

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Berri Primary School is committed to providing a safe and caring environment which fosters respect for others and does not tolerate bullying. We believe students have a right to be safe and happy at school.

The policy provides a code of conduct to ensure students are free from bullying and intimidation. It deals with bullying promptly and effectively by involving mediation, restorative justice, social skills programs (e.g. Play is the Way), counselling, parental involvement, warnings, and disciplinary action.

Harassment is a form of bullying and so is included in this policy.

OUR UNDERSTANDING OF BULLYING

'Bullying is recognised globally as a complex and serious problem. It is a form of aggression, involving the abuse of power in relationships. It has many faces, including the use of emerging technologies, and varies by age, gender and culture.'

Bullying can take many forms. We consider the following behaviours to be bullying:

Physical:

- Hitting, kicking, punching, pushing, shoving, spitting and tripping.

Psychological:

- Threatening either verbally or physically.
- Stalking or following.
- Making rude gestures.
- Taking or damaging something which belongs to someone else.
- Forcing others to hand over food, money or something which belongs to them.
- Making someone do something they don't want to do.

Verbal: (including technology use, Facebook, Messenger, Mobile Phones, etc.)

- Name calling, teasing or threatening others.
- Making fun of someone because of their appearance, physical characteristics or cultural background.
- Making fun of someone's actions.
- Annoying others repeatedly.
- Negative language (e.g. shut up).
- Being shut down whenever you try to speak.

Social and Emotional: (including technology use, Facebook, Messenger, Mobile Phones, etc.)

- Excluding others from the game or group.
- Spreading untrue stories about others.
- Following people around.
- Writing or posting incorrect or unwanted information about others.
- Unwanted texting, photographing or videoing of others (mobiles).

Racial or Sexual/Gender harassment may include:

- Remarks about a person's physiology, cultural or family background.
- Assault (ranging from unwanted touching to violent and verbal incidents).
- persistent and unwelcome invitations for sexual favours or social comment
- Smutty jokes, innuendo and suggestive comments, leering and ogling, belittling jokes/comments/put downs.
- Displays of sexually graphic materials.
- Suggestive comments about a person's private life or sexual/gender preference.
- Gender discrimination (eg. dumb girl/boy, you're such a girl – to a boy, being called 'gay')
- Derogatory comments based on race or gender.

Cyberbullying – viewed as most of the above delivered through means of technology, e.g. computers, mobile phones.

- Technology may be considered and not limited to chat rooms, instant chat messaging, social media such as Facebook and Twitter, email, text messages or using other web sites.

The consequences and the way we address cyberbullying is the same as any form of bullying but as there is specific legislation around cyberbullying, the police may be involved.

OUR RESPONSIBILITIES

At Berri Primary School we will:

- Openly talk about bullying – what it is, how it affects us and what we can do about it.
- Explicitly teach about the social and emotional consequences that devolve from all forms of Bullying. Including the various roles in bullying scenarios (bully, victim, bystanders), why people bully, how to support someone being bullied and the process of reporting bullying behaviour.
- Teach our children the skills which will build their self-esteem and empower them to take responsibility for themselves and give them opportunities to practise these skills.

Responsibilities of Staff:

- To model appropriate behaviours at all times.
- Explicitly teach about the inappropriateness of bullying through the Social Emotional Learning program.
- Pass on bullying information to class teachers and/or counsellors/leadership.
- To promptly deal with all reported and observed incidences of bullying as set out in the policy.
- To ensure that children are supervised at all times.
- To teach students grievance procedures and how to use them.

Responsibilities of Students:

- To not bully others.
- To 'tell' an adult if they are being bullied or if they see someone else being bullied, both at school and on the way to and from school.
- To help someone who is being bullied.
- To speak assertively to the bully.
- To use conflict resolution skills and appropriate grievance procedures.

Responsibilities of the Parents/Caregivers:

- To model appropriate behaviours to deal appropriately with bullies.
- To watch for signs that their child may be being bullied.
- To discuss with children, appropriate strategies that could be used to deal with bullies, in-line with school policies.
- To instruct their children to 'tell' if they are bullied.
- To speak with someone on the staff if their child is being bullied, or they suspect that this is happening.

BULLYING – WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Warning signs at school

If a student is being bullied at school they may:

- become aggressive and unreasonable
- start to get into fights
- refuse to talk about what is wrong
- have unexplained bruises, cuts, scratches, particularly those appearing after recess or lunch
- have missing or damaged belongings or clothes
- have falling school grades
- be alone often or excluded from friendship groups at school
- show a change in their ability or willingness to speak up in class
- appear insecure or frightened
- be a frequent target for teasing, mimicking or ridicule.

Warning signs at home

A parent may observe changes in their child's behaviour at home which they can report to the school. Their child may:

- have trouble getting out of bed
- not want to go to school
- change their method or route to school or become frightened of walking to school
- change their sleeping or eating patterns
- have frequent tears, anger, mood swings and anxiety
- have unexplained bruises, cuts and scratches
- have stomach aches or unexplained pain
- have missing or damaged belongings or clothes
- ask for extra pocket money or food
- arrive home hungry
- show an unwillingness to discuss, or secrecy about, their online communication.

It might not be bullying

Some changes in behaviour may also be a result of other student issues such as depression which may require a different response.

Whether it involves bullying or other student issues, schools can help out for example by involving student wellbeing staff.