



# **Bullying Prevention Policy**

## **PURPOSE**

Brighton Beach Primary School (BBPS) is committed to providing a safe and respectful learning environment where bullying will not be tolerated.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- explain the definition of bullying so that there is shared understanding amongst all members of the BBPS community
- make clear that no form of bullying at BBPS will be tolerated
- outline the strategies and programs in place at BBPS to build a positive school culture and prevent bullying behaviour
- ask that everyone in our school community be alert to signs and evidence of bullying behaviour, and accept responsibility to report bullying behaviour to school staff
- ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are appropriately investigated and addressed
- ensure that support is provided to students who may be affected by bullying behaviour (including targets, bystanders and students engaging in bullying behaviour)
- seek parental and peer group support in addressing and preventing bullying behaviour at BBPS.

When responding to bullying behaviour, BBPS aims to:

- be proportionate, consistent and responsive
- find a constructive solution for everyone
- stop the bullying from happening again
- restore the relationships between the students involved.

BBPS acknowledges that school staff owe a duty of care to students to take reasonable steps to reduce the risk of reasonably foreseeable harm, which can include harm that may be caused by bullying behaviour.

## **SCOPE**

This policy addresses how BBPS aims to prevent, address and respond to student bullying behaviour. BBPS recognises that there are many other types of inappropriate student behaviours that do not meet the definition of bullying which are also unacceptable at our school. These other inappropriate behaviours will be managed in accordance with our Student Code of Conduct, Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy, Inclusion and Diversity Policy (found on the [School Website](#)).

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions.

## **POLICY**

### **Definitions**

#### **Bullying**

In 2018 the Education Council of the Council of Australian Governments endorsed the following definition of bullying for use by all Australian schools:

*Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening.*

*Bullying can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time (for example, through sharing of digital records)*

*Bullying of any form or for any reason can have immediate, medium and long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders. Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.*

Bullying has three main features:

- It involves a misuse of power in a relationship
- It is ongoing and repeated, and
- It involves behaviours that can cause harm.

Bullying can be:

1. *direct* physical bullying – e.g. hitting, tripping, and pushing or damaging property.
2. *direct* verbal bullying – e.g. name calling, insults, homophobic or racist remarks, verbal abuse.
3. *indirect* bullying – e.g. spreading rumours, playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate, mimicking, encouraging others to socially exclude a person and/or damaging a person's social reputation or social acceptance.

*Cyberbullying* is direct or indirect bullying behaviours using digital technology. For example via a mobile device, computers, chat rooms, email, social media, etc. It can be verbal, written and include images, video and/or audio.

#### **Other distressing and inappropriate behaviours**

Many distressing and inappropriate behaviours may not constitute bullying even though they are unpleasant. Students who are involved in or who witness any distressing and inappropriate behaviours should report their concerns to school staff and our school will follow the Student Wellbeing Support Plan and Follow Through Process (Appendix A), as appropriate.

*Mutual conflict* involves an argument or disagreement between people with no imbalance of power. In incidents of mutual conflict, generally, both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution to the issue. Unresolved mutual conflict can develop into bullying if one of the parties targets the other repeatedly in retaliation.

*Social rejection or dislike* is not bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.

*Single-episode acts* of nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. However, single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression are not acceptable behaviours at our school and may have serious consequences for students engaging in this behaviour. BBPS will use its Student Wellbeing and Support Plan to guide a response to single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression.

*Harassment* is language or actions that are demeaning, offensive or intimidating to a person. It can take many forms, including sexual harassment and disability harassment. Further information about these two forms of harassment, including definitions, is set out in our Inclusion and Diversity Policy. Harassment of any kind will not be tolerated at BBPS and may have serious consequences for students engaging in this behaviour. BBPS will use its Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy to guide a response to students demonstrating harassing behaviour, unless the behaviour also constitutes bullying, in which case the behaviour will be managed in accordance with this Bullying Prevention Policy.

### **Bullying Prevention**

BBPS has a number of programs and strategies in place to build a positive and inclusive school culture. We strive to foster a school culture that prevents bullying behaviour by modelling and encouraging behaviour that demonstrates acceptance, kindness and respect.

