

# Anti-Harassment & Bullying Policy

## Policy Statement

Wilandra Rise Primary School has a Duty of Care to All students and will take reasonable measures to protect them from risks, both physical and psychological that could reasonably have been foreseen. Greater measures will be taken for younger students or students with disabilities.

Every student, staff member, parent and visitor at Wilandra Rise Primary School has the right to be respected and feel safe within the school environment and while participating in school activities. A person who bullies or harasses another is denying them that right and is not behaving as a responsible school community member.

This policy aims to inform and educate the school community regarding their rights and responsibilities. It also provides a basis upon which appropriate programs and procedures are developed across the school.

These programs and procedures are designed to develop a culture that does not tolerate bullying and / or harassing behaviour; provide an effective framework within which to address incidents and issues of harassment and bullying.

## Rationale

- To enable all children to feel safe and able to communicate any concerns to adults
- To develop respect and tolerance for others.
- To encourage children to support each other.
- To help children develop appropriate strategies to assist them in handling bullies.
- To develop awareness of the different types of bullying-psychological, social, physical and verbal.
- To develop children's understanding that some bullying is unlawful.
- To encourage a bully to take responsibility for his/her actions.
- To assist a bully to understand how his/her actions will affect others. To provide a safe environment that has a structure to effectively deal with bullying and harassment if they take place.
- Harassment and bullying is often kept a secret from adults. This secrecy often allows bullying and harassment to continue.
- Students must be able to feel that they can talk about incidences of harassment if the behaviour is to cease.
- Students are often afraid to report bullying for fear that it will get worse.
- The act of witnessing the bullying of another person and doing nothing to stop it, is as bad as the person who is actually bullying.
- Bystander responsibility will be adhered to by all members of the

- school community.
- Any form of harassment is totally unacceptable at Wilandra Rise Primary School.

### Definition of Key Terms

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. This could occur in a variety of ways: face to face; name-calling; excluding; spreading rumours; on the internet; over the telephone or via text messages.

There are many types of behaviours that if continuous can be defined as harassment: (NOTE: THE FOLLOWING LISTS ARE EXAMPLES ONLY, AND ARE NOT ALL-INCLUSIVE).

#### VERBAL

- Name calling, put downs, 'knocking' achievers Refs: Vic Govt Schools Policy Advisory Guide <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/bullying.aspx>
- Spreading rumours or gossiping
- Negative comments about someone's appearance, gender sexuality, cultural or social background
- Homophobic comments or teasing
- Threatening remarks, teasing or speaking rumours about others or their families
- Swearing
- Isolating people from their friends/peers, talking about them in a huddle as if they are not there (making them a 'non-person')
- Taking part in 'whispering campaigns'
- Threatening to 'get' another person or have others 'get' them.
- Sexual harassment through verbal acts of a sexual nature (asking someone to perform sexual favours, etc.)

#### PHYSICAL:

- Threatening behaviour, fighting or using weapons; spitting on others; invasion of 'personal space'
- Unfair exclusion
- Unwanted touching
- Interfering with another person's property, by stealing, hiding, damaging or destroying it, or teasing that person with their property (i.e. playing 'keepings off')
- Giving 'greasies', starting in a determined manner, and making gestures that are threatening
- Sexually harassing others through physical acts of a sexual nature (i.e. unwanted touching)
- Writing offensive notes or graffiti about others.
- Using students to obtain money, food, personal equipment, clothes or other things that students bring to school.
- Forcing students to complete work for someone else

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- Sending e-mail and/or texts which is offensive, demeaning or includes negative comments about someone's appearance, gender, sexuality, cultural or social background

### **RACIAL:**

- Racist comments or jokes; emails or letter
- Physical abuse
- Negative reference to a person's appearance, cultural values/beliefs, or language

### **SEXUAL:**

- Sexual harassment is defined under its own sub-policy.

### **DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY AND ELECTRONIC BULLYING**

- Spread of rumours via msn
- Placing images without a person's consent
- Intimidation
- Giving out personal details to others about others without permission
- Posting offensive comments, messages and bulletins on social networking sites (e.g. MySpace; Facebook).
- Downloading inappropriate material e.g. video images of students at school or student incidents and sending it to others
- Using SMS, chat rooms, e-mails, internet to belittle or intimidate.
- Refs: Vic Govt Schools Policy Advisory Guide -  
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/bullying.aspx>

## **Guidelines for Implementation**

- Every member of the school community has the right to be protected from all forms of harassment. This includes traveling to and from school, as well as being at school or on any camp, excursion, event (i.e. sporting carnival) or other related activity this is run by Wilandra Rise Primary School.
- Every member of the school community is responsible for implementing this policy. All students can help to stop incidents of bullying and harassment.
- All complaints of harassment should be treated as genuine
- All complaints of harassment/bullying will be listened to, and judged on its own merits.
- Each claim should be acted upon without undue delay
- Both the complainant and the accused have the right to an investigation that is confidential and discreet (realizing that there will be cases where the complainant will inevitably be identified).
- All documentation regarding harassment incidents should be filed in a manner that ensures confidentiality.
- In cases where the complainant is identified, all measures will be taken to ensure that repercussions are minimized (i.e. warning student/s involved that repercussions will result in harsh penalties)

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- A copy of all documentation regarding any harassment incident will be passed on to the Assistant Principals.
- Harassment and bullying at Wilandra Rise Primary School will not be tolerated.

### **How Students can deal with bullying?**

**Step 1:** Talk to someone they trust. E.g. Parents; Guardians; Friends; Teachers they trust, or the school counsellor.

**Step 2:** Take personal actions. E.g. Try to ask the bully to stop; keep notes or save texts/emails about who, what and when.

**Step 3:** Make a formal complaint to a teacher. E.g. Report bullying to your teacher.

**Step 4:** The person who the student has reported will be interviewed.

**Step 5:** Restorative Practices will be used to help resolve the situation if appropriate.

**Step 6:** If the problem is not resolved or the severity of the bullying may result in the Principal or Assistant Principals informing the bully's parents. Appropriate consequences (e.g. community service, detentions or suspension) will be determined.

**Step 7:** The bully/bullies and the person who has been harassed will be monitored by the teaching staff.

### **Evaluation**

To be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review process.