

# BULLY PREVENTION POLICY

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## PURPOSE

Chalcot Lodge 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 Chalcot Lodge 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); and
- seek parental and peer group support in addressing and preventing bullying behaviour at Chalcot Lodge Primary School.

When responding to bullying behaviour, Chalcot Lodge 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.

Chalcot Lodge PS 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 applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our school's Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy, Student Wellbeing and Discipline Policy, Student Wellbeing and Discipline Program (Preps & Year 1 to 6), Internet License Agreement, Duty of Care Policy and Statement of Values and School Philosophy.

## Definitions

### Bullying

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.

## Covert bullying

Covert bullying can be very difficult for someone outside of the interaction to identify. It can include hand gestures and threatening looks, whispering, excluding or turning your back on a person, restricting where a person can sit and who they can talk with. Social bullying (spreading rumours, manipulation of relationships, excluding, isolating) is often covert bullying.

## Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying includes any form of bullying behaviour that occurs online or via a mobile device. It can be verbal or written, and can include threats of violence as well as images, videos and/or audio.

## Physical bullying

Physical bullying includes hitting, pushing, shoving or intimidating or otherwise physically hurting another person, damaging or stealing their belongings. It includes threats of violence.

## Social bullying

This is sometimes called relational or emotional bullying, and includes deliberately excluding someone, spreading rumours, sharing information that will have a harmful effect on the other person and/or damaging a person's social reputation or social acceptance.

## Verbal and written bullying

Verbal and written bullying includes name-calling or insulting someone about an attribute, quality or personal characteristic

# BULLYING PREVENTION

Chalcot Lodge PS 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 Chalcot Lodge PS 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.
- Through the Blast Off Program, Protective Behaviours Program and the school's partnership with the Resilience Project, teachers incorporate classroom management strategies that discourage bullying and promote positive behaviour.
- The School's Buddies Program and the Peer Mediation program encourage positive relationships between students in different year levels. 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 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 Chalcot Lodge PS

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 teacher. However, students are welcome to discuss their concerns with any trusted member of staff including Teachers, Educational Support Officers, Leading Teacher, Assistant Principal or Principal.

Parents or carers who may develop concerns that their child is involved in, or has witnessed bullying behaviour at Chalcot Lodge PS should contact their classroom teacher, Assistant Principal Mr Poliviou or Principal Monica Ghirxi on 97994455.

### Investigations

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

- discuss the allegations with the Principal or Assistant Principal;
- record the details of the allegations in writing and email to either the Principal or Assistant Principal;
- Principal or Assistant Principal will save notes in Student Files on U Drive PPS; and
- the Principal/Assistant Principal or Leading Teacher are responsible for investigating allegations of bullying in a timely and sensitive manner.

To appropriately investigate an allegation of bullying, the Principal/Assistant Principal or Leading Teacher 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; and
- Obtain written statements from all or any of the above.

All communications with the Principal/Assistant Principal or Leading Teacher 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 Principal/Assistant Principal or Leading Teacher 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 Student Wellbeing Coordinator, teachers, SSSO, Assistant Principal and/or Principal.

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, Chalcot Lodge PS 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; and
- the alleged motive of the behaviour, including any element of provocation.

Chalcot Lodge PS may implement all, or some of the following responses to bullying behaviours:

- Offer counselling support to the victim student or students, including referral to the school psychologist.
- Offer counselling support to the perpetrator student or students, including referral to the school psychologist.
- Offer counselling support to affected students, including witnesses and/or friends of the victim student, including referral to the school psychologist.
- 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.
- 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 an Individual Management Plan restricting contact between victim and perpetrator students.
- 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.
- The Principal/Assistant Principal or Leading Teacher is responsible for maintaining up to date records of the investigation of and responses to bullying behaviour.

Chalcot Lodge PS understands the importance of monitoring the progress of students who have been involved in or affected by bullying behaviour. Our ability to effectively reduce and eliminate bullying behaviour is greatly affected by students reporting concerning behaviour as soon as possible, so that the responses implemented by Chalcot Lodge PS are timely and appropriate in the circumstances.

## FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy

Student Wellbeing and Discipline Policy,

Student Wellbeing and Discipline Program (Preps, Year 1 to 6)

Internet License Agreement

Statement of Values

## EVALUATION

This will be reviewed on a 1-2 year basis following analysis of school data on reported incidents of, and responses to bullying to ensure that this policy remains up to date, practical and effective.

Data may be collected through:

- discussion with students;
- Student Attitudes to School Survey;
- DET Staff Opinion Surveys; and
- Assessment of school based data, including the number of reported incidents of bullying in each year group and the effectiveness of the responses implemented.

## REVIEW CYCLE

This policy will be reviewed by teachers in consultation with School Council, every two years or sooner if required.