Bullying prevention at BBPS is proactive and is supported by research that indicates that a whole school, multifaceted approach is the most effective way to prevent and address bullying. At our school:

#### ***Whole school strategies***

- We have a positive school environment that provides safety, security and support for students and promotes positive relationships and wellbeing.
- We have well-established whole school values (the 5Rs) which underpin our classroom and playground norms, drive learning opportunities focussed on being a member of the BBPS community, and frame conversations that support student reflection (see Appendix A).
- We strive to build strong partnerships between the school, families and the broader community that means all members work together to ensure the safety of students.
- Teachers are encouraged to incorporate classroom management strategies that discourage bullying and promote positive behaviour.
- We participate in the National Day of Action against Bullying and Violence.

#### ***Social and Emotional Learning Curriculum***

- In the classroom, our social and emotional learning curriculum teaches students what constitutes bullying and how to respond to bullying behaviour assertively. This promotes resilience, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving.
- A range of year level incursions and programs are planned for each year to raise awareness about bullying and its impacts, including cyberbullying.
- As a Lead School for Respectful Relationships, our social and emotional learning curriculum unpacks how to build healthy relationships, teaching resilience and confidence in our students.

#### ***Student voice and agency***

- The Student Representative Council promote our school values across the school and model problem solving, restorative practice and how to build positive relationships. Further to this, our SRC are trained annually to be Peacemakers – helpers in the playground to support peers to resolve problems.
- Termly Friendship Lunches and the Better Buddies Program (Prep and Grade 5, Grade 1 and Grade 6) encourage positive relationships between students in different year levels. We seek to empower

students to be confident communicators and to resolve conflict in a non-aggressive and constructive way.

- Grade 6 Leaders facilitate Lunch Time Clubs throughout the year, focussed on encouraging multi-age play and relationship building.
- The Grade 5 Upstanders team engage in an annual project that connects five Bayside Network schools to promote teamwork in preventing and responding to bullying by being a 'Bully Stopper'.
- Students are encouraged to look out for each other and to talk to teachers and older peers about any bullying they have experienced or witnessed.

For further information about our engagement and wellbeing initiatives, please see our Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy.

## **Incident Response**

### **Reporting concerns to BBPS**

Bullying complaints will be taken seriously and responded to sensitively at our school.

Students who may be experiencing bullying behaviour, or students who have witnessed bullying behaviour, are encouraged to report their concerns to school staff as soon as possible.

Our ability to effectively reduce and eliminate bullying behaviour is greatly affected by students and/or parents and carers reporting concerning behaviour as soon as possible, so that the responses implemented by BBPS are timely and appropriate in the circumstances.

We encourage students to speak to their classroom teacher in the first instance. However, students are welcome to discuss their concerns with any trusted member of staff including other teachers, or members of leadership (including the Principal and Assistant Principal).

Parents or carers who develop concerns that their child is involved in, or has witnessed bullying behaviour at BBPS should contact the classroom teacher, Principal or Assistant Principal, by phone on 9591 0888 or email the school [brighton.beach.ps@education.vic.gov.au](mailto:brighton.beach.ps@education.vic.gov.au).

### **Investigations**

When notified of alleged bullying behaviour, school staff are required to:

1. record the details of the allegations in the BBPS incident register, via Compass Chronicle.
2. inform the Assistant Principal or Principal.

The classroom teacher, in partnership with Leadership (Principal, Assistant Principal, member of the Leadership Team), is responsible for investigating allegations of bullying in a timely and sensitive manner. To appropriately investigate an allegation of bullying, the staff member may:

- speak to the those involved in the allegations, including the target/s, the students allegedly engaging in bullying behaviour/s and any witnesses to the incidents
- speak to the parents of the students involved
- speak to the teachers of the students involved
- take detailed notes of all discussions for future reference
- obtain written statements/reflections from all or any of the above.

All communications in the course of investigating an allegation of bullying will be managed sensitively. Investigations will be completed as quickly as possible to allow for the behaviours to be addressed in a timely manner.

