

# Brighton Primary School

## ANTI-BULLYING Policy 1542

At Brighton Primary School our vision is to build a community of active learners who can meet the challenges of our rapidly changing world and become responsible global citizens. This is underpinned by the attributes of the IB learner profile.

The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.

IB learners strive to be:

<b>Inquirers</b>	They develop their natural curiosity. They acquire the skills necessary to conduct inquiry and research and show independence in learning. They actively enjoy learning and this love of learning will be sustained throughout their lives.
<b>Knowledgeable</b>	They explore concepts, ideas and issues that have local and global significance. In so doing, they acquire in-depth knowledge and develop understanding across a broad and balanced range of disciplines.
<b>Thinkers</b>	They exercise initiative in applying thinking skills critically and creatively to recognize and approach complex problems, and make reasoned, ethical decisions.
<b>Communicators</b>	They understand and express ideas and information confidently and creatively in more than one language and in a variety of modes of communication. They work effectively and willingly in collaboration with others.
<b>Principled</b>	They act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness, justice and respect for the dignity of the individual, groups and communities. They take responsibility for their own actions and the consequences that accompany them.
<b>Open-minded</b>	They understand and appreciate their own cultures and personal histories, and are open to the perspectives, values and traditions of other individuals and communities. They are accustomed to seeking and evaluating a range of points of view, and are willing to grow from the experience.
<b>Caring</b>	They show empathy, compassion and respect towards the needs and feelings of others. They have a personal commitment to service, and act to make a positive difference to the lives of others and to the environment.
<b>Risk-takers</b>	They approach unfamiliar situations and uncertainty with courage and forethought, and have the independence of spirit to explore new roles, ideas and strategies. They are brave and articulate in defending their beliefs.
<b>Balanced</b>	They understand the importance of intellectual, physical and emotional balance to achieve personal well-being for themselves and others.
<b>Reflective</b>	They give thoughtful consideration to their own learning and experience. They are able to assess and understand their strengths and limitations in order to support their learning and personal development.

This policy is consistent with Department of Education and Early Childhood Development guidelines and regulations. The school's Code of Conduct, welfare and student management structures and policies support this policy document. This policy will be monitored, evaluated and updated on a regular basis through the policy review process.

This policy is based on a set of rights (see below) and their related responsibilities.

Students are provided with the opportunity to develop and practise skills that will support and equip them throughout their lives. The school's Welfare Team will support students through a proactive approach.

Together we develop a values driven culture supported by the skills taught through planned, responsive and proactive programs. These include norms, the learner profile and the attitudes of the Primary Years Program. The norms action the values of the learner profile.

### **Code of Conduct: Rights and Responsibilities**

#### **All students, staff, parents/guardians have the right to:**

- be treated with courtesy, kindness and respect
- express feelings and opinions respectfully
- work and play in an atmosphere of harmony and co-operation
- expect that the co-created school norms and essential agreements will be consistently implemented and that there will be respect for the rights of all involved
- be valued as an individual
- learn in a supportive atmosphere

#### **All students, staff, parents/guardians have the responsibility to:**

- treat others with courtesy, kindness and respect
- actively listen to others
- maintain a safe and secure school environment
- manage impulsivity
- model and support co-created school and classroom norms
- develop and take responsibilities for their own actions
- value others, for their individual differences and similarities
- work to achieve their personal best whilst allowing others to do the same
- not take part in bullying in any way, zero tolerance
- report incidents of bullying to the principal or a teacher
- understand and not tolerate the participatory role of bystanders

The elimination of bullying at Brighton Primary School is everyone's responsibility. A person who is bullied does not have the problem alone because bullying adversely affects everyone in the community in one way or another. For example:

- The student who is bullied and their family, suffer emotional and physical distress
- No one is safe whilst bullying is happening. Bullying creates a climate of intimidation and fear in which effective learning cannot take place
- Students who are aware of bullying but do nothing about it often feel guilty and ashamed

Both students who bully and the bystanders can:

- become desensitised to cruelty and injustice
- fail to develop social responsibility
- and, in some cases, become involved at a later stage in workplace bullying and/or other forms of anti-social behaviour
- The way in which the school is perceived in the community

#### **Bullying - A definition**

Bullying is a pattern of behaviour by one person or a group towards others which is designed to hurt, injure, embarrass, upset or cause discomfort. It can be:

- Physical aggression
- The use of put-down comments or insults
- Name calling
- Deliberate damage to the person's property or reputation
- Deliberate exclusion from activities

- The setting-up of humiliating experiences.

