress one person may be genuinely regarded by the person doing them as minor or harmless).

Harassment is unacceptable and needs to be addressed as part of creating a safe school but it would not be considered bullying if any one or more of the following three features were present:

- It occurred only once and was not part of a repeated pattern.
- It (genuinely) was not intended to offend, demean, annoy, alarm or abuse.
- It was not directed towards the same person/s each time.

## ***Bullying is repeated harassment.***

### **Definitions for teachers and parents**

#### **Bullying**

Bullying is an ongoing misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that causes physical and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power over one or more persons. Bullying can happen in person or online, and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert).

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders.

Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are *not* defined as bullying. However, these conflicts still need to be addressed and resolved.

#### **Definition for use with younger students**

Bullying is when someone keeps picking on another child again and again to make them feel bad. They say or do mean things to upset them, make fun of them a lot, try to stop them joining in or keep hitting or punching them.

Sometimes there might be a fight or argument between children. If it happens once, it is not bullying even though it can be upsetting. It is also not bullying if someone sometimes fights with a friend and they can sort it out.

Bullying feels awful. Bullying is not OK. You feel like you can't stop it. You have the right to feel safe.

#### **Definition for use with older students**

Bullying is when one person (or a group of people) with more power than someone else, tries to upset or hurt them. This power can come from being more popular, stronger or part of the group. They might repeatedly try to hurt them physically, socially isolate them, or say and do mean or humiliating things to them. Bullying can happen in person or online, and it can be obvious or hidden.

If someone behaves in a mean or aggressive way on one occasion, it isn't bullying, even though it is not respectful or acceptable. A fight or disagreement between two people of equal power or status isn't bullying.

Bullying is not OK. It feels awful. You feel like you can't stop it. You have the right to feel safe.

### **Bullying behaviour can take many forms and may include:**

- Physical: doing things that frighten or hurt
- Verbal or written: saying or writing things that tease, embarrass, put down or exclude
- Sexual: saying or writing things that are linked with gender
- Intellectual: giving people a hard time because they are achieving or finding work difficult
- Racial: saying or doing things that make someone feel hurt that are about race
- Cyber: Using technologies (internet, mobile phones, social networking, etc.) to bully someone.

### **Bystander behaviour**

A bystander is someone who sees or knows about child maltreatment, harassment, aggression, violence or bullying that is happening to someone else. Supportive bystander behaviours are actions and/or words that are intended to support someone who is being attacked, abused or bullied. The actions of a supportive bystander can stop or diminish a specific bullying incident or help another student to recover from it.

### **Conflict**

Conflict is a mutual disagreement, argument or dispute between people where no-one has a significant power advantage and both feel equally aggrieved.

Conflict is different to bullying because there is always an imbalance of power in bullying. However, poorly resolved conflict situations, especially those involving friendship break-ups, sometimes lead to either aggression or bullying.

### **Violence**

Violence is the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against another person/s that results in psychological harm, injury or in some cases death. Violence may involve provoked or unprovoked acts and can be a single incident, a random act or can occur over time. This may constitute an assault, which is a Police matter.

## Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual conduct which makes a person (male or female, of the same or opposite gender, same-sex attracted, bisexual or transgender) feel offended, humiliated and/or intimidated, where that reaction to the conduct is reasonable in the circumstances. Sexual harassment can be a single incident, repeated or continuous, direct or indirect, and take various forms.

Sexual harassment is a legally recognised form of sex discrimination.

Behaviour of a sexual nature based on mutual attraction, friendship and respect, which is welcome or invited, consensual and reciprocal, does not constitute sexual harassment.

Sexual Harassment can include:

- Unwelcome touching, hugging, kissing, brushing up against a person, staring or leering
- Suggestive comments or jokes; sexually explicit pictures, screen savers, posters, graffiti, letters, messages, magazines or any other visual or written medium
- Unwelcome invitations to go out on dates
- Requests for sex
- Inappropriate and intrusive personal questions about a person's private life or his/her body
- Insults, taunts, teasing or name calling of a sexual nature; or sexually explicit conversation
- Accessing sexually explicit internet sites
- Offensive telephone calls, letters, e-mails or mobile phone text messages
- Posting filmed or photographed images or comments on social networking sites
- Behaviour that may constitute a criminal offence under criminal law and reportable to the police, such as physical or indecent assault, stalking, obscene communications, and sexual assault.