The objective of completing a thorough investigation into the circumstances of alleged bullying behaviour is to determine the nature of the conduct and the students involved. A thorough understanding of the alleged bullying will inform staff about how to most effectively implement an appropriate response to that behaviour.

Serious bullying, including serious cyberbullying, is a criminal offence and may be referred to Victoria Police. For more information, see: [Brodie's Law](#).

### **Responses to bullying behaviours**

When Leadership has sufficient information to understand the circumstances of the alleged bullying and the students involved, a number of strategies may be implemented to address the behaviour and support affected students, and additional supports consulted if relevant (e.g. Student Support Services, Department of Education and Training specialist staff, Allied Health).

There are a number of factors that will be considered when determining the most appropriate response to the behaviour. When making a decision about how to respond to bullying behaviour, BBPS will consider:

- the age and maturity of the students involved
- the severity and frequency of the bullying, and the impact it has had on the target student
- whether the student/s engaging in bullying behaviour have displayed similar behaviour before
- whether the bullying took place in a group or one-to-one context
- whether the students engaging in bullying behaviour demonstrates insight or remorse for their behaviour
- the alleged motive of the behaviour, including any element of provocation.

In deciding on an appropriate follow through plan, the school will refer to the BBPS Student Wellbeing Support Plan. The school may implement all, or some of the following responses to bullying behaviours:

- Facilitate a restorative practice meeting with all or some of the students involved. The objective of restorative practice is to repair relationships that have been damaged by bringing about a sense of remorse and restorative action on the part of the person who has bullied someone and forgiveness by the person who has been bullied through a reflection process.
- Facilitate a mediation between some or all of the students involved to help to encourage students to take responsibility for their behaviour and explore underlying reasons for conflict or grievance. Mediation is only suitable if all students are involved voluntarily and demonstrate a willingness to engage in the mediation process.
- Facilitate a Student Support Group meeting and/or establish or revise a Behaviour Support Plan for affected students.
- Prepare a Safety Plan or Individual Play Plan restricting contact between target and students engaging in bullying behaviour.
- Implement year group targeted strategies to reinforce positive behaviours as part of the classroom Social and Emotional Learning program.
- Provide discussion and/or mentoring for different social and emotional learning competencies of the students involved. This may also include the implementation of additional engagement opportunities such as small group social skills, as facilitated by school integration aides.
- Monitor the behaviour of the students involved for an appropriate time and take further follow up action if necessary.
- Implement disciplinary consequences for the students engaging in bullying behaviour, which may include removal of privileges, community service, suspension and/or expulsion consistent with our Student Wellbeing and Engagement policy, the Ministerial Order on Suspensions and Expulsions and any other relevant Department policy.

- Offer counselling support to the target student or students, including referral to OnPsych (external provider who works in partnership with our school).
- Offer counselling support to the students engaging in bullying behaviour, including referral to OnPsych, Student Support Services or allied health.
- Offer counselling support to affected students, including witnesses and/or friends of the target student, including referral to OnPsych.

BBPS understands the importance of monitoring and following up on the progress of students who have been involved in or affected by bullying behaviour. Where appropriate, school staff will continue to keep parents and carers informed about the process of follow-through taken, and resulting outcome for their own child as part of the ongoing management of bullying incidents. Confidentiality will be maintained at all times.

The school will maintain up to date records of the investigation of and responses to bullying behaviour.

## **COMMUNICATION**

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in our staff handbook/manual
- Discussed at staff meetings as required – standing agenda item: Student Wellbeing
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Included as annual reference in school newsletter
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

## **FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies ([School Website](#)):

- Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Parent Complaints policy
- Duty of Care Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy

The following websites and resources provide useful information on prevention and responding to bullying, as well as supporting students who have been the target of bullying behaviours:

- [Bully Stoppers](#)
- [Kids Helpline](#)
- [Lifeline](#)
- [Bullying. No way!](#)
- [Office of the eSafety Commissioner](#)

## **EVALUATION**

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years, or earlier as required following an incident or analysis of new research or school data relating to bullying, to ensure that the policy remains up to date, practical and effective.

