Bullying Prevention Policy

No: 2019-POL-5	**Version:** 2.0
Date: July 2019	**Owner/s:** Susie Rourke (Primary Welfare Officer) Samantha Fleming (Policy Leader)

Purpose

Glengala 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 encourages self-esteem, cooperation, personal growth and a positive attitude to learning and teaching. A clear bullying prevention (including cyberbullying) policy will inform the community that **Bullying in any of its forms will not be tolerated.**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy.

Scope

- To provide clear definitions of what is and what is not bullying and harassment
- To reinforce within the school community that no form of bullying or harassment is acceptable.
- To provide clear advice on the roles and responsibilities of the whole school community, including students, parents, caregivers and staff for preventing and responding to bullying behaviour
- To provide clear procedures for everyone to report incidents of bullying to the school
- To ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are followed up and that support is given to any person who has been affected by, engaged in or witnessed bullying behaviour
- To seek the support and co-operation of the whole-school community at all times.

Definitions

Bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological aggressive behaviour by a person or group directed towards a less powerful person or group that is intended to cause harm, distress or fear.

Types of Bullying Behaviour

There are some specific types of bullying behaviour:

• ***verbal or written abuse*** - such as targeted name-calling or jokes, or displaying offensive posters

• ***violence*** - including threats of violence

• ***sexual harassment*** - unwelcome or unreciprocated conduct of a sexual nature, which could reasonably be expected to cause offence, humiliation or intimidation

• **homophobia and other hostile behaviour** towards others relating to gender and/or sexuality

• **discrimination including racial discrimination** - treating people differently because of their identity

• **social rejection** – deliberate and/or repeated

Cyber-bullying

Comprises covert, psychological bullying, conveyed through electronic mediums, including but not limited to mobile phones, blogs and websites, 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 may be 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.

What is not Bullying

There are also some behaviours, which, although they might be unpleasant or distressing, are not bullying:

• **mutual conflict** - which involves a disagreement, but not an imbalance of power. Unresolved mutual conflict can develop into bullying if one of the parties targets the other repeatedly in retaliation.

• **single-episode acts of nastiness or physical aggression**, or aggression directed towards many different people, is not bullying

• **social rejection or dislike** is not bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.

Guidelines

Glengala Primary School will not tolerate bullying (including cyberbullying) or harassment. A school-wide approach will be taken to deal with Bullying in a consistent and systematic way. This policy will be clearly communicated to students, parents/carers and staff. All updated school policies can always be found online at: http://www.glengala.vic.edu.au/index.php/school-policies/   All complaints of Bullying will be taken seriously and treated sensitively.

Our school will organise and integrate 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.

There will be disciplinary consequences, covering a range of strategies, for those in breach of the Bullying Prevention Policy, guidelines and procedures.

Implementation

- Constructive strategies to deal with harassment will include: education in coping strategies; assertiveness training; problem solving and social skills; and behaviour modification.

- The Bullying PreventionPolicy and Procedures of the school will be widely promoted to students, staff, parents/cares and the local community.

- 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 peer support programs, leadership programs, extra-curricular programs and occasional activities may be run by outside experts and workers.

- The curriculum will include anti-bullying messages and strategies in line with current DET materials. e.g. 'Bullystoppers', 'eSmart' and 'Kidsmatter' programs.

- 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 implemented

- Disciplinary consequences for bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment will comply with the school's Engagement Policy.

- The principal or their nominee will provide disciplinary consequences including suspension in accordance with Department of Education and Training (DET) guidelines.

Review of this Policy

History of Updates to Policy

Date	Comment (e.g. major review, minor review)
16/08/16	Draft *Bullying and Harassment Policy* completed by Samantha Cunningham (AP).
October 2016	Ratified by School Council President. Policy for review in 3 years.
July 2019	Name of policy updated from *Bullying and Harassment Policy* to *Bullying Prevention Policy*. Changes in policy regulations. Policy require Consultation and update every 1-2 years. Updates to reflect changes in process and procedures and feedback from Student Wellbeing Coordinator and team.
August 2019	Presented to School Council

Review Date

This policy will be reviewed every 1-2 years or more often if necessary due to changes in regulations or circumstances.

This policy requires school council consultation.

Date of next review: 2020 or earlier.

