

# Wantirna South Primary School

## Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedures

### **Rationale:**

The school community requires the right to attend the school feeling safe and secure. Guidelines to support a safe secure environment are paramount to prevent bullying and harassment of community members.

Bullying will not be tolerated at Wantirna South Primary School. The WASPS School Rules and associated logical consequences will be implemented in response to all forms of bullying, at any level of the school.

### **What is Bullying?**

Bullying is when someone, or a group of people, upset or create a risk to another person's health and safety - either psychologically or physically - or their property, reputation or social acceptance on more than one occasion.

### **Types of Bullying**

There are three broad categories of bullying-

- Direct physical bullying e.g. hitting, tripping, and pushing or damaging their property.
- Direct verbal bullying e.g. name calling, insults, homophobic or racist remarks, verbal abuse.
- Indirect bullying - This form of bullying is harder to recognise and often carried out behind the bullied student's back. It is designed to harm someone's social reputation and/or cause humiliation.

Indirect bullying includes:

- lying and spreading rumours
- playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate
- mimicking
- encouraging others to socially exclude someone
- damaging someone's social reputation and social acceptance
- cyber-bullying, which involves the use of email, text messages or social media to humiliate and distress.

### **What bullying is not**

Many distressing behaviours are not examples of bullying even though they are unpleasant and often require teacher intervention and management. There are three socially unpleasant situations that are often confused with bullying:

**Mutual conflict** - In mutual conflict situations, there is an argument or disagreement between students but not an imbalance of power. Both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution to the problem. However, unresolved mutual conflict sometimes develops into a bullying situation with one person becoming targeted repeatedly for 'retaliation' in a one-sided way.

**Social rejection or dislike** - Unless the social rejection is directed towards someone specific and involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others, it is not bullying.

**Single-episode acts of nastiness or meanness, or random acts of aggression or intimidation** - Single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. If a student is verbally abused or pushed on one occasion they are not being bullied.

Nastiness or physical aggression that is directed towards many different students is not the same as bullying. However, our school has a duty of care to provide all students with a safe and supportive school environment, and single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression will not be ignored or condoned. As in the case of bullying, the WASPS School Rules will be implemented in response to incidents of nastiness and physical aggression.

**Harassment** involves actions, communication, or behaviour that mocks, demeans, puts down, disparages, or ridicules a person. Physical assaults, threats and intimidation are forms of harassment.

Harassment may also include offensive jokes, name calling, offensive nicknames, and offensive pictures or objects. These behaviours can interfere with a student's ability to do his or her work.

## **Cyber Bullying**

Multimedia technologies have created new domains in which young people learn and interact. Technology such as mobile phones, SMS, in-phone cameras, emails and social media can be an effective way to learn and a great way to communicate.

## **What is Cyber Bullying?**

Unfortunately some people use such forms of technology to bully others by teasing or defaming, stalking, sending threatening or unwanted messages or spreading nasty rumours.

Cyber bullying is very distressing and can lead to students experiencing feelings of being unsafe, decreased confidence or withdrawal from regular activities. If your child is experiencing cyber bullying within our school community, in or out of school hours, it is important that you let the school know.

## **Zero tolerance**

*Cyber Bullying will not be tolerated at Wantirna South Primary School.*

Not only is cyber bullying extremely hurtful and stressful for those being bullied, it is also a criminal offence and will not be tolerated. All students have clearly stated rights and responsibilities in regards to the use of internet and email at Wantirna South Primary School. (See below Cyber Safety...Rights and Responsibilities)

In order to protect the safety of all students using the internet and email, students will not be permitted to use such technologies at school, until they have signed the Wantirna South Primary School Internet and Email Access at School: Student Agreement (refer to Agreement). This agreement is a contract between the student, the parent and the school and ensures that students commit to the proper use of Information Communications Technology (I.C.T.), internet and email at our school.

Where there is an incident of cyber-bullying, appropriate consequences will be put in place in line with WASPS School Rules and the Student Agreement.

## Cyber Safety... Rights and Responsibilities

### Student responsibilities when using the internet and email-

Students of Wantirna South Primary School will-

- take responsibility for keeping themselves and their friends safe by not giving out personal details including full names, telephone numbers, addresses and images and passwords
- be respectful in how they talk to, and work with others online, and never write or participate in online bullying
- use the technology at school for learning, use the equipment properly and not interfere with the work or data of another student
- not bring or download unauthorised programs, including games, to the school or run them on school computers
- not go looking for rude or offensive sites
- use the Internet at school to help them learn
- remember that the content on the web is someone's property and ask their teacher to help get permission if they want to use information or pictures
- think carefully about what they read on the Internet, question if it is from a reliable source and use the information to help answer any questions (Students will be taught not to copy and paste the information as an answer).
- talk to teachers or another adult if they:
  - need help online
  - are not sure what they should be doing on the Internet
  - come across sites which are not suitable for our school
  - find that someone writes something they don't like, or makes them or their friends feel uncomfortable, or if anyone asks them to provide information that they know is private.
  - feel that the welfare of other students at the school is being threatened by online activities.

### Student rights when using the internet and email-

Wantirna South Primary School will-

- provide a filtered Internet service
- embed the use of Information and Communication Technologies within the teaching and learning program
- provide access to the Victorian Education Channel ([www.education.vic.gov.au/primary](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/primary)) a search engine that can be used to restrict students to only using websites that have been teacher recommended and reviewed
- provide supervision and direction in Internet activities
- work towards setting tasks that ask your child open questions, so they can't copy and paste all answers from the Internet
- reinforce the importance of safe and respectful use of the Internet in all curriculum areas

### Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's five-year review cycle or earlier as required.

This policy was ratified by School Council on May 2020.

## WANTIRNA SOUTH PRIMARY SCHOOL INCIDENT REPORT TO PARENT/GUARDIAN

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Dear ..... Date .....

At Wantirna South we see the education of all children as a joint partnership between parent/guardian and teacher with the co-operation of the child. Our Welfare Coordinator has requested that parents/guardians be informed when we have a particular concern about a child.

Thus we are informing you that today

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As far as the school is concerned we believe the matter is closed and we look toward tomorrow as a new day.

If this concern continues we may need to contact you again by sending home a Welfare Conference Notice.

Teacher .....

I/we have discussed this matter with my/our child.

Signed .....

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### WANTIRNA SOUTH PRIMARY SCHOOL WELFARE CONFERENCE NOTICE

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Dear ..... Date .....

This is to advise you that we are concerned about

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In light of the above, we would like to meet with you to discuss this matter at the following suggested times:-

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Please confirm which of these times is suitable or contact the office to arrange an alternative time. This slip should be returned on the next school day by your child.

Teacher .....

Principal of Assistant Principal .....

Parent/Guardian ..... Date .....