

# STUDENT BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY

## BRUNSWICK EAST PRIMARY SCHOOL POLICY

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### Rational

Brunswick East Primary School (BEPS) is committed to providing a safe and caring environment that supports positive behaviour and relationships to be formed amongst all students, parents and staff. These relationships encourage self-esteem, respect, compassion, cooperation, personal growth and a positive attitude to learning and teaching. **Bullying will not be tolerated.**

### Aims

- To reinforce within the school community that no form of bullying is acceptable.
- To alert everyone within the school community to signs and evidence of bullying and to their responsibility to report incidents of bullying to staff, whether their position is that of an observer or victim.
- To ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are followed up and that support is given to both victim and perpetrator.
- To inform parents about incidents of bullying and enlist their support.

### What is Bullying?

**Bullying** is when someone, or a group of people, deliberately upset or hurt another person or damage their property, reputation or social acceptance on more than one occasion. In incidents of bullying there is an imbalance of power, with the bully or bullies having more power at the time due to age, size, status or other reasons.

#### Bullying can be:

Emotional	being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (eg. hiding book, threatening gestures)
Physical	pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
Racist	racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
Verbal	name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
Sexual	unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comment
Cyber	internet misuse, mobile threats by messaging or texts, misuse of camera or video facilities

### What Bullying is Not

Many distressing behaviours are not examples of bullying even though they are unpleasant and often require teacher intervention and management. There are three socially unpleasant situations that are often confused with bullying:

#### **Mutual Conflict**

In mutual conflict situations, there is an argument or disagreement between students but not an imbalance of power. Both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution to the problem. However, unresolved mutual conflict sometimes develops into a bullying situation with one person becoming targeted repeatedly for 'retaliation' in a one-sided way.

#### **Social Rejection or Dislike**

Unless the social rejection is directed towards someone specific and involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others, it is not bullying.

#### **Single-episode acts of nastiness or meanness, or random acts of aggression or intimidation**

Single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. If a student is verbally abused or pushed on one occasion they are not being bullied.

Nastiness or physical aggression that is directed towards many different students is not the same as bullying.

### **Implementation**

The strategies below constitute a three-pronged approach primary prevention, early intervention and management.

### **Primary Prevention Strategies**

BEPS is committed to addressing bullying behaviours in a professional and consistent manner, and aims to provide a safe and respectful learning environment where bullying is not tolerated

BEPS has identified the following strategies for students, staff and the school community to implement to effectively address bullying.

#### **Students**

- Employ school programs and initiatives to promote bullying prevention and response strategies for bullying and other forms of unacceptable behavior based on the Education Department's anti-bullying resource, such as "Bully Stoppers".
- Develop curriculum programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, conflict resolution and problem solving where appropriate.
- Promote the reporting by children and staff of bullying incidents through regular reminders by teachers and Principal.

#### **Staff**

- Listen to every bullying complaint in confidence and take the matter seriously.
- Provide bullying and harassment professional development, resources and preventative strategies to all staff.
- Develop specialist resources and in-service activities to assist staff in responding appropriately to bullying issues.
- Link the Bullying Prevention policy with related policies, including the BEPS Student Code of Conduct, and BEPS Student Wellbeing Policy.
- Provide all new staff with a copy of the anti-bullying policy and training, as part of the induction process.
- Promote the reporting by children and staff of bullying incidents through regular reminders by teachers and Principal.

#### **Parents**

- Provide parents with the BEPS Bullying Prevention policy in new Student Enrolment Kits.
- Work in partnership with the school to reduce and manage bullying.
- Provide an opportunity for parents, students and staff to update this Policy annually.

#### **Community**

- Ensure BEPS Bullying Prevention Policy is available and promoted to students, staff, parents and the community the school website and via the newsletter.
- Promote BEPS commitment to addressing bullying, by inviting the leaders of BEPS community, including representatives from the Student School Council, Principal and School Council President to sign the Bully Stoppers Pledge and display copies in the school.

### **Intervention and Management Strategies**

Here are some other ways students, parents and staff can address bullying effectively:

#### **Students**

- Promote reporting of bullying incidents through regular reminders by teachers and the Principal
- Promote safe and friendly behaviours through Junior School Council
- Develop relevant activities for students at recess and lunch breaks

- Provide recognition for positive behaviour and resolution of problems

#### **Staff**

- Fully investigate and document all incidents or allegations of bullying with those involved and witnesses.
- Increase community awareness and input relating to bullying, its characteristics and the school's programs and response.
- Provide access to a range of programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving on site or through external agencies.
- Monitor yard behaviour and continue evaluation to inform planning and to ensure prompt responses to incidences of unsafe or disrespectful yard behaviour.
- Explicit teaching of interpersonal skills will be undertaken by classroom teachers.
- Promote the reporting by staff of bullying incidents through regular reminders by Principal.
- Plan strategically and pro-actively for those issues that arise, to ensure effective ongoing management for students and families.

#### **Parents**

- Contact the school and make an appointment to discuss the issue.
- Do not directly approach any other student or their family.
- Work with staff to address the issue by, for example, establishing a plan for dealing with the current situation and future bullying incidents.

#### **Student Management Plan**

If bullying behavior has occurred, the management plan will be individually based, documented and may include:

- The teacher meeting with children concerned
- meetings with parents or caregivers
- reinforcement and recognition of positive behavior, following discussions
- ongoing monitoring
- formal reflection time
- withdrawal of privileges
- exclusion from yard
- exclusion from class
- ongoing counselling from appropriate agency
- school suspension

All students, families and staff affected by bullying will be offered relevant counselling and support.

#### **Privacy**

Schools must follow privacy laws and may not be able to tell you everything that has taken place, especially about any other children involved. These laws also keep you and your child's information private too.

#### **Resources**

There are also a range of anti-bullying resources, support services and websites with more information:

[Bullystoppers](#) - this website contains information, advice sheets and videos for students and parents.

[Cybersmart](#) - this website is designed for the whole family to learn how to be online safely. Contains videos, activities, information and guides for the WHOLE family. Excellent resource!

*Kids Helpline* - 1800 55 1800 - is Australia's only free, private and confidential, telephone and online counselling service and website specifically for young people aged between 5 and 25.

[Bullying No Way!](#) This website provides students, parents and teachers with information about bullying, harassment, discrimination and violence in schools. Some great resources for primary students.

[Reach Out](#) - This website provides assistance to children and young people on a broad range of issues including mental health and wellbeing, bullying, family and peer relationships.

[Safe Schools Hub](#) - The Safe Schools Hub has been developed to support school communities to take up the National Safe School Framework. The Hub provides the tools and knowledge that will enable all members of the school community to develop the skills to build a positive and supportive school culture

### **Education Department resources**

[Respecting Diversity Teaching Resources](#): for teachers to support the inclusion of sexual diversity in the school's sexuality education program

[Effective Schools are Engaging Schools: Student Engagement Policy Guidelines](#) – Department guidelines for creating respectful and safe school communities

DEECD's Safe Schools are Effective School's:

<http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/stuman/wellbeing/segpolicy.pdf>

The school's Internet Use Policy (re cyber-bullying – still to be finalised)

### **Evaluation**

The Bullying Prevention Policy will be reviewed and updated as part of the school's three year policy review cycle, with staff, student, parent and community input.

This policy may be reviewed more often if necessary due to changes in regulations or circumstances.

Next Policy Review Date: June 2017 (or earlier, as required).

This policy was ratified by School Council on the

26<sup>th</sup> August 2014