



*Truth, Pride & Friendship*

**PREVENTING  
AND  
MANAGING  
BULLYING  
2015**

# RIVERSIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY

## Rationale

This school believes that the working environment for students and staff should be safe and free from violence, harassment and bullying of any kind.

## ACTION PLAN

All members of our school community are committed to ensuring a safe and supportive environment where all members have the right to be respected and have a responsibility to respect each other.

Students, staff, parents, caregivers and the wider community have the right to a safe and supportive learning environment in schools. For this to occur, all school community members have a responsibility to prevent and respond to reports and observations of bullying.

## Rights and Responsibilities of School Community Members

MEMBERS	RIGHTS	RESPONSIBILITIES
All students, teachers, parents, wider school community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are safe and supported in the school environment.</li> <li>• Treated with respect.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish positive relationships.</li> <li>• Respect and accept individual differences.</li> </ul>
Administrators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are supported in developing and implementing the school's plan to prevent and effectively manage bullying.</li> <li>• Feel safe and supported in the workplace.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide resources for teacher; for the management of bullying.</li> <li>• Ensure parents are informed of the school plan.</li> <li>• Support staff to implement the school's plan.</li> <li>• Offer follow-up support to victims.</li> <li>• Liaise with parents where appropriate.</li> </ul>
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feel safe and supported in the workplace.</li> <li>• Access to curriculum resources suitable for supporting students in building positive relationships, resiliency, safety and bullying prevention.</li> <li>• Are informed of the school's plan on bullying.</li> <li>• Are treated with respect in the workplace.</li> <li>• Have access to professional learning in preventing and effectively managing bullying.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote and model positive relationships.</li> <li>• Teach anti-bullying strategies.</li> <li>• Build resilience in the students.</li> <li>• Listen to and provide support to victims.</li> <li>• Follow the action plan (attached).</li> </ul>
Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to curriculum that supports the building of resiliency.</li> <li>• Are informed of the school's plan on bullying.</li> <li>• If involved, are provided with support to stop bullying.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Treat others with care and respect.</li> <li>• Identify and respond effectively to bullying.</li> <li>• Report in a timely fashion, instances of bullying.</li> <li>• Be an active bystander.</li> </ul>
Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expect children to be safe and provided with a supportive school environment and treated with respect.</li> <li>• Are provided with access to information on the prevention and response strategies related to bullying.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support and encourage children to treat others with respect and act in accordance with the school plan if they observe bullying.</li> <li>• Encourage children to report bullying incidents.</li> <li>• Are aware of school plans and support the school in effectively managing bullying.</li> </ul>

Wider community: including other professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic inclusion in prevention and bullying incident management.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide support and input into the school's approach to preventing and managing bullying through contact with staff, admin and via surveys.</li> </ul>
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## Common Understandings About Bullying

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### Definition of Bullying

Bullying is when an individual or group misuses power to target another individual or group to intentionally threaten or harm them on more than one occasion. This may involve verbal, physical, relational and psychological forms of bullying.

### Types of Bullying

Bullying takes many forms and can include:

- **Verbal Bullying:** The repeated use of words to hurt or humiliate another individual or group. Verbal bullying includes using put-downs, insulting language, name-calling, swearing, nasty notes and homophobic, racist or sexist comments.
- **Psychological Bullying:** Includes repeated stalking, threats or implied threats, unwanted email or text messaging, abusive websites, threatening gestures, manipulation, emotional blackmail, and threats to an individual's reputation and sense of safety.
- **Relational Bullying:** Usually involves repeatedly ostracising others by leaving them out or convincing others to exclude or reject another individual or group from their social connections, making up or spreading rumours and sharing or threatening to share another's personal information.
- **Physical Bullying:** Includes repetitive low level hitting, kicking, pinching, pushing, tripping, "ganging up", unwanted physical or sexual touching, and damage to personal property.
- **Cyber Bullying:** Involves the use of information and communication technologies such as e-mail, text messages, instant messaging and websites to engage in the bullying of other individuals or groups. This technology provides an alternative means for verbal, relational and psychological forms of bullying.
- **Bystanders to Bullying:** *Bullying also involves the concept of "bystanders"*. A bystander may be someone who sees bullying or knows about it but he or she is not usually directly involved. Everyone at the school can have a role in supporting those who are being bullied. All members of the whole school community at Riverside need to be aware of their role in supporting those who are being bullied and their responsibility to discourage bullying behaviours when they observe them. Any member of the school community can be a bystander and can act successfully to prevent or stop bullying. Sometimes it is difficult to act at the time of the bullying incident but reporting bullying behaviour is also important. Bystanders are encouraged to report to someone who can help, such as a member of the school staff.

