



## Bullying Prevention Policy

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### RATIONALE

At OLGC we believe every student has the right to feel safe from bullying. We are committed to providing a positive culture where bullying is not accepted. All have the right to be treated with respect, the right to learn or to teach, and a right to feel safe and secure in their school environment. This Bullying Prevention Policy complements our Student Wellbeing Policy.

### DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological aggressive behaviour by a person or group directed towards a less powerful person or group that is intended to cause harm, distress or fear.

*See Appendix A for types of bullying and non-bullying behaviour*

### AIMS

At OLGC we aim to develop knowledge, skills, behaviours and attitudes to promote bullying prevention behaviours by:

- Taking a whole-school approach that focuses on safety and wellbeing throughout all school practices.
- Providing students with Bullying Prevention strategies that aim to promote positive student behaviour, prevent anti-social behaviour, and encourage respect, tolerance, compassion and cooperation.
- Reinforcing within the school community what constitutes bullying, and the fact that it is unacceptable
- Encouraging everyone within the school community to be alert to signs and evidence of bullying and to have a responsibility to report it to staff whether as observer or victim.
- Ensuring that all reported incidents of bullying are followed up appropriately and that support is given to both victims and perpetrators.
- Documenting any reported incidents of bullying.
- To seek parental and peer-group support and co-operation at all times.

### SCHOOL PRACTICES

Each member of the School Community has a specific role in the creation and maintenance of a safe, secure and supportive environment.

#### *Role of the Student*

- Students are encouraged to assertively indicate that they find the behaviour threatening and that it needs to stop.
- If the behaviour continues, then the incident is reported to a staff member.
- If students witness another being bullied, they are expected to seek assistance from a staff member.

#### *Role of the Parent/Caregiver*

- Parents/Caregivers are asked to speak to their child's class teacher in the first instance
- Parents/Caregivers are NOT to approach (the) other student(s) or their parents regarding any perceived bullying issue

- Parents encourage their child to speak to their class teacher about the issue
- Parent/Caregivers must work in partnership with the school to address any issues raised by the school

### ***Role of the Staff***

- Actively observe and investigate any report of bullying or harassing behaviour, documenting the incident on nWellbeing and referring this on for further action to the Student Wellbeing Team.
- Support the student(s) through the incident and subsequent course of action.
- Teach Social and Emotional Learning programs (such as YCDI, CT and Buddies)
- Work to develop confidence and trust with students, so that students feel they can confide.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

At OLGC our aims are achieved by providing a four-phase approach to bullying:

### ***a) Primary Prevention***

The school will provide:

- Opportunities to empower all students by developing their social and emotional competencies
- Professional development for staff relating to Bullying Prevention, and the strategies to counteract it.
- Professional reading provided to staff about how they can prevent cyber – bullying.
- Community awareness and input relating to bullying, its characteristics and the school's programs and response (e.g. weekly newsletter, Student Wellbeing Newsletter, parent forums and information sessions).
- Bullying Prevention messages and strategies
- Provide programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution, problem solving and communication skills. (e.g. 'You Can Do It' Education program, Circle Time and Better Buddies implemented across the school)
- Enrichment and structured activities at some recess and lunch breaks (e.g. Chess Club, Choir, Student Representative Council (SRC) activities, Science Club, Running Club etc).
- Students with resources such as sports equipment to use at their recess and lunch breaks and quiet activities to use in the school 'chill-out space'.
- Staff supervision of set areas in playground and a yard watch book to document any incidents that may occur.
- Information to ensure students know and understand what behaviour is acceptable in the student school (i.e. consistent classroom/school rules and game rules displayed around the school).
- Awards where students are recognised for positive behaviours (e.g. 'You Can Do It Awards, Student Nominated Awards such as: Super Buddy Awards, Act of Kindness Awards and Everyday Hero Awards)
- Student Representative Council (SRC) and class meetings using strategies such as 'Circle Time' to help solve problems, which arise regarding bullies and the victims.
- Leadership positions for the Year 5/6 student and leadership training to prepare the senior buddies.
- 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 are installed to eliminate outside traffic into the school's network and intranet

### ***b) Early Intervention***

The school will teach:

- Positive Bystander behaviours in students
- Students and staff to report bullying incidents involving themselves or others.
- Teachers to regularly remind students to report incidents. (Reporting is not dobbing, but seeking assistance.)

- Parents to contact the school if they become aware of a problem
- Teachers to use the yard watch book to record incidents and the students involved
- Regular monitoring of student traffic on school's computer networks to identify potential problems.

### ***c) Intervention***

The school will implement the following process:

- Observation and investigation using affective questioning with all parties involved (including witnesses)
- Documentation of student meetings on nWellbeing – all teachers are responsible
- Class meeting – establish ground rules and start the conversation
- Communicate with parents
- Mediation between students
- Peer support group
- Meeting with parents
- Coaching (both bullies and victims will be offered counselling and support)
- Put in place a behaviour support plan (see template at:
- Loss of privilege for incidents of Cyber-bullying (including restricting access to the school's network and computers for a period of time.
- If student bullying persists, parents will be contacted and consequences implemented consistent with the school's Discipline Policy.
- If staff bullying students or other staff persists the principal will commence formal disciplinary action.

## **EVALUATION**

Policy reviewed June 2013

This policy will be reviewed as part of the 4 year review cycle.

## APPENDIX A:

### Types of Bullying Behaviour

There are some specific types of bullying behaviour:

- **verbal or written abuse** - such as targeted name-calling or jokes, or displaying offensive posters
- **violence** - including threats of violence
- **sexual harassment** - unwelcome or unreciprocated conduct of a sexual nature, which could reasonably be expected to cause offence, humiliation or intimidation
- **homophobia** and other hostile behaviour towards students relating to gender and sexuality
- **discrimination including racial discrimination** - treating people differently because of their identity
- **cyberbullying** – either online or via mobile phone

### Types of Non-Bullying Behaviour

There are also some behaviours, which, although they might be unpleasant or distressing, are not bullying:

- **mutual conflict** - which involves a disagreement, but not an imbalance of power. Unresolved mutual conflict can develop into bullying if one of the parties targets the other repeatedly in retaliation.
- **single-episode acts** of nastiness or physical aggression, or aggression directed towards many different people, is not bullying
- **social rejection or dislike** is not bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others (<http://www.education.vic.gov.au>)