Carnegie Primary School
BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY

Purpose

Carnegie Primary School 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 Carnegie Primary School community
- make clear that all forms of bullying at Carnegie Primary School will not be tolerated
- outline the strategies and programs in place at Carnegie Primary School 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 Carnegie Primary School.

When responding to bullying behaviour, Carnegie Primary School aims to:

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

Carnegie Primary School 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 Carnegie Primary School aims to prevent and respond to student bullying behaviour. Carnegie Primary School 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 Wellbeing and Engagement Policy and Inclusion and Inclusion and Diversity Policy.

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 and](#) [Engagement Policy](#) [Code of Conduct](#).

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. Carnegie Primary School will use its [Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy](#) 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 Carnegie Primary School and may have serious consequences for students engaging in this behaviour. Carnegie Primary School 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

Carnegie Primary School 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 Carnegie Primary School is proactive and is supported by research that indicates that a whole school, multifaceted approach is the most effect way to prevent and address bullying. At our school:

- We have a positive school environment that provides safety, security and support for students and promotes positive relationships and wellbeing.
- 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.
- A range of year level incursions and programs are planned for each year to raise awareness about bullying and its impacts.
- 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.
- The Bounce Back and Respectful Relationships programs 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.
- 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.
- We clearly define within the school community what bullying is, and the fact that it is unacceptable.
- We educate 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.
- We ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are followed up appropriately and that support is given to both victims and wrong doers as well as their families.
- We seek staff, parental and peer-group support and co-operation at all times.

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

Incident Response

Reporting concerns to Carnegie Primary School

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 Carnegie Primary School are timely and appropriate in the circumstances.

We encourage students to speak to their teacher, Wellbeing Leader or Assistant Principal. However, students are welcome to discuss their concerns with any trusted member of staff.

Parents or carers who develop concerns that their child is involved in, or has witnessed bullying behaviour at Carnegie Primary School should contact Karen Bentata-Grimm, Assistant Principal on 9571 2662 or email Karen.bentata-grimm@education.vic.gov.au. Alternatively, they can contact Liz Harley, Wellbeing Leader on 9571 2662 or email Elizabeth.harley@education.vic.gov.au

Investigations

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

1. record the details of the allegations in Compass and
2. inform the Wellbeing Leader, Assistant Principal and Principal

The Assistant Principal or Wellbeing Leader is responsible for investigating allegations of bullying in a timely and sensitive manner. To appropriately investigate an allegation of bullying, the Wellbeing Leader or Assistant Principal 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 from all or any of the above.

All communications with the Wellbeing Leader or Assistant Principal 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 the Wellbeing Leader or Assistant Principal 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 in consultation with the Principal, Student Wellbeing Team, and teachers.

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, Carnegie Primary School 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.

The Wellbeing Leader or Assistant Principal may implement all, or some of the following responses to bullying behaviours:

- Offer counselling support to the target student or students, including referral to the Student Wellbeing Team, SSS.
- Offer counselling support to the students engaging in bullying behaviour, including referral to the Student Wellbeing Team, SSS.
- Offer counselling support to affected students, including witnesses and/or friends of the target student, including referral to the Student Wellbeing Team, SSS.
- 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.
- 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 process using the Support Group Method, involving the target student(s), the students engaging in bullying behaviour and a group of students who are likely to be supportive of the target(s).
- Implement a Method of Shared Concern process with all students involved in the bullying.
- Facilitate a Student Support Group meeting and/or Behaviour Support Plan for affected students.
- Prepare a Safety Plan or Individual Management Plan restricting contact between target and students engaging in bullying behaviour.
- Provide discussion and/or mentoring for different social and emotional learning competencies of the students involved.
- Monitor the behaviour of the students involved for an appropriate time and take follow up action if necessary.
- Implement year group targeted strategies to reinforce positive behaviours
- Implement disciplinary consequences for the students engaging in bullying behaviour, which may include removal of privileges, detention, 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.

Carnegie Primary School 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 also endeavour to provide parents and carers with updates on the management of bullying incidents.

The Wellbeing Leader and Assistant Principal are responsible for maintaining up to date records of the investigation of and responses to bullying behaviour.

Further Information and Resources

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- [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:

- [Kids Helpline](#)
- [Lifeline](#)
- [Bullying. No way!](#)
- [Student Wellbeing Hub](#)
- [Office of the eSafety Commissioner](#)
- [Australian Student Wellbeing Framework](#)

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
- student bullying surveys
- 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 Student Wellbeing team and school council.

Review cycle

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	31/08/2021
Consultation	Leadership Team, Consultative Team, School Council
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	September 2023

Appendix 1.

What can we do about bullying?

Children will try to:
• Stand up for themselves. Use a strong voice and look the person in the eyes.
• Report any problems to a teacher.
• Not retaliate with kicks/punches or rude words as they may find themselves with a consequence also.

People who bully have problems of their own; so don't make their problems your problems.

