



Ratified by School Council: September 2009
Date of Next Review: February 2011

Purpose

The OOSH Anti Bullying Policy supports the Strategic Plan goal to provide a secure and safe learning and workplace environment. This policy promotes respect, tolerance, cooperation and self esteem and the beliefs contained in the Staff, Parents and Student Codes of Conduct. This policy works in conjunction with the OOSH Student Management Policy.

Definition

Bullying is a deliberate act of aggression causing embarrassment, pain and discomfort to another. It is the misuse of the 'power' of an individual or group derived from their position, seniority, physical attributes, gender, race or nationality against others. Bullying is not always intentional. Sometimes people do not realise that their behaviour can be harmful to others.

Bullying is actual hurtful behaviour directed by more powerful individuals or groups against those who are less powerful. It is not the same thing as fighting or quarrelling between people of about the same strength. It is typically repeated, often enjoyed by the bully or bullies, never justified. It is experienced as oppression.

(<http://www.education.unisa.edu.au/bullying/bgide2.htm>)

Bullying can take a number of forms: physical, verbal, gesture, extortion and exclusion. It can be an isolated incident or behaviour that is prolonged over time and indicates an imbalance of power. Individuals or groups may be involved.

Some examples of bullying are:

- Any forms or threats of physical violence such as hitting, kicking, biting, pushing or spitting on another.
- Interfering with another's property, stealing, hiding, damaging or destroying it.
- Verbal abuse; using offensive names, teasing or spreading rumours about others or their families.
- Using put downs, belittling other's abilities, achievements or efforts.
- Excluding or isolating others from a group and/or play.
- Inappropriate practical "jokes".
- Forcing others to act against their will.

Guidelines

- Middle Park Primary School & the OOSH Program does not tolerate bullying in any form.
- Staff will foster a respectful culture within the school at all times.
- The staff and students will be responsible for respecting their peers and their right to take appropriate action if bullied. It is the responsibility for both staff and students to actively promote a bully free environment.
- The staff and students will recognise, refuse to tolerate, and will be pro-active against bullying-like behaviour.
- The school community will be informed and actively encouraged to promote the anti bullying policy as an important component of our school culture.

Implementation

- The whole school's Social Skills Program will include strategies for dealing with and recognising bullies.
 - The OOSH staff will make all attempts to maintain a safe and secure environment and to take necessary measures to prevent unsafe practices.
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- All bullying incidents will be acted upon immediately and reported to the OOSH Director. Parents will be informed if their child is involved in a bullying incident.
- All incidents and ongoing problems will be reported to the OOSH Director and the Student Wellbeing Coordinator for further investigation.
- All staff bullying incidents will follow the *OOSH Complaints Resolution Procedures*.
- The school's administration and welfare committees will monitor bullying incidents in the workplace, classroom and the school environment and take necessary actions to prevent the recurrence of similar incidents.
- Repeated incidents of bullying involving students will be followed up with parental involvement.
- Where repeated bullying occurs the bully and the victim will be provided with counselling by the Student Wellbeing coordinator or another nominated body.
- When required, outside services will be accessed to support this policy.
- Confidentiality will be maintained.

Home strategies

- Report the incident either by encouraging your child to do so or do it yourself.
- Encourage your child to build up a network of trusted adults they can go to.
- Help your child to build up strategies to deal with bullying or teasing.
- Communicate with the school.

Strategies for all students

Encourage students to stand up for themselves if they are bullied by using any of the following steps where appropriate:

- ignoring bullying behaviour,
- asking an OOSH leader for support and advice,
- telling the bullier to stop,
- refusing to join in if others are being bullied,
- supporting students who are being bullied,
- reporting incidents of bullying,
- if students feel they are being bullied by another parent or a staff member they are to report this to the OOSH Director/Coordinator or the Principal immediately.

Strategies for all staff

Bullying behaviour should be challenged as early as possible. Some actions employees can take if they feel they are being bullied by a parent or another staff member are:

- report the issue to the Principal or OOSH Director,
 - collect evidence, e.g. anything in writing, other employee's statements,
 - keep a diary of incidents,
 - If unresolved options may include;
 - report the issue to the Occupational Health & Safety Representative (OH & SR),
 - request the OH & SR issue a Provisional Improvement Notice,
 - seek advice from the union,
 - seek advice or counselling from independent employees assistance services,
 - contact the Victorian Work Cover Authority, solicitors or the police.
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Outcomes

A safe and secure workplace and learning environment for all.

Evaluation

The effectiveness of the School & OOSH Anti Bullying Procedures will be monitored and reviewed regularly by the Student Wellbeing Action Team in conjunction with members of the school community.

Links to related policies

This policy has links to other policies and procedures:

- OOSH Student Management Policy,
- OOSH Complaints Resolution Policy,