## Cyber Bullying or Online Bullying

Cyber-bullying is bullying which uses e-technology as a means of victimising others. It is the use of an internet service or mobile technologies—such as e-mail, chat room discussion groups, instant messaging, web pages or SMS (text messaging)—with the intention of harming another person. Examples include communications that seek to intimidate, control, manipulate, put down or humiliate the recipient.

Online bullying can include:

- Sending insulting or threatening messages
- Posting unkind messages or inappropriate images on social networking sites
- Excluding others from online chats or other communication
- Inappropriate image tagging
- Sharing someone's personal or embarrassing information online
- Creating hate sites or starting social exclusion campaigns on social networking sites
- Sharing unflattering or private images, including naked or sexual images
- Assuming the identity of the another person online and representing them in a negative manner or manner that may damage their relationship with others
- Repeatedly, and for no strategic reason, attacking players in online gaming.

For it to be called bullying, inappropriate actions online must be between people who have ongoing contact and be part of a pattern of repeated behaviours (online or offline). Single incidents or random inappropriate actions are not bullying.

One action – such as an insulting comment or an embarrassing photo – which is repeated through sharing and forwarding to others, can be called bullying if the individuals involved know each other, and have ongoing contact either on or offline.

Online bullying has the potential to have social, psychological and educational impacts.

## **How to recognise a student being bullied**

Children affected by bullying and harassment may not talk about it with their teachers or family. They may be afraid it that it will make things worse or that it is wrong to 'tell on' other students.

When people are bullied or harassed they may feel angry, embarrassed, frightened, humiliated or uncomfortable, scared or unsafe. That is why all members of the school community have an important role to play in supporting and helping the school and students deal with bullying and harassment.

Some signs a child or young person might be being bullied are:

- Reduced ability to concentrate and learn
- Refusal to attend school, excuses not to go
- Unexplained cuts, bruises or scratches
- Stolen or damaged possessions / clothing
- Headaches or stomach aches

- Asking for extra pocket money or food
- Acting out, tearfulness, sadness, lack of interest in usual activities
- Unwillingness to discuss, or secrecy about, their online communication.

Children may present with these signs for reasons other than bullying and it is important to support children to communicate and be proactive in sorting out problems.

### 3. Reporting and responsibilities

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#### Beliefs and School Culture around Bullying

Cases of bullying are about two people who are finding life challenging for their own unique reasons and both the person being bullied and 'the bully' require support. There are reasons behind their behaviour. It is through addressing these reasons that lasting change can occur.

If students present as victims/targets of bullying, it is likely they will continue to approach their life as a victim/target. If a student presents as a bully it is likely they will continue to rely on bullying behaviours to make their way through life. However, if a student approaches life from the perspective of learning to take responsibility for their own behaviour and their own experience of life, it is likely this approach will continue in life.

Bridgewater Primary School promotes a community of people who take responsibility for their own behaviours and ways of managing their own challenges in life. We aim to have graduates who live with qualities of self-responsibility and care for others.

#### How to get help

##### What can you do about bullying at Bridgewater Primary School?

If you are being bullied, or you know someone is who is being bullied, make sure an adult knows about it. Take a friend with you if you feel nervous about doing this.

Fill out an '**Issue Report Form**'. These are found in the rack file mounted on the wall at the front office. An adult can help you with this if you need. Include information about where the bullying happens, how often and what you have done to try to stop it.

But remember, if the bullying is physical, or serious, tell an adult **straightaway**. This can be your studio teacher, an adult on yard duty or the front office staff.



If the bullying continues after you have reported it – report again, and keep reporting until it stops.

