



Anti-Bullying Policy

At Vale Park Primary School we strive to provide a positive environment, where everyone has the right to be safe. To achieve this, we are committed to developing a culture of **Respect, Achievement** and **Participation**.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repetitive behaviours of verbal, physical and/or anti-social behaviours that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm.

Examples of Bullying:

Verbal

Name calling, teasing, putting someone down, threatening to cause someone harm.

Physical

Poking, hitting, punching, kicking, spitting, tripping, or pushing someone or breaking someone's belongings, invading personal space.

Anti-Social

Lying, spreading rumours, pranking, leaving someone out on purpose or embarrassing someone in public.

Cyberbullying

Accessing other people's devices without their permission. Using technology to hurt someone by sending inappropriate pictures, messages, or comments.

How to Act Against Bullying?

If bullying occurs, or you know someone who is being bullied, students can tell a trusted adult (your teacher, other staff members, your parents/caregivers). Parents are to speak with the class teacher as soon as possible. We teach and encourage students to be upstanders not bystanders.

When to Report Bullying?

Incidents of bullying need to be reported as soon as they happen, or as soon as possible. Bullying cannot be ignored as it can escalate.

At Vale Park Primary School we believe that:

- Calling out bullying is everyone's responsibility
- Everyone has the right to be safe
- Everyone will have supportive relationships and networks with people they trust

Some Signs that a Student May be Experiencing Bullying:

- Unexplained cuts, bruises or scratches
- Damaged or ripped clothes
- Vague headaches or stomach aches
- Refusal to go to school
- Asking for extra pocket money or food
- Tearfulness, anxiety, withdrawal, or difficulty sleeping
- Hiding information on mobile phones, emails or in comments on their social networking pages

Suggested Strategies for Students:

Being Assertive: standing up for themselves in a positive way. If they look confident when they respond, the person who is bullying will know they mean what they say.

"I don't think the comments you're making are funny."

Using humour: this can be effective in teasing situations (verbal bullying) but may not be appropriate for every situation. A strategy to use is to agree with them. For example,

"Your hair is disgusting!"

"Thank you, that is very nice of you to notice."

Avoiding the situation: staying away from the people who are doing the bullying or the place where the bullying occurs. Find ways to be around more positive people. i.e., join lunch time activities.

Ignoring the bullying: walking away and using positive self-talk to help boost confidence. For example, *"I don't deserve to be treated like this. I'm not the one with the problem."*

Asking for help: when other strategies have been tried and are not working, or students feel they cannot deal with situations themselves, they should ask for help. **Asking for help is not dobbing.**

Persist until the situation is resolved.

What do we do as a School to Reduce Bullying?

If bullying occurs teachers implement prevention, intervention, and post intervention strategies.

Prevention Strategies:

- Using the Child Protection Curriculum and our Growing For the Future program to teach students about respectful relationships, inclusion, empathy, compassion and our school values.
- Developing programs to help students participate and have a say in their learning
- Teaching children about conflict resolution, anger management and problem solving.
- Developing policies which promote student safety and cooperation.
- Teaching for and about diversity through respect, friendship and fun.
- Providing professional development for staff.
- Students partake in a bully audit in terms 1 and 3 and any issues from the audit are addressed.

Bully Audit:

- Students participate in a bully audit in Terms 1 and 3.
- Teachers work with all stakeholders on areas identified to strengthen relationships and ensure all students are safe.
- Teachers continue to monitor the situation.

Intervention Strategies:

- Counselling all involved students using restorative practices who have been bullied and the person displaying bullying behaviour.
- Talking with parents and caregivers about the situation and our school values.
- Putting consequences in place for those who bully others.
- Teaching students proactive strategies for being better upstanders.
- Ensuring all staff know how to address bullying effectively and respectfully.
- Pastoral Care services are available for students to access.

P2 growing for the future...

Post-prevention Strategies:

- Monitoring the situation to ensure student well-being and safety is being maintained. (*Scheduled check ins—formalized for all parties*)
- Talking with parents and caregivers about strategies.
- Reviewing existing policies to make sure they are effective.

What Can Witnesses of Bullying Do?

If a student sees someone that is being bullied, they can:

- Ask a teacher or support person for help.
- Let the person displaying bullying behaviour know what they are doing is bullying.
- Refuse to join in with the person who is bullying and walk away.
- Support the person who is being bullied.

What can parents do if their child is bullied?

- When you first talk with your child about bullying, be prepared to listen without judgment, and provide a safe and supportive place where your child can work through their feelings.
- It is important to learn as much as possible about the situation, such as how long the behaviour has been happening, who has been involved, and what steps have been taken. Encourage your child to talk and let them know they are not alone, and you are there to help.
- Parents are to contact the school. This involves approaching the child's teacher first and the child's teacher will contact leadership if required.
- Be prepared to work with your child, their teachers, and the school leaders to address the issue.

What do staff members do about incidents of bullying?

We form trusting relationships where we:

- Listen and talk to both the person who has been bullied and the person who has bullied others, using restorative practices.
- Implement consequences for the person who has been bullying others. These may include family counselling meetings, office time out, suspension or exclusion. Consequences may vary depending on the situation.
- Support the person who has been bullied and the person using bullying behaviour.
- Use a process to help everyone involved to co-operate in order to improve their relationships with others.
- Record details on EMS.

What does a 'bully free' environment look like?

- Students cooperate and include others in activities.
- Students help each other by showing respect.
- Students are safe to learn in an environment where it's okay to take risks.
- Students trust their friends to display honesty at all times.

- Everyone's values and opinions are respected, valued and listened to.
- Students are confident to call out inappropriate behaviour.

For further information about bullying, visit:

www.ncab.org.au
www.bullyingnoway.gov.au
www.cybersmart.gov.au
www.kidshelpline.com.au

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