*(from "Friendly Kids, Friendly Classrooms" by Helen McGrath)*

Bullying is different from simple social rejection, one off aggression/nastiness and mutual conflict.

Bullying is a repeated unjustifiable behaviour that may be physical, verbal and/or psychological that is intended to cause fear, distress or harm to another. It is conducted by a more powerful individual or group against a less powerful individual who is unable to effectively resist. Bullying occurs to some extent in all schools. The effects of bullying on both the student being bullied and the student engaging in the bullying behaviour show a need for intervention in social skills development in students and the need for the creation of safe environments.

Bullying can be both direct (open and overt) and indirect (covert). Typical examples are physical bullying, practical jokes, name calling, using email, notes and phones to send abusive material, deliberate reputation damage through rumour and exposure, deliberate and repeated social exclusion, property damage etc.

At Brighton Primary School we have a strong commitment to prevent and minimise bullying and putdowns in the school. We are committed to the use of a combination of many approaches as we believe there is no one simple strategy to achieve a safe and harmonious environment.

### **Cyber Bullying**

The widespread availability of the internet provides unprecedented opportunities to communicate and learn. Whilst most people use the internet as a powerful tool for communication and education, some individuals use the power of the internet for purposes such as posting quite personal information and for bullying and harassment. We can minimise the harm that such individuals do by teaching students how to use the internet safely and responsibly. The term *cyber ethics* refers to a code of safe and responsible behaviour for the internet community. Practising good *cyber ethics* involves understanding the risks of harmful and illegal behaviour online and learning how to protect internet users from such behaviour. It also involves teaching young people, who may not realise the potential for harm to themselves and others, how to use the internet safely and responsibly. Recommendations for staying safe while using the internet at home and at school include:

- Talk to an adult immediately if you see something you are not comfortable with.
- Be open and honest with mum and dad about your Internet usage.
- Talk to mum and dad about your different online experiences, the good and the bad.
- Tell mum and dad if anyone online makes you feel uncomfortable or scared.
- Don't give out personal details.
- Use advanced search to narrow results.
- Use internet content filters.
- Don't chat to people you don't know.
- Don't open unexpected email attachments.
- Don't follow email links you are not expecting.
- Don't follow email links that request personal details.
- Use an email junk-mail filter and anti-virus software.

### **Guidelines for students, teachers and parents on what to do in bullying situations.**

Terminology to be used within the school community:

- Avoid the term "victim" and use "**recipient**" or "**target**" instead.
- Avoid the term "the bully" and use "**the student who bullied**" instead.
- Avoid the term "weaker" and use "**in a less powerful (or more vulnerable) position**" instead.

### **Guidelines to be followed within the school community**

- All students are acknowledged and valued as individuals regardless of gender, racial, cultural, religious, physical or intellectual differences.
- The principal and staff have a responsibility to fairly, reasonably and consistently implement the Code of Conduct.
- All students are informed that if they are bullied, teachers are available to support them and to stop it from happening. Incidents must be reported to a teacher be it the class teacher, the teacher on duty or a person with whom they feel comfortable.
- All students are informed that if they witness bullying or are aware of it occurring in other ways, incidents must be reported to a teacher whether it is the class teacher, yard duty teacher or a person with whom they feel comfortable.
- All parents are informed that if they believe that their child or another child is being bullied, they should contact the school, class teacher, principal, assistant principal or someone with whom they feel comfortable.

- All teachers are informed that if they feel bullied they must report the incident to the principal. (Dated journal entries to support this)
- All teachers are informed of the procedures that must be followed if an incident of bullying is reported to them.
- All teachers have a responsibility to respond to, investigate, follow up and monitor incidents of bullying.

### **Procedures for identifying and dealing with bullying**

The staff member investigating the report should:

#### 1. Establish the facts-

- What was said and/or done to the recipient
- The time and place the incident occurred
- The reaction of the recipient
- Whether it is the first time the recipient has experienced bullying behaviour and, if not, whether the same person or group was involved
- Whether the recipient knows of anyone else experiencing the same treatment
- Whether there were any witnesses to the incident.