Parents will… if your child is affected by bullying

• Advise your child to act assertively; children need to stand up for themselves when bullying occurs.
• Advise your child not to retaliate and then explain the possible negative consequences of such actions.
• Advise your child to report incidents of bullying to a teacher in a timely manner. Whenever possible, encourage your child to report the incident himself or herself. Children gain more self-respect by taking the initiative themselves rather than relying on a parent for action.
• Understand that being bullied is NOT part of growing up. Bullying is never acceptable behaviour.

Parents will… if your child is participating in bullying behaviour

• Show support for the school's consequences for bullying.
• Let your child know that bullying is totally unacceptable because it affects the rights of others
• Emphasise to your child that school should be a safe place for everyone, regardless of the differences between people: no one deserves to be bullied because they speak, look or act differently or in any way that 'you don't like.'
• Show your support for the victim: speak to your child about how the victim may feel because of your child's actions.
• Support and foster respect for each person's contributions, acknowledge differences of opinion, and a culture of cooperation. This, above all else, is the strongest antidote to bullying.
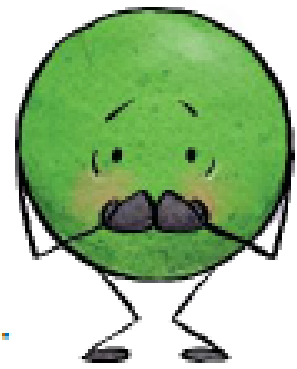
The school will… for the persons affected by bullying

• Clarify the facts.
• Discuss the incidents with the student/s concerned. (Restorative Practices)
• Make sure the victim of the bullying situation has been looked after and been given some strategies to deal with the situation.
• Provide appropriate support.
• Make sure the class teacher, other staff and a school leader have been informed.
• Contact parents.

The school will … for the child engaging in bullying behaviour

• Clarify the facts.
• Discuss the incident.
• Link actions to consequences.
• Restate the school rules and responsibilities on discipline and acceptable behaviour.
• Negotiate reconciliation or a change of attitude. (Restorative Practices)
• Discuss strategies to manage behaviour.
• Provide appropriate support.
• If warning is not heeded, take action: time out, behaviour management plan or suspension as required.
• Make sure the class teacher and a school leader have been informed.
• Contact parents.

What bullying is and isn't.

Bullying is when someone:

- Teases someone else in a mean and unkind way <u>more than once</u>.
- Says, writes or does, mean things that hurt another's body, their things or their feelings.
- Tries to stop them from joining in and being liked.

It's NOT bullying if someone just has an argument, or says or does something nasty just once.

<u>When you're being bullied, you don't feel safe.</u>

What bullying is and isn't.

Bullying means trying to hurt another person <u>on purpose</u> and <u>more than once</u>.

It may involve:

- Hurting someone physically
- Calling them nasty names
- Using putdowns or embarrassing them in front of others
- Saying mean things or spreading nasty rumours about them
- Playing nasty jokes on them
- Trying to make sure they are left out
- Trying to stop others from liking them

When technology is used to bully, it is referred to as cyberbullying.

It's NOT bullying if someone just has an argument, or says or does something nasty just once.

Bullying is NOT OK at Carnegie Primary School

Bullying is not acceptable.

It is unkind, cruel and unfair to bully someone.

All teachers will act quickly to stop it once they know it is happening.

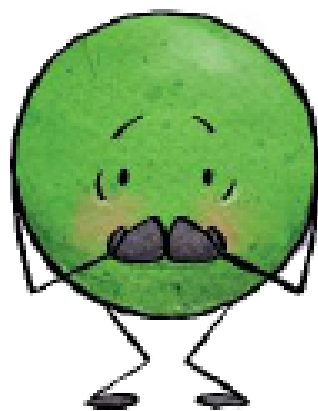Everyone in our school has the right to feel safe and be safe from being bullied.

Put-downs are also unacceptable as they can lead to bullying. A put-down is a deliberately mean remark or gesture that tries to belittle (make them look small, bad or silly). Put-downs are mean, unkind and anti-social (i.e against the accepted rules of our society).
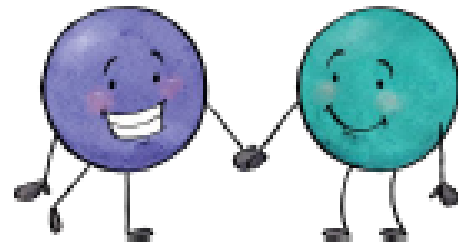
Bullying is harmful

Bullying hurts the person being bullied.

It damages the wellbeing of the person being bullied.

They may not feel safe at school and their school work is often affected too.

Be an Upstander,
Speak Up about Bullying

Teachers at Carnegie Primary School care about the wellbeing of all students, and they want to know when bullying is happening.

Then they can stop it and help the students involved.

Please be brave and be responsible, let a teacher know if you are being bullied or if someone else is being bullied.

It takes courage and kindness to do this and it is the right thing to do to make our school caring and safe.