### **Who can you talk to?**

Students can talk to staff members, your parents or other family members, your friend or the principal.

Parents can talk to your child's Studio teacher and if you are dissatisfied with the outcomes of the process in place, please contact the school to make an appointment with the Principal.

### **What does the school do about incidents of bullying?**

- We listen to the person reporting the bullying and the person being reported.
- We put negotiated consequences in place for the person who has been doing the bullying behaviours. These may include time out, 'Rethink' during play-time or suspension.
- We use Restorative Justice Practices to help everyone involved improve their relationship with each other. This includes the wrongdoer taking responsibility for repairing any harm done.
- Parents of the students involved in serious incidents are informed.
- Follow up with students involved continues into the future.
- Develop strategies for short term and long term behaviour change for bully and target.

### **What are Restorative Justice Practices?**

In this approach to behaviour management, the term 'restorative' is used to stress that when a student misbehaves, restoring relationships, repairing harm and learning perspective-taking and social responsibility is more important and effective than simply delivering punishment for their misbehaviour.

Restorative practices include:

- Peer Mediation in which students use a structured format, discuss and problem-solve an issue that has affected an individual or group.
- A 'restorative interview' where the teacher uses an incident of misbehaviour as an educative opportunity for teaching empathy, consequential thinking and the importance of making amends in order to repair harm and relationships.

- A more formal 'restorative conference' that is used with more serious or ongoing misbehaviour and usually involves senior staff, parents/carers.

**Please note:** each situation is managed according to the circumstances. Different children have different capacities to participate in a restorative process and the process may look different for each child.

Other considerations include the involvement of students with a disability (including learning disabilities), students under the Guardianship of the Minister (GOM) and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

## Responsibilities of the Principal

Strategies the Leadership Team will utilise to minimise the likelihood of bullying and violence occurring in school:

- Develop, implement and review annually the school's anti bullying policy involving staff, parents and students.
- Survey students, parents and teachers, in line with the review schedule for the school's policy.
- Provide updates to the Governing Council in relation to school bullying data and trends and any anti bullying programs/initiatives in place or being considered.
- Manage the incidents of bullying consistent with the DECD School Discipline Policy.
- Ensure ongoing professional development of teachers, induction of students and the provision of information to parents.
- Manage a whole school change approach to ensure the Keeping Safe Child Protection Curriculum is implemented in all year levels.
- Ensure that all parents have access to the school's Anti Bullying Policy, the DECD Bullying and Harassment at School: Advice for Parents and Caregivers, Cyber bullying, e-crime and the protection of children and young people Advice for families and related documents via the school's website.
- If bullying and harassment are not managed to parents' satisfaction, direct them to the DECD Parent Complaint Process ([www.decd.sa.gov.au/parentcomplaint](http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/parentcomplaint))

## Responsibilities of Staff

Strategies staff will utilise to develop and maintain positive relationships with students and families:

- Communicate and interact effectively with students and parents and engage in collaborative problem solving to address issues of bullying.

- Critically reflect on practices and develop the knowledge and skills needed to manage incidents of bullying successfully.
- Establish, maintain, make explicit and model the school's expectations and values related to bullying.
- Adopt positive classroom management strategies and incorporate anti-bullying messages into curriculum delivery.
- Participate in professional development related to decreasing bullying and implement the Child Protection Curriculum to teach students about respectful relationships.
- Teach students appropriate grievance procedures, countering harassment strategies, conflict resolution and problem solving skills.
- Teach students how to respond appropriately if they witness bullying and to support students to be effective bystanders.

## Responsibilities of the Students

Strategies students will utilise to support the school in maintaining a safe and supportive environment:

- Follow the school's behaviour expectations.
- Respect self and other students, staff and members of the school community.
- Be a strong bystander and report the event and where possible provide support by telling the person doing the bullying to stop. State clearly that the behaviour is unwelcome and offensive.
- Use Peer Mediation skills, use peer mediators, be a peer mediator.
- Seek help and communicate with a trusted person if bullied or harassed or if they are aware that someone else is being bullied or harassed.
- Act with honesty and integrity.
- Put into practice Bully Proof strategies including using FABIC behaviour scale, 'I choose' model and positive/unwanted behaviours model.

