



SORRENTO PRIMARY SCHOOL ANTI – BULLYING AND HARRASMENT POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Reviewed: 16th May 2016

Basic beliefs

Sorrento Primary School emphasises that all members of the school community operate in an environment that is both safe and supportive, free from physical, emotional, cyber and social harassment: where individual rights are respected.

Guidelines

Definition – Bullying is when someone, or a group of people, who have more power at the time, deliberately upset or hurt another person, damage their property, reputation or social acceptance on more than one occasion. Bullying includes physical bullying such as hitting; verbal bullying such as name calling; indirect bullying such as spreading rumours and cyberbullying which includes the use of digital technologies to bully or harass someone.

Rights and responsibilities of the individual – At Sorrento Primary School students, staff, parents and visitors to the school have the right to be treated with respect as worthwhile individuals. Every student at Sorrento Primary School has the right to an education in a safe environment free from bullying and harassment. This includes zero tolerance of child abuse in all school environments and outside of school hours. With these benefits and individual freedom comes a duty of the individual to act responsibly to others and within the school community. It is the responsibility of all individuals to refrain from indulging in bullying behaviours.

Implementation strategy to deal with bullying

- An Emotional Intelligence program (Bounce Back) is implemented from Prep to Grade 6. This program draws on a variety of resources designed to provide students and teachers with strategies to deal with bullying behaviours. This program aims to build resilience.
- All students and parents will sign and agree to the Internet Acceptable Use Policy.
- In the case of a bullying incident the following steps will be taken (Support Group Approach):
 1. Information about the bullying situation is collected individually from all involved.
 2. The victim's permission is sought to hold a support group meeting with the students involved. It may also be appropriate to have bystanders and supportive classmates involved in this meeting.
 3. The victim's situation is described in order to elicit an empathic response from the group. Everyone is asked to make suggestions for improving the situation for the victim.
 4. Parents will be contacted to inform them of the outcome, where appropriate.

5. A follow up (or sooner/more regularly if required) meeting will be held to review progress:
 - The victim is interviewed again to see if there have been any changes.
 - Each student in the support group is interviewed about what they have been able to do.

If the bullying situation continues and the bully/bullies choose not to change, then an Individual Behaviour Plan will be written and the following consequences will take place:

- Having 'time out'.
- In-school suspension.
- Suspension (in line with Department of Education and Training Guidelines).

It may also be relevant to involve other agencies, such as social worker, psychologist.

In order to ensure that bullying and harassment are not tolerated, we must all speak up and report cases, even at risk to ourselves.

This requires staff to:

- Be role models in word and action.
- Be observant of signs of distress, suspected incidents of bullying or bullying behaviours.
- Take immediate steps to help victims without placing the victim at further risk.
- Report suspected incidents to the appropriate staff member who will follow up to ensure that the bullying ceases.
- Inform students that the situation has been dealt with.

This requires students to:

- Refuse to be involved in any bullying situation. If present when bullying occurs he/she should take some form of preventative action and report the incident.
- Avoid retaliation. It is important to take other action such as asking the bully to stop, laughing it off or telling someone who will support you.
- Refrain from bullying behaviours.

This requires parents to:

- Be role models in word and action.
- Watch for signs of distress in your child.
- Advise your child to tell a teacher about the incident.
- Encourage your child to not retaliate.
- Be watchful of your child exhibiting bullying behaviours.
- Let your child know regularly and firmly that you disapprove of bullying. Students who come from families that oppose bullying are less likely to bully others.
- Avoid any type of bullying at home. Deal firmly with siblings who attempt to bully one another.
- Encourage your child to see the positive side to other students, rather than express contempt and superiority.
- Model and encourage respect for others. Emphasise seeing things from another's point of view.

- Encourage your child to act courageously and support any other student who is being bullied.
- Develop resilient social skills in your child, such as speaking assertively, negotiating, expressing their own opinion and using a confident voice.
- Talk to your child about the qualities associated with developing true, caring friendships and assist them to build and maintain these friendships.
- Be willing to attend interviews at school about the incident.
- Support the school's approach and work closely with the school to prevent bullying.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the 'Student Engagement Policy' where procedures are outlined. When teachers, students and parents work together on bullying, we can create a school environment that allows the student to maximise his/her potential without interference from others.