



## BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY

### PURPOSE

Lang Lang Primary School is committed to providing a safe and respectful learning environment where bullying will not be tolerated.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- explain the definition of bullying
- make clear that all forms of bullying at Lang Lang Primary School will not be tolerated
- ask that everyone in our school community be alert to signs and evidence of bullying behaviour, and accept responsibility to report bullying behaviour to school staff
- ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are appropriately investigated and addressed
- ensure that support is provided to students who may be affected by bullying behaviour (including victims, bystanders and perpetrators)
- seek parental and peer group support in addressing and preventing bullying behaviour at Lang Lang Primary School.

When responding to bullying behaviour, Lang Lang Primary School aims to:

- be proportionate, consistent and responsive
- find a constructive and positive solution for everyone
- stop the bullying from happening again
- restore the relationships between the students involved.

Lang Lang Primary School acknowledges that school staff owe a duty of care to students to take reasonable steps to reduce the risk of reasonably foreseeable harm, which can include harm that may be caused by bullying behaviour.

### SCOPE

This policy addresses how Lang Lang Primary school aims to prevent and respond to student bullying behaviour. Lang Lang Primary School recognises that there are many other types of inappropriate student behaviours that do not meet the definition of bullying which are also unacceptable at our school. These other inappropriate behaviours will be managed in accordance with our *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy* and *Equal Opportunity policy*.

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions.

### POLICY

#### Definitions

*Bullying* occurs when someone, or a group of people, deliberately and repeatedly upset, harass, intimidate, threaten or hurt another person or damage their property, reputation or social acceptance. There is an imbalance of power



in incidents of bullying, where the bully or bullies have more power than the victim due to their age, size, status or other reasons.

Bullying may be direct or indirect, physical or verbal, and includes cyberbullying. Bullying is not a one-off disagreement between two or more people or a situation of mutual dislike. In this policy any reference to 'bullying' includes all forms of bullying including cyberbullying.

Bullying can be:

1. *direct physical bullying* – e.g. hitting, tripping, and pushing or damaging property.
2. *direct verbal bullying* – e.g. name calling, insults, homophobic or racist remarks, verbal abuse.
3. *indirect bullying* – e.g. spreading rumours, playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate, mimicking, encouraging others to socially exclude a person and/or damaging a person's social reputation or social acceptance.

*Harassment* can also constitute bullying if it amounts to a pattern of behaviour or course of conduct towards another person that is demeaning, offensive or intimidating to a person.

*Cyberbullying* is direct or indirect bullying behaviours using digital technology. For example via a mobile phone, tablets, computers, chat rooms, email, social media, etc. It can be verbal, written or include use of images, video and/or audio.

### **Other distressing behaviours**

Many distressing behaviours may not constitute bullying even though they are unpleasant. Students who are involved in or who witness any distressing behaviours should report their concerns to school staff and our school will follow the Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy. *Mutual conflict* involves an argument or disagreement between people with no imbalance of power. In incidents of mutual conflict, generally, both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution to the issue. Unresolved mutual conflict can develop into bullying if one of the parties targets the other repeatedly in retaliation.

*Social rejection or dislike* is not bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.

*Single-episode acts* of harassment, nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. If someone is verbally abused or pushed on one occasion, they are not being bullied. Harassment, nastiness or physical aggression that is directed towards many different people is not the same as bullying. However, single episodes of harassment, nastiness or physical aggression are not acceptable behaviours at our school.

### **BULLYING PREVENTION**

Lang Lang Primary School has a number of programs and strategies in place to build a positive and inclusive school culture. We strive to foster a school culture that prevents bullying behaviour by modelling and encouraging behaviour that demonstrates acceptance, kindness and respect.

Bullying prevention at Lang Lang Primary School is proactive and is supported by research that indicates that a whole school, multifaceted approach is the most effect way to prevent and address bullying. At our school:



- We have a positive school environment that provides safety, security and support for students and promotes positive relationships and wellbeing.
- We strive to build strong partnerships between the school, families and the broader community that means all members work together to ensure the safety of students.
- Teachers are encouraged to incorporate classroom management strategies that discourage bullying and promote positive behaviour.
- In the classroom, our social and emotional learning curriculum teaches students what constitutes bullying and how to respond to bullying behaviour assertively. This promotes resilience, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving.
- Our School Wide Positive Behaviours and Respectful Relationships programs encourage positive relationships between students. We seek to empower students to be confident communicators and to resolve conflict in a non-aggressive and constructive way.
- Students are encouraged to look out for each other and to talk to teachers and older peers about any bullying they have experienced or witnessed.

For further information about our engagement and wellbeing initiatives, please see our *Student Wellbeing and Engagement* policy.

## **INCIDENT RESPONSE**

### **Reporting concerns to Lang Lang Primary School**

Bullying complaints will be taken seriously and responded to sensitively at our school.

Students who may be experiencing bullying behaviour, or students who have witnessed bullying behaviour, are encouraged to report their concerns to school staff as soon as possible.

