

# Anti- Cyber Bullying Policy

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## **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, intranets, phones or similar technologies to bully others are cyber bullies and are breaking the law.

## **Rationale:**

Bullying in any form is unacceptable. Bullying that is carried out through an internet service, such as email, social media, chat rooms, online game, discussion group or instant messaging or through mobile phone technologies such as short messaging service (SMS) 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 bullying is (including cyber bullying), and the fact that it is unacceptable and against the law.
- 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 bullying.

### **A. Primary Prevention:**

- Professional development for staff relating to all forms of bullying including cyber bullying, harassment and proven counter measures.
- 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 bullying (including cyber-bullying), its characteristics and the school's programs and response.
- Provide programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving through the 7 Habits and the eSmart initiative.
- Each classroom teacher to clarify with students at the start of each term the school policy on bullying, including cyber-bullying.
- 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 to outside of school hours with consequences to be implemented for any students who use mobile phones inappropriately.
- The curriculum to include anti-bullying messages and strategies through the eSmart program.
- Student Beacon team, staff and students to promote the philosophy of the 7 Habits.
- A vigilant and accountable yard duty roster for teachers will be put in place.
- Electives and structured activities available to students at recess and lunch breaks.

#### **B. 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 are encouraged to contact school if they become aware of a problem.
- Student Lounge – a designated safe and quiet place for children to access at recess and lunch times.
- Public recognition and reward for positive behaviour and resolution of problems.

#### **C. Intervention:**

- Once identified each bully, victim and witnesses will be spoken with, and all incidents or allegations of bullying will be fully investigated and documented.
- Parents to be contacted.
- Students and staff 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.

#### **D. Post Violation:**

- Consequences for students will be individually based and may involve:-
  - exclusion from class.
  - exclusion from yard.
  - school suspension.
  - withdrawal of privileges.
  - ongoing counselling from appropriate agency for both victim and bully
  - exclusion from special activities
- Criminal charges being laid by police.
- Support Structures.
- Ongoing monitoring of identified bullies.
- Rewards for positive behaviour.