## Responsibilities of the Parents

Strategies Parents/Caregivers will use to support the school in maintaining a safe and supportive environment:

- Be aware of signs of distress in their child and keep the school informed of concerns about behaviour, their child's health issues and other relevant matters.
- Communicate in a respectful manner with the school staff about issues or concerns and assist their child to discuss the problem with a teacher.

- Discourage any planned physical or verbal retaliation if their child is bullied by discussing positive strategies.
- Be positive about their child's qualities and encourage their child to be tolerant, caring and compassionate.
- Be aware of Bully Proof strategies and the school's learning programs.

## Responding to incidents of Bullying

Familiarise yourself with this document and consider its content when making decisions and judgments.

If you think your child is being bullied or harassed, you may feel anxious or sad. However, it is important that you stay calm and take the following steps:

- Listen calmly to your child.
- Let your child know that telling you about the bullying or harassment was the right thing to do.
- Find out:
  - What happened
  - Who was involved
  - Where it happened
  - If anyone else saw, read or heard it.
- Talk to your child about what should be done.
- Make a note of what your child tells you to help you when you talk to the school.

Use the 'Parent Issue Decision Chart' to guide you in communicating with the school. Remain calm, respectful in your communication with staff members.

Be aware that events can be described with varying degrees of difference in home and school contexts. The school listens to the perspectives of all the people involved and will act with all available facts. All these facts may not be available to parents and this should be acknowledged and taken into consideration, especially as the school must make decisions with a burden of proof.

It is a responsibility of parents to support students at this school to act in a safe and respectful way towards all others. It is not acceptable to encourage students to resolve conflict with aggression or violence.

## School monitoring of Bullying incidents

- All incidents of Bullying are communicated to the Principal.
- The Principal and studio teachers work with students and families on a solution to the problem.
- Parents and students are asked to agree to the strategies and agreements put in place.
- Parents are invited to give feedback about the response and resolution of issues.
- The Principal and parents will have the option to set up a review date in the future if desired.
- Information and data about the incident will be recorded and may include student files, ReThink files, EDSAS (Education Department online data system), IRMS (Education Department Incident Response and Management System).
- **Confidentiality is high priority and should be maintained by all parties.**

## 4. Prevention, Intervention and Coping Strategies

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### What can parents and teachers do to support Bully Proofing children?

Building children's resilience, skills to manage big feelings and life's ups and downs helps children be in charge of their choices, life experience and responsible for their behaviours. All adults in the Bridgewater Primary School community can support this all the time, whether children are experiencing a specific problem or not. It is an effective way to Bully Proof our children.

How to do this?

**Here are some strategies parents can use at home** (from Mark Le Messurier & Bill Hansberry's 'Raising Beautiful Kids' [2013])

- Coach kids to have a 'Can do' attitude when facing tricky situations. Work with them to problem solve, think about options and even to take a sensible risks.
- Plant seeds of confidence regularly by telling kids the resilient qualities you see them use when solving problems and managing tricky situations.
- Present a wide range of opportunities to learn, develop and practice social skills. Model them, have friends over and set up success and give direction, be involved with community groups outside of school.
- "How was school today?" is a vague question that is often about *parents investigating their own anxieties* about their child at school; prompting a 'negative script'. Instead ask 'positive script' questions like "What went well today?", "What were you proudest of today?", "Got anything funny that happened today", "Did you surprise yourself today?" Keep it up, even if you don't get a positive response. Respond to negative response in ways that show you have confidence in their capabilities. For example, "You're good at solving problems. Let me know how you go!"
- Organise ways for kids to contribute to the family. Can they prepare a meal? Immerse them in the world of giving. Without this, we risk teaching them the world owes them something.
- Develop coping strategies by: building positive sayings into everyday life, have 'what if...' conversations when hearing about a problem to show there are always choices, teach the visualisation strategy of a mental 'delete key' to shrink or get rid of troubles, rehearse how to handle up-coming events and teach how to say "sorry" (it doesn't always mean admitting what happened was their fault, it is a signal to heal and restore relationships), use a catastrophe scale where 1=slight set back 2= an upset 3=a trouble 4=a worry 5= a total disaster.