In most circumstances, we encourage students to speak to their classroom teacher. However, students are welcome to discuss their concerns with any trusted member of staff including teachers, education support staff, school chaplain and principal.

Parents or carers who may develop concerns that their child is involved in, or has witnessed bullying behaviour at Lang Lang Primary School should contact either their classroom teacher or any member of staff.

Our ability to effectively reduce and eliminate bullying behaviour is greatly affected by students and/or parents and carers reporting concerning behaviour as soon as possible, so that the responses implemented by Lang Lang Primary School are timely and appropriate in the circumstances.

### **Investigations**

When notified of alleged bullying behaviour, school staff are required to:

1. record the details of the allegations in student files;  
and
2. inform classroom teacher and/or principal

The classroom teacher and/or principal is responsible for investigating allegations of bullying in a timely and sensitive manner. To appropriately investigate an allegation of bullying, they may:



- speak to the students involved in the allegations, including the victim/s, the alleged perpetrator/s and any witnesses to the incidents
- speak to the parents of the students involved
- speak to the teachers of the students involved
- take detailed notes of all discussions for future reference
- obtain written statements from all or any of the above.

All communications in the course of investigating an allegation of bullying will be managed sensitively. Investigations will be completed as quickly as possible to allow for the behaviours to be addressed in a timely manner.

The objective of completing a thorough investigation into the circumstances of alleged bullying behaviour is to determine the nature of the conduct and the students involved. A thorough understanding of the alleged bullying will inform staff about how to most effectively implement an appropriate response to that behaviour.

Serious bullying, including serious cyberbullying, is a criminal offence and may be referred to Victoria Police. For more information, see: [Brodie's Law](#).

### **Responses to bullying behaviours**

When Lang Lang Primary School has sufficient information to understand the circumstances of the alleged bullying and the students involved, a number of strategies may be implemented to address the behaviour and support affected students in consultation with teachers, SSS, Principal and DET specialist staff.

There are a number of factors that will be considered when determining the most appropriate response to the behaviour. When making a decision about how to respond to bullying behaviour, Lang Lang Primary School will consider:

- the age and maturity of the students involved
- the severity and frequency of the bullying, and the impact it has had on the victim student
- whether the perpetrator student or students have displayed similar behaviour before
- whether the bullying took place in a group or one-to-one context
- whether the perpetrator demonstrates insight or remorse for their behaviour
- the alleged motive of the behaviour, including any element of provocation.

The school may implement all, or some of the following responses to bullying behaviours:

- Offer counselling support to the victim student or students, including referral to SSS/School Chaplain.
- Offer counselling support to the perpetrator student or students, including referral to SSS/School Chaplain.
- Offer counselling support to affected students, including witnesses and/or friends of the victim student, including referral to SSS/School Chaplain.
- Facilitate a restorative practice meeting with all or some of the students involved. The objective of restorative practice is to repair relationships that have been damaged by bringing about a sense of remorse and restorative action on the part of the person who has bullied someone and forgiveness by the person who has been bullied.
- Facilitate a mediation between some or all of the students involved to help to encourage students to take responsibility for their behaviour and explore underlying reasons for conflict or grievance. Mediation is only



suitable if all students are involved voluntarily and demonstrate a willingness to engage in the mediation process.

- Facilitate a process using the Support Group Method, involving the victim student(s), the perpetrator students and a group of students who are likely to be supportive of the victim(s).
- Implement a Method of Shared Concern process with all students involved in the bullying.
- Implement disciplinary consequences for the perpetrator students, which may include removal of privileges, detention, suspension and/or expulsion consistent with our Student Wellbeing and Engagement policy, the Ministerial Order on Suspensions and Expulsions and any other relevant Department policy.
- Facilitate a Student Support Group meeting and/or Behaviour Support Plan for affected students.
- Prepare a Safety Plan and/or Individual Management Plan restricting contact between victim and perpetrator students.
- Provide discussion and/or mentoring for different social and emotional learning competencies of the students involved, including Student mentor.
- Monitor the behaviour of the students involved for an appropriate time and take follow up action if necessary.
- Implement year group targeted strategies to reinforce positive behaviours, for example SWPB expectations and Respectful Relationships.

The principal is responsible for maintaining up to date records of the investigation of and responses to bullying behaviour.

Lang Lang Primary School understands the importance of monitoring and following up on the progress of students who have been involved in or affected by bullying behaviour. Where appropriate, school staff will also endeavour to provide parents and carers with updates on the management of bullying incidents.

### **FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Parent Complaints policy
- Duty of Care Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy
- Equal Opportunity Policy

The following websites and resources provide useful information on prevention and responding to bullying, as well as supporting students who have been the target of bullying behaviours:

- [Bully Stoppers](#)
- [Kids Helpline](#)
- [Lifeline](#)
- [Bullying. No way!](#)
- [Bully Free World: Special Needs Anti-bullying Toolkit](#)
- Australian Human Rights Commission - [Human rights in the school classroom](#)



- [Racism. No way!](#) anti-racism education for Australian schools

## **EVALUATION**

This policy will be reviewed on an biannual basis or earlier as required, following analysis of school data on reported incidents of, and responses to bullying to ensure that the policy remains up to date, practical and effective.

