



Bullying Prevention

First Developed: May 2014

**Updated: October 2016, May 2017, May & October 2018
and February 2019**

Rationale

- Every person in our school community has the right to feel safe and have a sense of wellbeing and belonging.
- Our school is committed to providing a safe and caring environment and culture which enables positive relationships to be formed amongst all students and staff and which encourages self-esteem, cooperation, personal growth and a positive attitude to learning and teaching.
- Schools must include a statement about bullying and cyberbullying behaviours in the Rights and Responsibilities section of their Student Engagement Policy.

Note: A Student Engagement Policy should include a positive statement about the school's values and philosophy, and the related programs and strategies being implemented by the school to promote student engagement, high attendance and positive behaviours see: [Department resources](#)

Purpose

- To create a safe and respectful school environment and prevent bullying, cyber bullying and other unacceptable behaviours.
- To ensure Altona P-9 College complies with DET policy and guidelines.
- To further empower children who are key stakeholders within our organisation.
- To ensure the school has in place strategies to enhance compliance with the Child Safe Standards 2, 4 and 7.
- To ensure the school discharges its duty of care towards children

Definitions

The national definition of bullying for Australian schools states:

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.

Categories of bullying include direct physical bullying (hitting, kicking, pinching, pushing or damaging property), direct verbal bullying (name calling, insults, teasing, intimidation, racist remarks or verbal abuse), indirect verbal bullying (lying or spreading rumours, playing nasty jokes, mimicking or encouraging others to socially exclude someone) and cyberbullying (direct verbal or indirect bullying behaviours using digital technologies including harassment using a mobile phone, setting up a defamatory website or deliberately excluding someone from social spaces).

Mutual conflict involves an argument or disagreement between people but not an imbalance of power. Both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution. Unresolved mutual conflict can develop into bullying if one of the parties targets the other repeatedly in retaliation.

Social rejection or dislike is not bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.

Single-episode acts of nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. If someone is verbally abused or pushed on one occasion they are not being bullied. Nastiness or physical aggression that is directed towards many different people is not the same as bullying. However, this does not mean that single episodes should be ignored or condoned as these are unacceptable behaviours.

Implementation

- The school has **zero tolerance of bullying and of harassment in any form.**
- The wellbeing of every child at the school is our highest priority.
- The school encourages all children to speak up when bullying or harassment is encountered
- The school will:
 - promote and support safe and respectful learning environments where bullying is not tolerated
 - provide clear definitions of what is and what is not bullying, including descriptions of the different subtypes of bullying
 - put in place whole-school strategies and initiatives as outlined in DET's anti-bullying policy
 - develop a Student Engagement Policy that includes processes and strategies to prevent and respond to incidents of bullying and other forms of unacceptable behaviour.
 - Involve children, staff and parents/carers in updating the Student Engagement Policy.
 - take a whole-school approach focusing on safety and wellbeing
 - consistently respond to all incidents of bullying that have been reported to the school and ensure that planned interventions are used to respond to these incidents
 - ensure that support is provided to any child who has been affected by, engaged in or witnessed bullying behaviour
 - provide regular updates, within the bounds of privacy legislation, to parents/carers about the management of incidents
 - address cyber bullying as part of its *Internet Use/Social Media Policy*
- The school will ensure the policy is easily accessible within the school community and published on the school's website.
- If circumstances warrant, the school may consider using Bullying No Way! and the National Safe Schools Framework.
- For further information, including information on sexual diversity, the school will refer to the DET resources at the website below.
- Please refer also to the school's *Duty of Care Policy*, *Mobile Phones, Use by Children Policy*, the *Student Engagement Policy*, the *Gender Identity Policy* and the Child Safe Standards.

Evaluation

- This policy will be reviewed annually as part of preparing the Annual Report or if guidelines change (latest DET update late January 2019).

This update was ratified by the College Council.....

Reference:

www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/bullying.aspx