These facts will be ascertained using a range of strategies which best suit the child's age and emotional state. Eg. drawings, written conversations, group interviews, one on one interviews and verification techniques. This information must be recorded in individual welfare files and kept for future reference.

#### 2. Strategies the school will use to respond to a confirmed incident of bullying:

- Record any statements from the recipient of bullying
- Record any statements from witnesses
- Record any statements from the student who allegedly bullied
- Discuss a range of possible solutions to manage the situation and find a resolution to which all parties involved agree
- Advise all involved that they may make additional reports if they are not satisfied that the issue has been resolved
- Advise the parents of the recipient, and the student who bullied, of the incident
- Monitor and record the situation on an ongoing basis
- Where necessary provide support and the opportunity for counselling for the recipient and the student who bullied
- Develop an Individual Behaviour Management Plan, where necessary, for the student who bullied and the recipient, to promote and establish positive peer relationships
- Establish graduated behaviour management strategies for the student who has bullied.

3. If bullying by a student persists, strategies to eliminate further incidents will include recommendations to seek placement of the student in an alternative setting such as the Social Adjustment Centre, suspension or expulsion.

Parties involved will be advised of their right of access to the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development and Training complaints procedures or to seek external review through the office of the State Ombudsman.

Following is a summary of the programs for students, teachers and parents to promote social competency and an anti-bullying environment.

These programs develop in students the strategies that promote a caring, positive and pro-social school community based on positive relationships and include:

- \*Restorative Practices
- positive parenting initiatives
- class meetings
- an engaging curriculum
- Buddies Program
- Indoor play at lunchtime
- daily yard supervision is provided at specified times
- anecdotal records of incidents using the incident journal in the yard duty bag
- annual audits of student perceptions of high risk areas and situations done on a class basis
- planning to address issues evident in the audit of student perceptions

- Life Education Program P-6
- Student Leadership Program – Student Welfare Team
- Student elected Junior School Council
- Learning Support Programs.

**\*Restorative Practices:**

The fundamental concepts of Restorative Practice include an understanding of violation of people and relationships, resultant obligations and liabilities, restorative justice to heal and put things right and seeking to heal and put things right. These fundamental concepts have the relationship and putting it right at its core. Restorative Practice is based on an old commonsense understanding of wrongdoing and the underlying need in all of us to be connected. Wrongdoing is therefore damage to the connection, and restorative justice seeks to understand, make amends and put things right. The healing of the relationship invariably concerns all those connected to or affected by the wrongdoing thus allowing everyone to begin their “journey to belonging.”

Professional development activities focussing on student welfare issues are attended by individual teachers, teams of teachers and principal class officers.

At Brighton Primary School our norms and essential agreements, co-created with students, are stated positively and support the principles and practices of the school welfare program and endeavour to develop:

- an understanding and use of common language
- the attributes of the learner profile and attitudes
- social skills and social competencies.

These skills are defined explicitly as personal development areas, which teachers teach to, evaluate and report on to parents.

In summary, the Brighton Primary School community is continually striving for the establishment of a cohesive, supportive and inclusive culture with a zero tolerance of bullying. The implementation of a range of anti-bullying program options at all year levels provides students with strategies to develop positive relationships and contributes to the creation of a caring, pro-social school environment. Parents, teachers and students are supported by the provision of a variety of anti-bullying resources, programs, professionals and outside agencies.

Through:

- the commitment of staff as positive role models
- parent opinion, feedback and support
- student identification of high risk areas and situations
- regular review of programs and policies, our students will continue to grow and learn in a safe environment.

