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CYBER BULLYING POLICY

# Definition:

# Cyber bullying involves the use of information and communication technologies to support **deliberate, repeated and hostile behaviour** by an individual or group that is intended to harm others. Bullies deliberately set out to intimidate, exclude, threaten and/or hurt others repeatedly. Bullying is a clear form of harassment. People who use the internet, email, intranet, phones or similar social media or technologies to bully others are cyber bullies and are breaking the law.

**Rationale:**

1. Cyber bullying in any form is unacceptable. Cyber bullying that is carried out through an internet service, social media platforms or through mobile phone technologies is cyber bullying.  Cyber bullying will not be tolerated at any level, and consequences exist for students who choose to bully others.

**Aims:**

* To reinforce within the school community what cyber bullying is and the fact that it is unacceptable.
* Everyone within the school community to be alert to signs and evidence of cyber bullying and to have a responsibility to report it to staff whether as observer or victim.
* To ensure that all reported incidents of cyber bullying are investigated appropriately and that support is given to both victims and perpetrators.
* To seek parental and peer-group support and co-operation at all times.

**Implementation:**

* Parents, teachers, students and the community will be aware of the school’s position on cyber bullying. Teachers will be regularly reminded of their duty of care regarding protection of students from all forms of bullying.
* The school will adopt a four-phase approach to cyber bullying.

**1. Primary Prevention:**

* Provide programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution, problem solving and affirmations.
* Professional development for staff relating to all forms of bullying including cyber bullying, harassment and current DET programs.
* Educate the school community about the seriousness of cyber bullying, its impact on those being bullied and how this behaviour is unacceptable
* Community awareness and input relating to cyber bullying , its characteristics and the school’s programs and response.
* A student cyber bullying survey will be administered and acted upon annually.
* Each classroom teacher to clarify with students at the start of each year the school policy on cyber-bullying.
* All students to be provided with individual and confidential computer and network log ins and passwords. Processes to be put in place to ensure tracking of student activity on the school’s computer equipment and network. Firewalls to be installed to eliminate outside traffic into the school’s network and intranet.
* The use of mobile phones by students will be limited with consequences to be implemented for any students who use mobile phones inappropriately.
* The curriculum to include anti cyber bullying messages and strategies.
* Students, staff and parents promote school values to support the Cyber Bullying Policy..
* A vigilant and accountable yard duty roster for teachers will be put in place.
* Electives and structured activities available to students at lunch breaks e.g. FunTime Lunchtime, Chess Club.

# 2. Early Intervention:

* Encourage children and staff to report bullying incidents involving themselves or others.
* Classroom teachers and Principal on a regular basis reminding students and staff to report incidents of bullying.
* Regular monitoring of traffic on school’s computer networks to identify potential problems.
* Parents encouraged to contact school if they become aware of a problem.
* Designated passive play spaces for children to access at recess and lunch times.
* Public recognition and reward for positive behaviour and resolution of problems.

# 3. Intervention:

* Once identified each bully, victim and witness will be spoken with and all incidents or allegations of bullying will be fully investigated and documented.
* Parents to be contacted.
* Students, staff and community members identified by others as bullies will be informed of allegations.
* Both bullies and victims will be offered counselling and support.
* Removal of cyber-bullies from access to the school’s network and computers for a period of time. Loss of privilege to bring a mobile phone to school for students who bully via SMS or similar telephone functions.
* If student bullying persists parents will be contacted and consequences implemented consistent with the school’s Student Code of Conduct.

# Post Violation:

* Consequences for students will be individually based and may involve:-

-exclusion from class

-exclusion from yard

-exclusion from school activities

-school suspension

-withdrawal of technology use

-ongoing counselling from appropriate agency for both victim and bully

* Criminal charges being laid by police if considered appropriate in serious cases
* Support Structures i.e. SSSO, Child First, DHS, DET resource materials, eSmart.
* Ongoing monitoring and support of identified bullies

**Evaluation:**

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school’s three-year review cycle.

**Ratified by School Council: 2016 To be reviewed: 2019**

References: Safe Schools are Effective Schools booklet

[www.curriculum.edu.au/mindmatters](http://www.curriculum.edu.au/mindmatters)

S428-2007 Cyber Bullying

[www.bullyingnoway.com.au](http://www.bullyingnoway.com.au)

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/elearningsupportservices/www/classroom/cyberbullying.htm>

eSmart <https://www.esmartschools.org.au/General/Pages/404.aspx?oldUrl=https%3A%2F%2Fwww%2Eesmartschools%2Eorg%2Eau%2FPages%2FeSmartPortal%2Easpx>

Think U Know

<http://www.thinkuknow.org.au/site/index.asp>

Cyber Safety, Cyber Bullying and Cyber-ethics

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/safety/Pages/cybersafety.aspx>