- Communicate by listening, validating how they feel and responding to promote their independent thinking (our instinct is to rescue them and fix their problem). Try rephrasing back what they've told you and ask questions such as "Wow, how did you feel...? I would have felt the same.", "How do you think they felt when you said that?", "So, what do you think we should do to make that better?", "What can you do to help fix this?"
- Share problems and how you solved them.
- Always encourage children to use their strategies to solve 'kid sized' problems, and make sure the school knows when problems are serious.

## What else do we do to reduce bullying at Bridgewater Primary School?

**Prevention Strategies** include:

- Teaching students our values of respect, integrity and resilience
- Teaching students the Peer Mediation process
- Ensuring student have choice, voice and relevance in learning programs, including social learning
- Teaching students social skills that help them manage their feelings
- Talk openly about bullying as part of learning programs, including the affect it has on others
- Teaching about diversity
- Developing collaborative learning across the school.

**Intervention Strategies** may include:

- Talking with parents about the situation
- Following through with consequences and counseling for children who have used bullying behaviour
- Counseling students who have been the target of bullying behaviours
- Teaching children to be responsible for each other – don't be a bystander
- Staff working together to understand effective strategies when working with bullies and victims
- Ensure children receive clear information about appropriate behaviours and feedback when they are learning new behaviours.

**Post Intervention Strategies** may include:

- Staff working together to monitor interactions between children who are having difficulty
- Talking with parents about strategies to support their child

- Keep an eye on problem areas in the yard
- Review and implement behavior procedures and plans
- Support from the Regional Office, DECD and/or counseling services
- Opportunity for parents or staff to arrange a follow up meeting.

## Training and Development

All teachers have undertaken Reporting Abuse & Neglect (RAN) training, as is a requirement of employment.

All teachers are trained in delivering the Keeping Safe Curriculum (KS:CPC). This is taught each year. The program follows two main themes:

- We all have the right to be safe
- We can help ourselves to be safe by talking to people we trust.

These two themes are explored through four focus areas:

- The right to be safe
- Relationships
- recognising and reporting abuse
- Protective strategies.

The focus areas are examined in complexity according to the age of the learners.

Students are trained in the Peer Mediation Process, FABIC and What's The Buzz and are supported in using the strategies.

Student voice is promoted, sought, listened to and responded to in the classroom, and at a whole school level, to ensure students feel safe and feel they belong. Bridgewater Primary School will take part in the Education Department's 'Student Wellbeing and Engagement Survey' (year levels 4-7) each year.

Students and parents of children in years 4-7 are required to understand and sign an ICT Use Agreement, which supports safe online behaviour.

Education, psychology and law enforcement professionals conduct a parent workshops and information sessions at school each year. These have included sessions in 'Raising Beautiful Kids', Building Resilience, ThinkUKnow: Cyber Safety, Online Pornography: Overexposed and Underprepared.



## 5. Distribution List

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Staff, Governing Council, Parents, Students  
Website

## 6. Review Date

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Date: Term 3, 2018

## 7. Supporting Documents

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FABIC, DECD brochure, Bully Proof Report, Insights article, Parent Issue Decision Chart

## 8. Further Information

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### Websites

- Bullying No Way - <https://bullyingnoway.gov.au>
- Safe Schools Coalition Australia - <https://www.education.gov.au/safe-schools-coalition-australia>
- South Australian Department of Education and Child Development: Cyber-Safety, Bullying and Harassment information - <https://www.decd.sa.gov.au/supporting-students/health-e-safety-and-wellbeing/cyber-safety-bullying-and-harassment>
- FABIC - [www.fabic.com.au](http://www.fabic.com.au)
- What's The Buzz - <https://www.whatsthebuzz.net.au>