Data will be collected through:

- discussion with students
- regular student surveys
- regular staff surveys
- assessment of school based data, including the number of reported incidents of bullying in each year group and the effectiveness of the responses implemented.

Proposed amendments to this policy will be discussed with Junior School Council, School Council and staff.

## **REVIEW CYCLE**

This policy was last updated on June 2019 and is scheduled for review in February 2021.



## Appendix A

### Anti-Bullying & Anti-Harassment Procedures

Bullying complaints will be taken seriously and treated sensitively. School procedures for responding to a student who bullies or harasses others are set out below.

**Note:** If at any time bullying or harassment persists or is sufficiently serious, the principal may contact parents/carers and commence formal disciplinary action in accordance with the School's Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy and DET's Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidance.

#### ***Procedure for Staff***

If staff witness an incident that may involve bullying inside their classrooms or elsewhere on school grounds, they will:

- Approach the students and try to establish the nature of the incident
- Take action as outlined below, dependent upon the level of the incident
- Decide whether the incident is likely to recur in which case it should be reported to the Principal or Student Welfare Co-ordinator

#### ***Procedures for Students***

##### Step 1

Take direct personal action. The first thing to do is to try to make it clear to the person who is harassing or bullying you that you don't want him/her to continue doing it. Speak up, say how you feel. Sometimes it is not possible to speak to the person who is harassing you because it only makes the situation worse or because it makes you feel worse. In this case you should go straight to Step 2.

##### Step 2

Talk to someone you trust: Your parents, a friend, a teacher, the Principal or School Chaplain.

##### Step 3

A formal complaint will be referred to the Principal who will arrange for a meeting with the person against whom the complaint is made to:

- (i) determine whether mediation can be used to resolve the conflict.
- (ii) if mediation is not jointly agreed upon as an option, parents will be contacted to discuss other strategies to stop the bullying behaviour. Examples include: Behaviour contract, restricted play area, direct supervision whilst in the playground and suspension from school.

##### Step 4

Discipline measures will be enforced by the Principal and staff. A follow up time with victim and perpetrator will be set to determine whether the behaviour has ceased.



### **Level 1**

Where the bullying or harassment incident is minor or a first-time occurrence. All instances of suspected bullying or inappropriate behaviour must be responded to by staff

- Teachers may elect to use one or more of the following:
  - stopping the bullying with re-statement of rules and consequences and reminder of Bullying and Harassment Policy and the Student Code of Conduct
  - give a verbal warning
  - restorative questioning
  - think time /reflection session
  - private conference
  - shared control discussion
- parents and carers are encouraged to contact the school if they suspect a bullying or behavioural problem.
- parents and carers will be contacted if their child is alleged to have been bullied or if their child appears to have bullied someone else.
- appropriate and proportional consequences may include a verbal apology, writing a letter of regret, loss of privileges, etc
- public recognition and reward for positive behaviour and resolution of problems will occur as appropriate

If the student does not take control over his/her behaviour the Principal should be notified.





## **Level 2**

Where the bullying or harassment continues, or in instances of severe bullying or harassment.

- Serious incidents and/or repetitive incidents of bullying or unacceptable behaviour must be reported, responded to by staff and documented, with each bully, victim and witness spoken with once they've been identified.
- A referral should be made to the Principal who may:
  - arrange counselling support to the victim and bully
  - meet with the perpetrator to develop a Behaviour Support Plan and meet with parents of the student to discuss strategies
  - provide discussion/mentoring of different social and emotional learning competencies including structured learning activities
  - conduct a restorative conference separately with the perpetrator and "target"
- The most appropriate staff member will contact parents/carers of the targeted child. The Principal or delegate will contact alleged perpetrators unless advised not to.
- appropriate and proportional consequences may
  - exclusion from class
  - exclusion from yard
  - school suspension
  - withdrawal of privileges (including access to school's network and computers)
  - ongoing counselling for both victim and bully
- Post incident there will be:
  - Reinforcement and recognition of positive behaviours
  - A management strategy for all parties will be developed in consultation with the students and parents/carers involved and will include support structures
  - Ongoing monitoring of identified bullies
  - Ongoing communication with parents/carers



**Appendix B**

**Reporting on Incident of Bullying / Harassment –**

Staff member recording incident:

Date: / /

Name of student(s) who appears to have instigated bullying

Year/Class:

Name(s) of target(s)

Name(s) of witnesses

Did you observe the incident? Yes  No

If 'No' who reported the incident to you?

Brief description of incident (what was allegedly said or done to the student who appears to have been bullied?)

What form(s) of bullying took place? Verbal  Physical  Indirect   
Cyber  Other

Please detail:



Describe how you responded (Did you use a school anti-bullying practice?)

Describe how student responded to your intervention

**Where / when / time incident took place:**

Location:

When: before school       recess       lunch       in class       after school

Time:                  am/pm

Date incident took place: /      /

**Additional comments:**