

GUTHRIDGE PRIMARY SCHOOL

BULLYING POLICY

DEFINITION

A person is bullied when they are exposed regularly and over time to negative actions on the part of one or more persons. Bullies are people who deliberately set out to intimidate, exclude, threaten and/or hurt others repeatedly. They can operate alone or as a group.

Types of bullying include:

Physical:

Includes pushing, shoving, fighting and any other unwelcome physical contact used intentionally to intimidate or hurt someone.

Verbal:

Includes name-calling, put downs, teasing and threats. Jokes aimed at embarrassing a person are also verbal bullying.

Gesture:

Non-verbal signals used by bullies to silence or intimidate their victims e.g. gestures, threatening stares or threatening with a fist.

Extortion:

Stronger students bully others into giving up possessions, money, committing minor offences for them or forcing them to do other things against their will.

Exclusion:

Being left out of activities or groups on purpose can be very hurtful.

Telephone/Cyberbullying

Contacting the target by phone (home line, mobile, sms) or using the internet with the intention to harass or cause distress

RATIONALE

The school will provide a positive culture where bullying is not accepted, and in doing so, all will have the right of respect from others, the right to learn and to teach, and a right to feel safe and secure in the school environment.

AIMS

- To reinforce within the school community that no form of bullying is acceptable.
- To establish a caring and tolerant atmosphere, where each member of the school community considers the welfare of others.
- To establish set procedures to deal with incidences involving bullying, for both the perpetrators and the victims.
- To raise the children's awareness of their right to live, learn and be happy at school without fear of emotional or physical abuse and their responsibility to allow others to do the same.
- To raise the children's awareness that it is their responsibility to report incidents of bullying.
- To seek parental and peer group support at all times.

WHAT THE SCHOOL WILL DO

- All incidents of bullying will be noted by the supervising teacher and recorded on ztrAck database
- A set of consequences will be put in place for perpetrators. (refer overleaf to “Management of Bullying Behaviour”)
- Material on bullying, tolerance and positive social behaviours will be included in the curriculum.
- The Student Welfare Co-ordinator/Committee will be responsible for displaying appropriate posters around the school – in corridors, classrooms and around buildings.
- The Student Welfare Co-ordinator/Committee will carry out bullying surveys in Terms 1 & 3.
- Emphasis will be placed on encouraging and focusing on children who are playing and interacting appropriately, through playground awards.
- Programs that promote resilience, life skills and social skills will be provided. (Eg. *Healthy Relationships, You Can Do It Peer Activity Leaders and Buddies programs.*)
- All staff will implement the Whole School Management Program and the Bullying Policy.
- Ongoing collegiate support will be provided, and professional development arranged as appropriate, by the Student Welfare Co-ordinator/Committee.
- The Student Welfare Co-ordinator/Committee will be responsible for educating the wider community through articles placed in *The Guthridge News*.

STAFF EXPECTATIONS

Staff are expected to model the preferred behaviour – we treat each other with respect and promote a culture which tolerates differences.

It is expected that staff in classrooms will:

- Arrive punctually.
- Provide a safe and supportive school environment that encourages positive relationships between students, their peers and teachers.
- Establish expectations of student and teacher behaviour at the beginning of the year.
- Clarify the school policy on bullying at the start of the year.
- Promote the philosophy of “No Put Downs”.
- Develop an Assertive Discipline Policy with clear rules and consequences that are consistently applied and reinforced.
- Take action – step in; *don't ignore bullying* – record incidents and forward reports to Principal/Assistant Principal.

It is expected that staff on yard duty will:

- Regularly supervise “hot spots” such as the toilets, oval and asphalt area. Special attention needs to be paid to children lining up after the bell; many incidents occur at this time.
- Watch out for loners (potential targets).
- Interact positively with students. Provide the message to both targets and bullies that you are around and being vigilant.
- Issue a red card automatically for any bullying offence.
- An orange Emergency Card should immediately be sent to the staffroom for serious incidents.

