



BULLY

PREVENTION POLICY

Definition:

- A person is bullied when someone, or a group of people, deliberately upset or hurt another person or damage their property, reputation or social acceptance on more than one occasion. There is an imbalance of power in incidents of bullying with the bully or bullies having more power at the time due to age, size, status or other reasons.
- Leopold PS defines types of bullying behavior within the following areas :-
 - **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.
- Leopold PS acknowledges, 'What is not bullying'. 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.

Rationale:

- The school will provide a positive culture where bullying is not accepted, and in so doing, all will have the right of respect from others, the right to learn or to teach, and a right to feel safe and secure in their school environment at all times.
- This policy is a compendium to the Leopold PS 'Student engagement and wellbeing policy'.

Aims:

- To reinforce within the school community what bullying is, and the fact that it is unacceptable.
- To alert everyone within the school community of the signs and evidence of bullying and to ensure bullying is reported to staff whether a person is an observer or a victim.
- To ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are followed up appropriately.
- To seek parental and peer-group support and co-operation at all times.

Implementation:

- Bullying may consist of persistent behaviours in regard to physical harm, harassment, verbal insults or hurtful remarks, or actions designed to hurt somebody's reputation, social standing or to cause humiliation. Bullying may be carried out directly or indirectly, and may include the use of digital technologies such as social network sites, websites or on-line chat rooms.
- Our school has adopted a zero tolerance position on bullying.
- We have adopted a four-phase approach to bullying.

A. Primary Prevention- Make a stand. Lend a hand :

- The 'Bully stoppers' program forms the core curriculum resources for the explicit teaching of Bully prevention. Staff have professional development in regard to Bully Stopper and access to the '**Bully Stoppers**' website and related teaching resources. Families and students can also access to the '**Bully Stoppers**', website via the global web or www.leopold.vic.edu.au <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers>
- Community awareness and input relating to bullying, its characteristics and the school's programs and response, complemented by clear processes for reporting suspected bullying.
- The provision of programs that promote inclusiveness, resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness and problem solving will form an integral part of our curriculum. In particular, assertiveness training and bystander training that builds skills in children to challenge and/or report unacceptable behaviour will be central to our curriculum.
- Explicit teaching of 'bully prevention', strategies, reporting and discipline processes will be undertaken annually within each class thereby reinforcing the recognition of bullying behaviours (What bullying behaviours are and are not), to make it clear the bullying behaviours that are unacceptable and also to reintegrate that it is important to not label students' as 'a bully'. Annually the curriculum will include 'Bully stoppers' programs. Eg. Term 1 and term 3.
- A 'student safety' survey is administered in early term 2 and 3, to all Grade 2-6 students. Collated information is presented to teachers and team leaders. All students will be provided with an information session of what bullying is and is not and how to identify being safe in the school environment.
- The 'You Can Do It Education' program and restorative practices program are implemented across the school.
- Student School Council, student peer mediators, staff and students to promote the philosophy of '**Bully Stoppers- Make a stand. Lend a hand**'.

B. Isolated, Infrequent or Less Serious Incidents:

- All instances of suspected bullying or inappropriate behaviour must be responded to by staff.
- Parents are encouraged to contact the school if they suspect a bullying or behaviour problem.
- The school will reinforce with children the importance of appropriately reporting incidents of inappropriate behaviour involving themselves or others, and the imperative that staff responds appropriately and proportionally to each allegation consistent with the school's Student Code of Conduct, including the proper reporting and recording of the incident on our on-line behaviour tracker.
- Parents are to be contacted if their child is alleged to have been bullied or experienced inappropriate behaviour, or if their child appears to have behaved inappropriately or bullied someone else.
- Appropriate and proportional consequences may include a verbal apology, writing a letter of regret, loss of privileges etc.
- Public recognition and reward for positive behaviour and resolution of problems will occur as appropriate.

C. Repetitive or Serious Incidents:

- Serious incidents and/or repetitive incidents of bullying or unacceptable behaviour must be reported, responded to by staff and documented.
- Serious incidents are those that include physical assault, sexual assault, criminal activity involving theft or serious damage of property, serious threats or homophobic bullying etc.
- All such incidents or allegations will be properly investigated and documented. Depending upon the nature of each incident, they may be also be reported to and investigated by police, reported to the Student Critical Incident Advisory Unit, and/or reported to the Department's Emergency and Security Management Unit.
- Department of Education and Early Childhood (DEECD) expects that all parties will, when addressing concerns and complaints:
 - maintain the confidentiality of all parties, in line with Departmental policy and legislative requirements
 - acknowledge that their common goal is to achieve an outcome acceptable to all parties
 - act in good faith and in a calm and courteous manner

School Policy & Advisory Guide:

www.education.vic.gov.au/about/contact/parentcomplaint.htm

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/principals/participation/segministerord.pdf>

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers>

- show respect and understanding of each other's point of view and value difference, rather than judge and blame
 - recognise that all parties have rights and responsibilities which must be balanced.
- The school may contact support professionals such as Welfare officers, Welfare coordinators or Councillors and/or Student Support Officers for assistance and support.
 - Students, staff and parents identified by others as bullies will be informed of allegations.
 - Both bullies and victims will be offered counselling and support.
 - All repetitive or serious incidents must be brought to the attention of the principal class members of the school.
 - The most appropriate staff member will contact parents of the targeted child. Principal class members will contact alleged perpetrators unless advised by police etc not to do so.
 - Consequences of repetitive or serious incidents may include criminal charges, suspension, expulsion, loss of privileges, counselling, conciliation or any other consequences consistent with the school's Student Code of Conduct.
 - A management strategy for all parties will be developed in consultation with the students and parents involved.
 - Parents or community members who bully or harass or abuse staff will be provided with official warnings, and if necessary referred to the police, and/or have Trespass restrictions placed upon them by the principal consistent with the Summary Offences Act.

D. Post Incident:

It is important that appropriate strategies are put in place after the incident has been resolved for all students involved. Appropriate strategies may include:-

- conciliation meetings between all parties
- ongoing monitoring of students involved.
- identification of an agreed key contact staff member for each student involved.
- follow-up meetings regarding each child's management strategy.
- ongoing communication with parents.
- counselling from appropriate agencies of support officers etc for both parties.
- reinforcement of positive behaviours and appropriate behaviour strategies.

Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's review cycle.

Signed: School Council President *Debra Duncan*

Signed School Council Executive Officer (Principal)

Jan Rollinson

This policy was last ratified by School Council in....

21st May 2013