Data will be collected through:

- discussion and consultation with students and parent/carers
- regular student bullying surveys – Resilience Youth Survey grades 3-6
- regular staff surveys
- assessment of other school-based data, including the number of reported incidents of bullying in each year group and the effectiveness of the responses implemented
- Attitudes to School Survey
- Parent Opinion Survey

Proposed amendments to this policy will be discussed with representatives of our key stakeholders: staff, students and parents.

## **POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL**

Policy last reviewed	2022
Consultation	Staff: School Improvement Team, March 2022 Students: ¾ Hub, March 2022 Parents: School Council, March 2022
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	2025

## BBPS Wellbeing Support Plan

<b>Resilience</b> Self - Management Managing emotions Goal Setting	<b>Responsibility</b> <u>Responsible decision making</u> Analysing situations Assuming personal responsibility Respecting others Problem solving	<b>Relationships</b> <u>Relationship skills</u> Communication Building relationships Negotiation Refusal	<b>Respect</b> <u>Social awareness</u> Perspective taking Appreciating diversity	<b>Reflection</b> <u>Self-awareness</u> Identifying emotions Recognising strength
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Is aware of how different emotions affect one's behaviour</li> <li>● Understands the characteristics of positive goals</li> <li>● Can express emotions appropriately (non-verbally and verbally)</li> <li>● Perseveres in the face of setbacks</li> <li>● Can set realistic <u>short and long term</u> goals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Can distinguish between positive and negative outcomes or consequences</li> <li>● Can identify situations that require a decision or solution</li> <li>● Values the rights of others</li> <li>● Can generate multiple options or alternative solutions to problems</li> <li>● Takes responsibility for decisions and actions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Can express oneself assertively</li> <li>● Understands the characteristics of friendships</li> <li>● Can comfortably act independently of others</li> <li>● Uses appropriate facial expression and body language when communicating</li> <li>● Can approach and join in with others</li> <li>● Make positive connections and friendships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Can identify the emotions of others based on verbal and non-verbal cues</li> <li>● Has empathy for others</li> <li>● Accepts and appreciates differences between people</li> <li>● Is aware that people can express the same emotion differently</li> <li>● Understands that individual group differences complement each other</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Can recognise own emotions through situational or body language</li> <li>● Can cultivate and increase own strengths and qualities</li> <li>● Can label own emotions accurately</li> <li>● Has a feelings vocabulary</li> <li>● Can differentiate the strength or intensity of different emotions</li> <li>● Can identify own basic positive qualities such as fairness and humour</li> </ul>



# BBPS Wellbeing Support Plan

<p><b>Concepts</b>          All children have the right to be safe          Bullying is repeated inappropriate behaviour          Controlling impulsivity          Stop Think Do          Mindfulness/personal self-regulation (REAP)          Community service          Rights and responsibilities          No name, no shame or blaming          Follow through and consequence</p>	<p><b>Bullying Prevention</b>          It's OK to tell          Be an up-stander not a by-Stander          Fairness rather than unfair Power          Inclusion over exclusion          Peace makers</p>	<p><b>Resources</b>          Circle time daily          Buddies          Bully Stoppers - Make a stand, Lend a hand          Says NO to bullying, friendship ambassadors          SRC - Network, skits, 5 R's award, problem box          No Put Down Zone/Stop it! I don't like it          SEL incursions          Resilience project          You can do it, growth mindset          Smiling minds          iMessages (I felt ____ when you ____)          Incident reports (compass)          Think paper as reflection tool</p>
---	--	--

FT 1	FT 2	FT 3	FT 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Reflection with class teacher/duty teacher</li> <li>● Clarifying class expectations through discussion and anchor charts</li> <li>● Restorative practice - Script</li> <li>● Circle time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Class teacher/level leader/AP</li> <li>● Time to meet with teacher at recess/lunch</li> <li>● Think paper</li> <li>● Community service</li> <li>● Parents contacted</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● AP/P involved</li> <li>● Parent Interview/SSG meetings/student mentor/ ILP</li> <li>● Withdrawal of privileges/ community service</li> <li>● Communication book</li> <li>● SSSO/ON Psych (as required)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Suspension</li> <li>● Re-entry/SSG meetings</li> <li>● Negotiated individual behaviour plan (ILP)</li> </ul>