Management of Bullying Behaviour

- Student interviewed by supervising teacher and given the opportunity to modify behaviour.
- Bullying incident detailed and recorded on ztrAck database.
- Normal classroom/yard management sanctions applied.
- Student counselled by Principal/Assistant Principal and parents notified. Referral to Student Wellbeing officer.
- Normal classroom/yard management sanctions applied.
- Meeting arranged between Principal/Assistant Principal, student and parents. Further consequences to be determined at the meeting. These may include behaviour contracts, yard detentions, further counselling with the Principal/AP, social skills sessions with the Student Welfare Co-ordinator / Principal/AP, after-school detention, exclusion from the yard, confinement to a particular area of the yard, withdrawal of privileges etc.
- Suspension and family meeting.

NB

- **Positive feedback (encouragement &/or positive letters home to parents) will be presented after negotiated goals have been achieved.**

SUPPORT FOR TARGETS OF BULLYING

- Students who are bullied for the first time will be referred to their classroom teacher for immediate advice.
- Students who continue to be bullied will be referred to the Student Welfare Co-ordinator.
- **The whole staff need to be alerted to developments with serious offenders, firstly to act appropriately if the child is involved in more incidences of bullying and secondly, to be positive to that child if his/her behaviour is showing signs of improvement.**
- Students will be given strategies for dealing with bullying. (Refer Appendix)

Appendix

STRATEGIES FOR STUDENTS TO DEAL WITH BULLYING

- Don't ignore it! Tell someone. If they don't help you, tell someone else until it is dealt with. Bullying is too important not to report. This includes incidents which involve someone else as the victim, not just yourself.
- If the problem reoccurs then tell someone again.
- Don't be fooled by the bully's threats to "get you" if you tell. You have a much better chance of being protected if you can say, "I've already told Mrs..... and she knows that if I'm hurt, she should come looking for you."
- Avoid joining in to encourage bullying. Being part of a group that is bullying someone else is just as bad as bullying yourself.
- Try to remain in sight of adults if you have been bullied.
- Stay close to friends or other children whenever possible. Being on your own makes you more vulnerable.
- If you are being bullied before or after school, then vary the times and routes for travelling to and from school. Be aware of the location of safety houses on the varying routes.
- Leave expensive possessions and money at home. If you don't have it with you, it can't be taken away.

SEVEN WAYS TO SAY NO TO BULLYING

- By showing you are not upset or angry, you are giving the bully the message you are strong. (It's okay if you yell or get upset later.) Taking some strong breaths will help you stay calm.
- When you let your hands hang loose by your sides, you are giving them the message that you are relaxed and you're not afraid. (Even though you are a bit.)
- When you stand up tall, you are giving the message that you're not going to be pushed around.
- When you look a bully in the eye, you are giving them the message that you are in control and they can't be the boss of you.
- When you speak in a clear and steady voice, you are giving them the message that you know what you want and you're going to get it. (Think of the voice your parents use when they say "NO" and really mean it.)
- When you tell the bully "**Stop, I don't like it when you..... I want you to stop**", you are giving them the message that you are not going to let them hurt you.

STRATEGIES FOR TEACHERS TO DEAL WITH BULLYING

- Listen to the complaints and act upon them; empathy for the target is vital.
- Avoid labelling students.
- Focus on what you want when there is no bullying – move behaviour towards tolerance and acceptance; model this behaviour.
- Encourage students to be active bystanders, to tell about bullying and to support the target.
- Hold open discussions about bullying in the classroom; teach assertive skills.
- Provide feedback to all students involved in bullying incidents, so that they are aware of the consequences that have been implemented.

STRATEGIES FOR PARENTS TO DEAL WITH BULLYING

- Stay calm and accept that all of us have the capacity to be involved on either the giving or receiving end of bullying.
- Listen calmly; note specifically what your child is saying.
- Let the school know what is happening.
- If the target, let your child know that it is not their fault.
- Try not to model bullying behaviour at home.

EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed each year.