

## ANTI-BULLYING & HARASSMENT POLICY

At Para Vista Primary we believe that everyone has the right to feel safe. We are strong believers in educating our students of the importance in being an 'upstander' to support our school community. This policy explains what bullying is, how you can report it and what we will do to stop it from happening. The purpose of this policy is to provide information to students, staff and parents/caregivers about Anti-Bullying.

### **A definition of bullying**

Bullying is the use of targeted, intentional and ongoing unwanted behaviour towards another person with the intention of hurting, either physically or emotionally.

**Bullying is not 'one off' incidents of harassment or teasing.**

### **Bullying:**

- Is the systematic abuse of power.
- May occur because of people's inability to accept and value difference.
- Includes racial or sexual harassment or any other form of discriminatory behaviour.
- Can involve violence.
- Is everyone's business.

### **Examples of bullying include:**

- Having your lunch money taken away often.
- Often being left out of games or conversations.
- Being hit or kicked.
- Being bullied by SMS on mobile phones or through social media.
- Being the focus of jokes and/or ongoing teasing.
- Being a bystander by watching bullying occur and not doing something to stop it.

### **Bullying can make children feel:**

- angry
- sad, upset and withdrawn
- scared about coming to school.
- worried and anxious
- sick (e.g. headache or stomach ache) which can result in poor attendance

### **Signs and Symptoms to look out for:**

Children who are being bullied at school may not always tell a teacher about it. They may be afraid to tell, thinking that it may make the situation worse. This is why, parents or caregivers have an important part to play in helping your child and the school deal with bullying. A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied.

Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate further if a child:

- Refuses to go to school and is finding excuses not to go.

- Is frightened of walking to or from school and begs to be driven to school.
- Changes their usual routine.
- Begins to be truant.
- Has unexplained cuts, bruises or scratches.
- Has unexplained change of mood, tension or emotional distress, cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares.
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence.
- Attempts or threatens suicide or runs away.
- Has damaged or missing clothing/possessions.
- Comes home with clothes torn or property damaged.
- Begins to do poorly in school work.
- Is nervous or jumpy when a cyber-message is received.

Whilst the above signs and behaviour could indicate other problems, bullying should be considered and investigated further.

### **What should I do if I suspect my child is being bullied?**

Talk to your child about what is happening for them at school and establish whether this has been an ongoing problem for them. We encourage families to come into the school and discuss concerns with the classroom teacher, to establish whether they have noticed anything different about your child, e.g. a shift in behaviour, being withdrawn, etc.

Make a member of leadership aware of the disclosure of bullying from your child, so that they can carry out further investigations of the claim to ensure that your child feels safe at school once again.

### **Who can you report bullying to?**

- Your teacher
- A member of leadership
- Any staff member at the school
- A classmate
- School Representative Council Students (SWAT)
- A professional counsellor from an outside agency
- Your parent/s or caregiver/s
- A trusted friend

### **When to report**

- Report the bullying to a trusted adult as soon as it happens.
- Do not ignore it.
- When bullying is ignored it can give people the idea that we think it's acceptable.

### **What do we do at Para Vista to reduce bullying behaviour?**

If an incident of bullying occurs at Para Vista we use **prevention, intervention** and **post intervention** strategies.

#### **Prevention strategies include:**

- Using Restorative Practices to repair and strengthen relationships.
- Using the curriculum to teach students about respectful relationships, civics and citizenship.
- Teaching students about solution based strategies using the Emotional Thermometer & key concepts from Play Is The Way (PITW).

- Working together with members of our school community to develop policies, which promote student wellbeing.
- Teaching students about diversity and tolerance
- Providing training for staff and parents in the area of bullying and prevention in collaboration with outside agencies.
- Whole school approach to PITW and Wellbeing & Resilience training.
- Fortnightly Students Working Actively Together (SWAT) meetings with representatives from every classroom.

**Intervention strategies include:**

- Listening to those who were involved including people near by to gather all the information.
- Counselling students who have been involved in bullying.
- Talking openly with parents and caregivers about the situation.
- Educating students on how to be confident and to cooperate and get along with others.
- Using restorative practices where all parties are supported and have opportunities to talk about what has happened, how they feel and explore what can be done to repair relationships &/or 'bounce back'.
- Putting appropriate consequences in place for those who are using bullying behaviour.
- Teaching students about conflict resolution, anger management, problem solving and assertiveness training.
- Teaching students about the role of **upstanders** and how they can play an active role in stopping bullying behaviour.

**Post-intervention strategies include:**

- Monitoring class and yard relationships and behaviour to ensure that student safety and wellbeing is maintained.
- Openly discuss strategies with members of our school community.
- Planning, delivering and resourcing proactive curriculum and whole-school programs to maintain and strengthen positive school climate (PITW).
- Other actions may take place. In serious cases, suspensions or even exclusion will be considered. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted.

It is important to understand that these steps may be different for each scenario and are implemented at the discretion of the leadership staff in consultation with class teachers. This is because each person is different and every incident of bullying may be different.

At Para Vista Preschool-7 we are committed to treating everyone involved with respect and fairness.

Above all we encourage our school community to abide by Play Is The Way's Golden Rule:

**TREAT OTHERS AS YOU WOULD LIKE THEM TO TREAT YOU.**

