



# Bullying and Harassment Policy

## Purpose

The policy has been created to clearly outline the responsibilities of Angle Vale Primary School when addressing bullying and harassment incidents.

## Definition

The national definition of bullying for Australian schools says:

‘Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening.

Bullying can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time (for example, through sharing of digital records).

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have immediate, medium and long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders.

Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.’

National definition of bullying for Australian Schools – developed by the Safe and Supportive School Communities Working Group and endorsed by the Education Council (2018)

## Bullying has three main features

It involves the misuse of power in a relationship

Conflict and fights between equals are not considered bullying.

Bullying involves a power imbalance where a person or group of people have more power than the person being bullied.

Power can come from:

- physical characteristics like being bigger, taller, stronger or physically capable
- being older
- having more money or things
- being popular, well-liked, having lots of friends
- being in a group
- being from the mainstream or dominant culture, religion, gender identity, sexual identity

## It is ongoing and repeated

One incident of conflict is generally not defined as bullying.

But, a one-off incident might be:

- harassment
- violence
- discrimination.



These types of incidents must receive a response from school staff, using the behaviour support policy.

One act, by one person, may be bullying if:

- the one-off behaviour adds to other people's behaviours, which forms a collective pattern.
- it can be shared online to a large audience, or reposted on other sites.

### It involves behaviours that cause harm

Bullying can cause physical and psychological harm.

Physical harm may result in injuries. It can also include theft or damage to belongings.

Psychological harm can include:

- anxiety
- not wanting to go to school
- lack of interest in school
- isolation and depression.

A fear of being bullied can create psychological harm.

Bullying can have long-term and short-term negative impacts. Negative impacts can be experienced by everyone involved, including bystanders.

Bullying can impact on children and young people in different ways. This will depend on the personal resources of the individual and the support network that is available to them. This network may include peers, friends, school and family.

### Types of bullying and examples

- Physical - This includes: Hitting, kicking, tripping, pinching, pushing, damaging or stealing belongings.
- Verbal - This includes: name calling, insults, taunting, intimidation, threats, sarcastic remarks, put-downs.
- Social - This includes: social exclusion, lying, spreading rumours, unkind facial expressions or body language, mean and condescending looks, playing jokes to embarrass and humiliate, mimicking and damaging someone's reputation or social relationships.
- Cyber - Cyberbullying is bullying behaviour which is done online.

Verbal and social bullying can be cyberbullying when it occurs online. Cyberbullying often occurs in addition to face-to-face bullying.

Cyberbullying includes:

- manipulation of peer group
- nasty online gossip and rumours
- leaving people out and humiliating others
- creating sites that mock others or starting social exclusion campaigns on social network sites
- repeatedly, and for no strategic reason attacking players in online gaming
- sharing someone's personal or embarrassing information online
- inappropriate image tagging
- making demands or giving harmful instructions
- sending abusive messages, hurtful photos or videos
- altering images to create hurtful memes or fake images of someone
- creating fake accounts in someone's name to trick and humiliate them
- forcing, threatening or being manipulative to obtain nude or nearly nude photos
- non-consensual sharing of nude or nearly nude images



## Types of bullying and examples

Sometimes reports about bullying may also include behaviours that are harassment, discrimination and violence. These behaviours can be related to each other and overlap. But they can also be separate concepts and experiences.

It is important leaders and staff understand these differences and similarities. This may affect their prevention strategies and response interventions.

Bullying, harassment, discrimination and violence all create or add to a negative environment.

This negative environment can make children and young people feel unsafe and unable to reach their full potential. These negative behaviours may be displayed by individuals or be embedded in the culture of the school, pre-school or children's service.

Bullying, harassment, discrimination or violence for any reason are not acceptable. Leaders and staff must be proactive and responsive in addressing these behaviours.

## Definitions

### Harassment

Harassment is negative behaviour that targets an individual or group.

An individual (or group) may be targeted because of their:

- identity
- race
- culture or ethnic origin
- religion
- physical characteristics
- gender identity
- sexual orientation
- age
- economic status
- ability or disability.

Harassment behaviour offends, humiliates, intimidates and creates an unsafe environment.

It might be an ongoing pattern of behaviour or a one-off act. It might be directed randomly, or at the same person.

Harassment can be purposeful or unintended. A neutral behaviour can be harassment if it continues despite requests for it to stop.

### Discrimination

Discrimination happens when people are treated differently (less favourably) to others. Discrimination can disadvantage some people because of their background or personal characteristics.



People can experience discrimination based on their:

- identity
- race
- culture or ethnic origin
- religion and religious appearance / dress
- physical characteristics
- gender identity
- sexual orientation
- age
- economic status
- ability or disability.

## Violence

Violence is the intentional use of physical force or power against another person.

Violence can be threatened or actual. It might result in psychological harm, injury or in some cases death.

South Australian Police must be contacted by phoning 131 444 if a violent incident involves an assault where:

- any person is injured and first aid is administered or an ambulance is called
- it is more than a one-on-one altercation between any persons.

For an emergency, police are to be contacted on 000.

## Related Information

- [Behaviour support policy](#)
- [Online policy tool for schools – attendance, behaviour support and bullying prevention](#)
- [Student mental health](#)
- [The Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum](#)

*Information for this policy has been taken directly from the South Australian Department for Education Behaviour Support Policy and Bullying Prevention Requirements 2021*

## Procedures – What will the school do when a report of bullying occurs?

- Report bullying incidents to staff immediately. Use the Grievance Procedures to report bullying.
- The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying will be investigated and documented.
- In serious cases parents will be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem.
- The victim of bullying will be involved / informed of progress towards resolving the bullying issue.
- If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted.
- An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour.



### Outcomes – What will happen as an outcome of the investigation in to bullying?

We use a range of preventative, intervention and follow-up strategies to best deal with the situation by:

- Using Restorative Practices to repair and strengthen relationships
- Educating students on how to be confident and to cooperate and get along with others
- Encouraging students to bounce back and be resilient
- Teaching students about conflict resolution, anger management, problem solving and assertiveness training

Other consequences may take place:

- In serious cases, suspension or even exclusion will be considered
- After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

### Prevention – What does the school do as part of the curriculum?

We will use a number of methods for helping students to prevent bullying. All teachers will use the Child Protection Curriculum as a reference for teaching students the skills to prevent, recognize and / or manage bullying.

The 'What's the Buzz?' program has specific lesson plans in for teachers to use in classrooms explicitly.

Teaching students about honesty, responsibility, respect and empathy.

## Resources

<https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/>

<https://kidshelpline.com.au/teens/issues/bullying>

## Communication and review

Outline:

- This policy is available on our school website and from the front office
- This policy has been discussed with our staff, governing council members and primary students
- This policy will be reviewed in line with the Department for Education's requirements
- Policy endorsed by Governing Council Term 3 **2020**
- This Policy will be due for review Term 3 **2023**