**Evaluation:** This policy will be reviewed annually.

**References:**

*Anti-bullying Template for Schools* by Helen McGrath

*Friendly Kids Friendly Classrooms* by Helen McGrath

*Bounce Back* by Helen McGrath

*Hotshots* by Helen McGrath

*National Safe Schools Framework* Dept of Education, Science and Training

*The Bully You Can't See* by Farah Tomazin

*Cyberethics: Be alert but not alarmed* by John Keyzers

Research Papers

*Peer Harassment, School Connectedness and Academic Achievement* by Marla Eisenberg

*A Strategy to Help Students with Bullying* by Katherine E. Gregory

*Bullying and Harassment* by Dr Donna Cross

Websites:

[www.education.vic.gov.au/wellbeing/index](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/wellbeing/index),

[www.bullyingonline.org](http://www.bullyingonline.org)

[www.bullyingnoway.com.au](http://www.bullyingnoway.com.au),

[www.ncab.org.au](http://www.ncab.org.au)

[www.cybersmartkidsonline.com.au](http://www.cybersmartkidsonline.com.au)

[www.cyberquoll.com.au](http://www.cyberquoll.com.au)

This policy was last ratified by School Council on the 17<sup>th</sup> of November 2010

### **Appendix to Brighton Primary School's Anti Bullying Policy.**

In reviewing our Anti Bullying Policy and whole school approach to student welfare, our school has followed the recommendations of the Anti Bullying Template for Schools developed by Dr Helen McGrath.

The template has five parts including:

Part A: Anti Bullying Policy

Part B: Procedures, Processes and Structures Based on Informed Practice.

Part C: Effective Management of Bullying

Part D: Implementation of Preventive programs and Strategies Based on Informed Practice.

Part E: Collection of Feedback and Ongoing Adjustments

#### **Part A: Anti Bullying Policy.**

In consultation with the school community the school developed an Anti Bullying Policy that was ratified by School Council.

#### **Part B: Procedures, Processes and Structures Based on Informed Practice.**

Bullying awareness programs continue on an on-going basis for all students at all year levels through:

- the use of norm setting and essential agreements by each class for use as a point of reference for student interactions,
- the implementation of a range of skills programs,
- the presentation of workshops demonstrating real life bullying scenarios for students to discuss and resolve.

Bullying awareness programs for teachers and parents are provided by health professionals on a regular basis. Consultants provide skills based professional development for teachers, and information sessions for parents, based on informed practice.

Teacher guidelines for responding to and managing bullying situations are developed collaboratively and are outlined in the Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy.

A commitment to whole staff responsibility for student welfare, the school has procedures in place to address student welfare issues as they arise. Confidential reporting and record keeping procedures and systems have been established and collected data is analysed to inform our practice.

The playground is supervised by duty staff during recess and lunchtimes and students are made aware of the importance of teacher intervention in welfare issues.

The students complete a bullying audit of playground areas and activities to enable the implementation of strategies to eliminate high risk situations.

#### **Part C: Effective Management of Bullying**

Guidelines for the effective and sensitive handling of bullying reports and complaints have been included in the policy. Additionally the staff is proactive in continuing open communication between all parties involved in bullying issues through the use of student interviews, follow up phone calls to parents and parent/teacher meetings to ensure all are informed.

Guidelines for the effective and sensitive handling of all discussions have been established in consultation with the leadership team, teachers, guidance officers and from feedback from a survey of parents.

Following the investigation of an incident, the staff use mentoring and coaching strategies to improve and develop their practice.

Counselling is available for the bully and the victim at a level agreed to after consultation with the parents. Counselling is also available to others involved if necessary.

**Part D: Implementation of Preventive Programs and Strategies based on Informed Practice.**

Brighton Primary School is committed to the establishment of a 'no put downs' culture. This culture permeates the school through a range of anti bullying program options implemented at all levels.

These programs and strategies contribute towards the creation of a caring and pro-social school. The programs are supported by a variety of anti-bullying resources for teachers, students and parents, which may range from reference material, structured classroom programs, texts for students and in house workshops.

The program extends to the creation of a safe and structured approach to indoor and outdoor activities including strategic playground supervision, open classrooms and library, time out areas and individualised behaviour management plans.

Underlying our endeavour to create a 'safe school', is a staff commitment to model appropriate behaviour and provide positive role models. Through the use of consultants, focussed professional development and consultation with the broader school community, a whole school approach to anti bullying is a high priority.

**Part E: Collection of Feedback and Ongoing Adjustments.**

Ongoing collection of data about bullying is achieved through the parent opinion survey, Student Attitudes to School Survey, playground audit data, incident records in the welfare book and parent and teacher observations and feedback.

The school has a proactive approach to anti-bullying that is enhanced by analysing information collected to inform the future direction of the programs at the school.