

SAMSON PRIMARY SCHOOL

BULLYING POLICY

RATIONALE

We have a vision statement, which challenges us to create a learning community based on values. Each person is recognised as a unique individual bringing special qualities and gifts to share and so we all have a right to be respected and a responsibility to respect each other.

Therefore, we do not tolerate bullying or harassment in any form. All members of our community are committed to ensuring a safe and supportive environment, which promotes personal growth and fosters positive self-esteem for all. We aim to maintain a setting in which everyone feels valued and respected and where individual differences are appreciated, understood and accepted.

DEFINITIONS

Bullying

Bullying is:

- A repeated and unjustifiable behaviour
- Intended to cause fear, distress and/or harm to another
- May be physical, verbal or indirect/relational
- Conducted by a more powerful individual or group
- Against a less powerful individual who is unable to effectively resist.

Types of bullying:

	Direct	Indirect
Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hitting, slapping, punching• Kicking• Pushing, strangling• Spitting, biting• Pinching, scratching• Throwing things eg stones	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Getting another person to harm someone
Non-Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mean and hurtful name-calling• Hurtful teasing• Demanding money or possessions• Forcing another to do homework or commit offences such as stealing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Spreading nasty rumours• Trying to get other students to not like someone
Non-Verbal	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Threatening and/or obscene gestures	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deliberate exclusion from a group or activity• Removing and hiding and/or damaging others' belongings

Harassment

Harassment is any unwanted, unwelcome, or uninvited behaviour which makes a person feel humiliated or offended. Harassment can be seen as one form of bullying. The terms are often used interchangeably.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of our whole-school bullying policy are:

- To raise awareness among staff, students and parents about bullying;
- To actively counter bullying at the school;
- To provide strategies to resolve conflict and respect differences;
- To create a school environment where all students, staff and parents feel safe and welcome;
- To create a climate where it is okay to talk about bullying and ask for help; and
- To promote a positive mental health.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

RIGHTS

- Every person has the right to feel safe. Any person who bullies another is denying them that right. This means we have to think about others (not just ourselves) in the playground. The right to feel safe means we have a responsibility to consider how we speak and act towards others. Bullying takes away a person's sense of security. The right to safety means that any bullying of any kind is unacceptable.
- Every person has the right to be treated with respect and fairness. This means we show respect to other people, and their property, in the class and in the playground. The right to receive respect and fair treatment requires from us the responsibility to show manners and courtesy towards each other.
- Every person has the right to learn. This means we do not adversely affect the learning of another student.
- Every teacher has the right to teach. This means that teachers can fulfil their responsibilities without disruption.

At school it is everyone's responsibility to take the necessary steps to stop bullying behaviour. The school will not tolerate any action that undermines a person's right to feel safe, respected, to learn and to teach.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Staff, students and parents have the following responsibilities:

Leadership Team will:

- Support, promote, enact, maintain and review the bullying policy and procedures.

All Staff will:

- Be familiar with the school's bullying policy and procedures.

Teachers will:

- Be models of caring and tolerant behaviour;
- Listen to reports of bullying;
- Act upon these;

- Inform the Principal;
- Protect the person being bullied from further harm;
- Act to stop the behaviour recurring; and
- Record identified bullying incidents.

Students who are bullied need to communicate about it with:

- A teacher, a staff member or student of trust and give full details of the event and/or their parents and give them full details of the event.

Student witnesses to bullying should:

- Intervene if they are able;
- Seek teacher assistance; and
- Document the incident if requested.

Parents should:

- Be limited to verbal intervention;
- Seek teacher assistance; and
- Document the incident if requested by school staff.

MANAGEMENT OF BULLYING INCIDENTS

All parties are expected to treat each other with respect and dignity, and ensure the confidentiality of any issues that may arise.

TEACHERS' RESPONSIBILITIES

- Teachers to be familiar with the school's bullying policy and procedures.
- Teachers to be models of caring and tolerant behaviour.
- In the first weeks of each school year, the non-acceptance of bullying to be discussed in class.
- Teachers to make students aware of their responsibilities with regard to the bullying policy.
- Implement lessons to develop resilience to bullying – Friendly School and Families.
- Teach relevant strategies.
- Attend to reported instances of bullying behaviour.

ACTION

- Protect the bullied child from further harm.
- Write down name/names of bullied child, who reported the incident and bystander/bystanders.
- Interview the bullied child to see what happened.
- Suggest strategies that the bullied student might use to avoid being bullied in the future.
- Individually interview bystander/bystanders using the No Blame Approach. Discuss strategies these students might use to avoid bullying in the future.
- Record what happened on the bullying incident form. Send a copy of the form to the Principal.
- Monitor the situation over the following days.
- **Where necessary**, speak to class without using any names.

- **Where appropriate and using discretion**, work with parents of the bullied child to assist their child to avoid being bullied in the future. Keep them informed about progress and the measures taken.
- **If necessary, where appropriate and using discretion**, inform the parents of the child bullying and work with them to establish joint strategies for behaviour modification.

RESPONSES TO BULLYING INCIDENTS

THE NO BLAME APPROACH

“The No Blame Approach” to bullying is a reactive approach that gives teachers techniques for intervention.

Features of the Approach

- The problem with punishment is that it leads to retaliation.
- When perpetrators can relax because they are known they are not going to be punished they are then able to react to the victim’s feelings and problem solve.

