**SEATON PARK
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

ANTI- BULLYING POLICY

SCHOOL STATEMENT

Bullying, harassment and violence are hurtful and destructive. Physical bullying *can be seen.* Cyber bullying happens *behind the screens.* Not involving others or ignoring others can also be deemed as bullying. Bullying, harassment and violence continue to be issues of concern for students and their parents/guardians.

Bullying, including cyber bullying and harassment and violence, is not acceptable in this school and will be dealt with seriously and expediently.

The school will work with the school community and other services and agencies to support its students in being responsible and productive members of this community.

COMMITMENT

The school commits to being a 'safe and supportive school, where the risk from all types of harm is minimised, diversity is valued and all members of the school community feel respected and included. They can be confident that they will receive support in the face of any threats to their safety or wellbeing.'

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DEFINTIONS OF BULLYING

Bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons.

Examples:

- Repeated verbal embarrassment.
- Forced compliance by pushing or punching.
- Exclusion from usual playground activities.
- Threats forcing extorting of money.
- Repeated gestures designed to demean.

Bullying for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved including bystanders.

Harassment

Harassment involves a person annoying another person repeatedly or continually.

Discrimination

It is unlawful to unfavourably treat a person based upon their race, colour, religion, gender or sexual preference.

Aggression or Violence

Conflict or fights between equals and single incidents are not defined as bullying. These incidents are addressed within the 'School Behaviour Code'.

Cyber-Bullying

Cyber-bullying refers to bullying through information & communication technology. Cyber-bullying is usually carried out through internet and online. Events often include teasing, making fun of, sending unwanted messages, spreading rumours and defamation.

Examples;

- Email and chat room comments to tease or embarrass a student.
- Social networking sites such as 'Facebook', websites or instant messaging to display an unwanted picture or comment.
- Mobile phone to send or record messages, texts, pictures or film clips of students.

NB- Staff require students to refrain from using mobile phones to record voice or vision at school. To do so is a breach of the Telecommunications Act.

REPORTING AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Reporting Bullying

Ideally victims should report bullying to the class teacher, Principal or Deputy. However, parents often receive information first and are asked to include the following in a report to the school:

1. What happened?
2. Where and when did it happen?
3. Who was involved and who were witnesses?
4. What you suggest should be done by whom?

The school will conduct an annual survey of a sample of students to gain data about bullying related issues.

The school also documents incidents for the school, the department and its community through the Incident Management System

Responding to Incidents

There are varying degrees of incidents that may constitute bullying and the school response will be appropriate to cater for this range. The school response will focus on student incidents and adults should use the appropriate grievance procedures on the school website where adults are involved.

Responses seek to restore positive relationships and enable students to learn appropriate social behaviours. Responses will be age appropriate and involve communication with parents of both parties.

Responding to Bullying

1. Low Level Incidents

Responses at Level 1 usually address initial reports and will involve natural justice to seek an understanding of the incident and a restorative approach to assist the learning of those involved. Consequences will be applied within the spirit of the 'School Behaviour Code'.

Responses at Level 1:

1. Establishing bullying behaviour
2. Acknowledging the harm caused
3. Defining strategies to resolve the bullying
4. Commitment to repair relationship
5. Application of consequences consistent with the 'School Behaviour Code'.
6. Monitoring the agreement

2. Medium Level Incidents

Responses at Level 2 usually address repeated behaviours and will involve natural justice to seek an understanding of the incident and a restorative approach to assist the learning of those involved. More significant consequences may be applied within the spirit of the school's 'School Behaviour Code'.

Responses at Level 2:

1. Recording individual written statements from the victim, perpetrator and witnesses
2. Identifying to the perpetrator the concerns raised by the victim
3. Establishing a written agreement designed to reconcile the situation
4. Commitment from parties to the agreement
5. Application of the more significant consequences consistent with the 'School Behaviour Code' that may include internal suspension.
6. Negotiating how the agreement will be monitored and timelines

3. High Level Incidents

Responses at Level 3 usually address severe and entrenched behaviour and will involve natural justice to seek an understanding of the incident and a restorative approach to assist the learning of those involved. Significant consequences will be applied within the spirit of the Department's 'School Discipline Code'.

Responses at Level 3:

1. Recording individual written statements from the victim, perpetrator and witnesses
2. Identifying to the perpetrator the concerns raised by the victim
3. Application of significant consequences consistent with the Department's 'School Discipline Code' that may include suspension or exclusion
4. Establishing a written agreement designed to reconcile the situation and to clearly state non-negotiable behaviour on the part of the perpetrator.
5. Negotiating a Re-Entry meeting to implement a written agreement that will be monitored within agreed timelines
6. Commitment from the perpetrator to the written agreement prior to re-commencing school.
7. Referral to regional Interagency Services will be made for Level 3 Incidents.

Responding to Cyber-bullying

It is acknowledged that the Department requires schools to act in cases of Cyber-Bullying involving students outside of school hours and off site. http://www.cybersmart.gov.au

To meet compliance, the school will respond to incidents in a way consistent with other forms of Bullying and within the spirit of the tri-level approach outlined previously.

Evidence

The school requires evidence of Cyber-Bullying and will respond providing this evidence is provided. This may include screen capture, hard copy, text messages or photographic evidence.

Compounding Cyber-Bullying

As with other forms of bullying, the victim must not contribute to, or escalate, the incident. Those contributing to the incident will be subject to the responses as outlined.

Timeliness

Victims of Cyber-Bullying must report instances and provide evidence immediately. Aged evidence or information may not be accepted.

CODE OF CONDUCT

The Department and Governing Council require students and families to comply with this policy and the school's 'Anti-Bullying - Code of Conduct'.

REVIEW

The Anti-Bullying Policy is reviewed by Governing Council in December each year and a brief report is included in the school's Annual Report.