References
- DET's [Effective Schools are Engaging Schools: Student Engagement Policy Guidelines](#)
- DET's [Student Engagement Policy Guidelines](#)
- DET's [National Safe Schools Framework](#)
- Glengala Primary School Student Engagement Policy 2016

Appendix 1

Bullying Prevention Procedures	Glengala Primary School

What are the effects of Bullying and Harassment?

- poor health - anxiety, depression
- lower self esteem
- reduced study performance
- missed classes, social withdrawal
- reduced career prospects

Am I bullying or harassing someone?

If you are not sure about your behaviour you can:

- check it out by asking if it is offensive or inappropriate
- stop it
- Apologise
- take it seriously if someone says they are feeling uncomfortable
- talk it over with an adviser or somebody who has an understanding of the issues

What are some of the feelings victims of bullying or harassment may experience?

- "I will ignore it and it will go away."

- - If anything it will make things worse - you will give the impression that you agree with the situation.
- "I don't want to cause trouble."
  - Most causes of harassment are sorted out quite simply. By speaking up, action can be taken to address the problem.
- "Am I to blame?"
  - Victims of harassment or bullying sometimes feel that it is their fault. Victims are made to feel guilty by the offender and often blame themselves. It is your right to have a safe environment free from harassment or bullying.
- "Am I imagining things?"
  - Often our hunches are correct. Rather than put up with nagging doubts, talk to someone about your feelings.

Bullying or harassment can often make people feel:

- embarrassed or ashamed
- offended or humiliated
- intimidated or frightened
- uncomfortable

What should you do if you see another person being bullied or harassed?

Be an Upstander - Tell the person that you witnessed the incident and advise them to report it to an appropriate person. However, if your friend is harassing another person, let them know that their behaviour is unacceptable.

Bystanders who do nothing to stop bullying may be contributing to the problem by providing an audience for the bully.

What do you do if you are being bullied or harassed?

- tell the person you don't like what they are doing and you want them to stop
- discuss the matter with a Coordinator, Student Welfare Coordinator or peer mediator, peer support leader or a teacher that you feel comfortable with
- the school will take your concerns seriously - all complaints will be treated confidentially

How will a student's bullying complaint be dealt with?

Bullying complaints will be taken seriously and treated sensitively. School procedures for responding to a student who bullies or harasses others are set out below.

Level 1

If the bullying or harassment incident is minor or a first time occurrence teachers, may elect to use one or more of the following:

- stopping the bullying/re-statement of school wide behaviour matrix and consequences

- restorative questioning

- private conference

If the student does not take control over his/her behaviour the Student Engagement Coordinator/ Principal/Assistant Principal should be notified.

Level 2

If the bullying or harassment continues, or in instances of severe bullying or harassment a referral should be made to thePrimary Welfare Officer/Principal/Assistant Principal who may:

- provide incidental reassurance of a counselling style support to the victim
- refer the matter to the Primary Welfare Officer
- meet with the perpetrator to develop a Behaviour Support Plan/ other type of behaviour modification strategy document and meet with parents of the student to discuss strategies
- provide discussion/mentoring of different social and emotional learning competencies including structured learning activities
- conduct a restorative conference separately with the perpetrator and 'target'

Level 3

For 'at risk' students (many risk factors, few protective factors) whose bullying or harassing behaviour is severe and for other non 'at risk' students whose bullying or harassing and other aggressive behaviour is resistant to change, an individual 'behaviour plan' should be developed by the Primary Welfare Officer in consultation with student, parent/carers, Student Support Services Officer, School based Psychologist (if applicable) and teachers. Individual strength-building plans and associated interventions help connect the student to positive people, programs and actions in the community, school and home as well as develop the student's inner social and emotional resilience skills and values)

Level 4

Students whose severe bullying or harassing behaviour resists school efforts and represents a significant threat to the safety and wellbeing should be referred to outside agencies for evaluation. The Student Wellbeing Coordinator will need to be familiar with those community agencies and organisations that can offer more intensive services to the student and student's family.

Note:

The school may choose, if bullying or harassment persists or the initial incident is of such magnitude, that parents/carers will be contacted and consequences implemented consistent with the Glengala Primary School Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy (2019).

Furthermore, the Principal team may commence formal disciplinary action in line with "Effective Schools are Engaging Schools – Student Engagement Policy Guidelines' (DET) at any stage in the process depending on contextual information relating to the severity of the bullying (including-cyberbullying) and harassment.