Procedure

1. Collect information from parents/teachers.
2. Talk to others –observers, friends etc not just the bullies.
3. Interview the victim. Get them to write an account of their feelings. Reassure them that the others will not get into trouble. We are aiming to make things better.
4. Meet with the group/bully. Explain the problem and that the victim is unhappy. Don’t give details nor allocate blame.
5. Explain to the group/bully that they have a responsibility and can do something about it. The group/bully then makes suggestions/come up with ideas.
6. Group/bully to come up with a solution.
7. Further meeting with victim and group/bully to see how things are going.

NB Students not willing to follow this procedure will go straight to the School’s MSB policy and incur the sanction outlined.

CHALLENGING INCIDENTS – PHYSICAL VIOLENCE OR INTIMIDATION

- Immediate notification of assistance from an administrator or colleague – red card messenger.
- Move student onlookers away.
- Separate students with minimal physical contact.
- Apply Behaviour Management Plan (BMP) guidelines.
- Apply “The No Blame Approach”.
- Report of incident to be written up.

CHALLENGING STUDENTS

- Collaborative case management of students with persistent aggression or continued victimisation. Develop a collaborative action plan with specified outcomes (school psych and case manager/teacher).
- Problem solving strategies for dealing with disclosures.
- Use of sanctions in BMP policy for violent incidents.

SCHOOL STRATEGIES TO REDUCE AND PREVENT BULLYING

Our strategy has two aspects: prevention and management. Preventing strategies assist students to become resilient. The management strategy we apply is the 'No Blame Approach'. Although this approach is not based on sanctions or punishments, the school has a range of such measures available, up to and including suspension or exclusion which are in accord with our Behaviour Management Plan, and which may be used in response to bullying.

PREVENTION PROGRAMS

- Whole-School Approach
 - Compose a school policy for 'bullying'.
 - All staff made aware of bullying issues, student attitudes, the need to take action and of their role in implementing the policy.
 - The bullying policy clearly articulated to staff, students and parents.
 - All staff to provide careful supervision.
 - Discuss the issue of bullying regularly at staff meetings and provide training to all staff.
 - Anti-bullying material included in Health learning area. (Self-management skills and interpersonal skills.)
 - Teachers to run a universal program in the classroom as a prevention model. A cross-curricula content is utilised to provide practice in conflict resolution and protective behaviours.
 - Class meetings to discuss problem-solving measures. Focus on behaviour changes not punishment. Preventative social skills training – playing games well, giving and receiving compliments, taking risks and joining in, cooperating and respecting other people's decisions.
 - Self-protective behaviours – ignoring verbal put downs, enlisting adult or peer support, learn assertive responses, saying "no" and walking away, helping others being bullied. Change the "don't do" culture. Model and teach students to value and respect others.
 - Preventative support systems – peer support (school councillors and house captains) to assist in making the school safer by reporting incidents and assisting students who may be targets of bullying. Teach bystander students to challenge bullying. Provide safe places, mentors and group problem-solving.
 - Whole class /parent workshops /group workshops for ongoing problems.
 - Intensive small group work for students who bully (conflict resolution, anger management) and students who are bullied (assertiveness training and self-protective behaviours).
 - Teachers to be assisted in difficult cases by administrator and school psychologist.
- Rewarding positive action and appropriate behaviour:
 - Uniform award – school mascot and trophy to winning class (fortnightly assemblies).
 - House points – for good sportsmanship, fair play and appropriate behaviour (at sport and in the playground) results announced at assemblies.
 - Raffle tickets – for exemplary/improved classroom behaviour. Drawn fortnightly at assemblies.

- Tidy bags award – trophy for tidy bags presented fortnightly at assemblies.
 - Merit certificates – teachers’ awards presented at fortnightly assemblies. Recipients to have their names and group photo in the school newsletter and their work can be displayed in the library.
 - Courtesies of the fortnight – Principal to introduce the fortnightly courtesy. Students demonstrating the courtesy receive a sunshine card to take home and another which is put in a box in the front office, winners drawn fortnightly (Courtesy Kids).
- Inform the students about opportunities for incidents to be reported confidentially in a verbal or written form to staff, the Principal, parents and student leaders.
 - New students arriving late in the school year to be advised of the policy.
 - Schoolyard strategies:
 - Segregate the schoolyard into group areas (junior, middle and upper).
 - More play direction – ideas given for games.
 - Teachers reinforce positives with house points, sunshine cards and verbal praise. Listen to grievances and take appropriate action.
 - Mark out addition ‘four square’ courts.
 - Teachers to return to class 2-3 minutes before the siren goes to counter bullying on class lines.
 - Lunchtime activities – chess clubs etc.
 - Follow the school’s BMP policy.

INDUCTION OF NEW STUDENTS AND STAFF

- Class teachers to introduce new students to the desired outcomes and the prevention programs.
- Administrators to discuss program with new staff.

BULLYING

INCIDENT REPORT FORM

DATE: _____

STUDENT NAME: _____

CLASS: _____

TEACHER: _____
(Teacher/Support Staff – reporting incident)

LOCATION OF INCIDENT: _____

BEHAVIOUR DISPLAYED: Bullying Being Bullied

PHYSICAL

VERBAL

EMOTIONAL

Hitting, punching
Kicking
Pinching
Scratching
Damaging or stealing
property
Throwing things at
someone
Other

Teasing
Name calling
Insulting someone
Threatening remarks
Discriminatory remarks
Lies or nasty stories
Offensive language
Other

Exclusion from friends
Ignoring someone
Making fun of someone
Stopping someone from
joining in
Disrupting someone's
game
Other

COMMENTS:

ACTION TAKEN:

“No Blame Approach”
Parents informed

FOLLOW UP:

TEACHER SIGNATURE: _____

PARENT SIGNATURE: _____