### Terminology

The Department of Education promotes the use of affirmative language that supports the values of Riverside Primary School. The terms "bullies" and "victims" are not recommended as appropriate terminology to use when identifying, reporting, recording and responding to bullying incidents. More appropriate terms to use may include "bullied students", "students who are bullied", "victimised students", "students who bully", "students who engage in bullying behaviour" and "students who bully others". This will ensure that unacceptable behaviours are separated from the students involved. This allows the behaviours to be addressed in a manner that remains respectful of the individuals.

**Mutual Conflict:** A disagreement or argument, not an imbalance of power, both parties usually want a resolution. This can develop into bullying.

**Social Rejection or Dislike:** Unless deliberate or repeated, this is not bullying.

**Single Episode Acts:** If it is only one occasion this is not bullying.

## **School Strategies to Prevent and Manage Bullying**

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- A whole school culture that seeks to be proactive and restore relationships damaged through conflict.
- Clear, well-defined and agreed types of student and staff behaviour (shared vision / goals).
- All staff made aware of bullying issues, the need to take action and staff role in implementing the policy.
- Anti-bullying component included in the curriculum for each year level.
- High expectations of behaviour and encouragement of students to adopt pro-social values.
- Good Standing policy implemented to build a culture of respect and develop self-discipline, responsibility and respect for the rights of others.
- Student well-being to be a high priority that underpins all student learning and behaviour.
- Identification of high risk situations and providing adjustments to supervision.
- Work in partnership with parents to reduce and manage bullying.
- Provide parent information to raise awareness and clarification of bullying.
- Articles published in the newsletter providing advice for students, teachers and caregivers.
- Values education to support a positive, caring school community.
- School chaplain to work with at risk students and actively promote values education (assemblies, special days).

## **Intervention for Bullying Incidents**

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### **Support For Students Who Are Bullied**

Students who are bullied are encouraged to report to members of staff and/or parents, all incidents of bullying, violence and harassment. The school will act on these reports. The bullied student and those engaging in bullying behaviour will have opportunities to describe what happened. Both parties will be counselled separately and caregiver(s) notified of the outcome(s) for serious incidents. A request will be made for the caregiver(s) support and understanding. The class teacher involved and/or a deputy, will oversee the reparation process. All serious occurrences will be recorded.

### **Dealing With Bullying Behaviour**

The school will ensure that *students who engage in bullying behaviour* are:

- Confronted by the evidence.
- Counsellor so they can suggest how they can make the bullied student feel better at school.
- Assisted to develop a personal action plan of non-aggression.
- Given non-violent sanctions.
- The subject of regular behavioural review.
- Encouraged to change behaviour through a variety of means (role play, counselling) and positive affirmation.

The following procedures will be considered when dealing with bullying behaviour:

### **Method of Shared Concern**

- Receive information about the incident.
- Gain the confidence and agreement of bullied student to proceed.
- Individual chats with both students.
- Follow-up with individuals after each break for a designated number of days.
- Group meeting with inclusion of victimised student when they are ready.
- Resolution meeting with both parties.
- Further follow-up and monitoring.

The aim of the approach is to develop empathy and concern for others. By working with students involved in the bullying and onlookers, the dynamics that sustain bullying can be shifted. By developing a sense of shared concern for the bullied students a shift in behaviour can be achieved.

## **No Blame Approach**

- Interview the student who is bullied.
- Seek illustration of how the bullying affects them.
- Speak with the group of students involved in the bullying, plus bystanders.
- Seek their empathy and suggestions.
- Speak to students involved in the bullying individually about progress made.
- Talk with the bullied student about progress.

## **Other Action**

For students who don't respond to the methods outlined above, other approaches will be implemented including appropriate MSB processes, school chaplain and adult counsellors.

## **Parent Support**

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The school will:

- Request that parents cooperate with the year level teacher in any reparation process.
- Involve professional help, where necessary.
- Provide information which could help the student overcome bullying.

## **Prevention Programs**

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- Teachers will incorporate into the curriculum a personal development program including role play, classroom meetings and cooperative group activities, to assist students develop assertive rather than aggressive ways of dealing with situations of conflict.
- Regular articles will be published in the school newsletter providing advice for students, teachers and caregivers.
- In addition the school will provide facilities and equipment to encourage a positive playground environment. A variety of sports equipment will be available to students in every classroom and each year group will have access to age appropriate fixed play equipment on a rostered basis. Specific play areas will be set aside to encourage students of a similar age level to play together. In addition the school will encourage structured activities in well-organised play.
- Staff at Riverside Primary School will model and actively reinforce appropriate behaviour.

## **Planning, Monitoring and Review**

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- Provide professional learning opportunities for staff.
- Monitor effectiveness of existing programs (Peer mediation, Friendly Schools, Lions Skills, Rainbows, Buzz).
- Establish lines of communication between teachers, parents and the school chaplain.
- Behaviour books to be used in classroom and playground and details to be recorded on Integris. Parents given a copy of behaviour slips.
- Integris to record all reported incidents.
- Use Integris to provide qualitative, quantitative and comparative data analysis.
- School Board to endorse policy changes.