

Anti-Bullying Policy

Introduction

At Golden Grove Primary School we promote a culture that is conducive to learning and emotional wellbeing. We believe all members of our school community are entitled to a safe, secure and caring environment and it is everyone's responsibility to ensure this is provided and maintained. Bullying in any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders. Consequently we will not accept any type of bullying and encourage all members of the community to report any incident of bullying with the expectation that they will be supported.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is **targeted, intentional** and **repeated** verbal, physical or social behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons. Bullying is not a one off incident of harassment, teasing, conflict or aggression.

Examples of Bullying

Physical: repeated and targeted hitting, punching, fighting, pushing, touching, poking, grabbing, spitting, taking/damaging property, using a weapon.

Sexual/Racial: repeated and targeted verbal or physical contact of a sexual/racial nature, teasing because of skin colour, gender or sexual orientation.

Social/Emotional: repeated and targeted looks, stares, facial expressions, hand signs, hurt feelings, intimidation, deliberate exclusion or teasing.

Verbal and written: repeated and targeted spoken or written insults, threats, suggestive comments, name calling, rumour spreading.

Cyber-bullying: refers to bullying through information and communication technologies.

Graffiti: involves the use of using pictures, tags or words.

Bullying Behaviour

What Bullying Is: Bullying and harassment are repeated actions over time involving an imbalance of power. Deliberate and repeated name-calling, making sexist or racist remarks, spreading rumours, texting abusive messages and threatening someone or excluding someone from games and groups are all examples of bullying or harassment.

What Bullying Is Not: Not all distressing or hurtful behaviour is bullying. Although social rejection can be hurtful, it is not bullying unless accompanied by repeated and deliberate attempts to distress or hurt. Arguments can be distressing but it is not bullying when two people are upset and neither one is misusing power over the other. Conflict may still give rise to unacceptable behaviour which will be responded to as part of our behaviour management processes.

Cyber-bullying can occur from a single act when the message or picture is sent to more than one person. For example, a bully may only press 'send' once, but the choice to send the message to multiple addresses, makes the action more than a single incident.

For Parents: What should I do if I suspect my child is being bullied?

- Listen calmly to your child. Talk about what is happening for them at school and establish whether it has been an ongoing problem.
- Discourage retaliation, either physical or verbal.
- Encourage positive strategies such as using a strong, confident voice to tell the bully "Leave me alone" or walk away and immediately inform a teacher.
- Let your child know that reporting about the bullying is the right thing to do. If necessary assist your child in discussing the problem with their class teacher.
- Make an appointment to come into the school and discuss your concerns with the child's teacher.
- If necessary the teacher will then make a member of the Leadership Team aware of your child's disclosure of bullying so they can carry out further investigations of the claim and put steps in place to ensure that your child feels safe at school.

How will the school handle a report of suspected bullying?

All bullying or threats of bullying will be investigated and documented.

A member of the leadership team will determine what steps have already been taken by staff and support continuation of the intervention. If the situation has not been resolved, an intervention program will begin.

Options for dealing with bullying will depend on the issue and age of the student and may include:

- Counselling of the student in dealing with the matter and supporting them to develop appropriate skills.
- Acting on behalf of the student and informing the person bullying that his/her behaviour must stop and implementing consequences if required.
- Acting as a facilitator in a restorative meeting so that the student being bullied and the student doing the bullying may discuss the issue with clear expectations being made about future behaviour. This may involve repeated meetings and monitoring.
- Actively work to repair and prevent the repetition of bullying using restorative and positive education practices.
- Setting negotiated consequences in place if required.
- Working with parents to resolve the issue.

What do we do to prevent bullying?

Our school uses a wide range of strategies to prevent bullying. These include:

- Maintaining a strong whole site emphasis on our school values.
- Teaching students about violence prevention, conflict resolution, anger management and problem solving.
- Using the curriculum to teach about respectful relationships, civics and citizenship.
- Teaching for and about diversity.
- Developing programs to help students participate and have a say in their learning.
- Teaching students about the role of bystanders, the expectations and responsibilities.
- Monitoring situations between students to ensure their safety and wellbeing are maintained.
- Using restorative practices to maintain relationships.
- Fostering positive relationships amongst all members of the school community.
- Working in partnership with outside agencies to provide supplementary programs for targeted students.
- Remaining alert to the dynamics between individuals and groups.