



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the principal on 94798000

Bullying Prevention Policy

Purpose

Davis Creek Primary School is committed to providing a safe and respectful learning environment, where bullying will not be tolerated. Davis Creek Primary School will emphasise equally the importance of a balanced curriculum that emphasises equally the art and science of teaching. We recognise the development of the whole child and this includes supporting them to build strong social networks, feel confident as learners and manage the challenging and difficult emotions that will certainly arise when faced with the unknown. A strength-based approach is the focus of our curriculum.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- explain the definition of bullying to all stakeholders so that there is shared understanding amongst all members of the Davis Creek Primary School community
- make clear that no form of bullying at Davis Creek Primary School will be tolerated. Our school values of **C**uriosity, **A**gency, **R**espect and **E**xcellence will be taught explicitly and guide how we behave and act in order to have a safe and orderly school environment. We have zero tolerance to any form of bullying
- outline the strategies and programs in place at Davis Creek Primary School to build a positive school culture and prevent bullying behaviour including the Primary Years Program supported by the Berry Street Education Model
- promote the school's motto *stronger together* and therefore emphasise that everyone in our school community must be alert to signs and evidence of bullying behaviour, and accept responsibility to report bullying behaviour to school staff so that everyone feels safe
- ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are appropriately investigated, addressed and recorded in a timely manner.
- 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 Davis Creek Primary School.

When responding to bullying behaviour, Davis Creek Primary School 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.

School staff at Davis Creek Primary School owe a duty of care to students. We seek to educate all children around the development of positive relationships in order to reduce the risk of reasonably foreseeable harm, which can include harm that may be caused by bullying behaviour. We are stronger together when everyone is respectful, kind and empathetic.

Scope

This policy addresses how Davis Creek Primary School aims to prevent, address and respond to student bullying behaviour in a timely manner. Davis Creek 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 School Engagement, Safe Behaviour and Wellbeing Policy.

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

Policy

Definitions

What is 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.

Bullying can be a form of racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia or other type of social prejudice when the behaviours is targeted at an individual or group because of a personal characteristic such as race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability.

For further information about bullying, refer to: [Bully Stoppers \(education.vic.gov.au\)](http://education.vic.gov.au) and the Department's [Bullying Prevention and Response](#) policy in the Policy and Advisory Library.

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 Engagement, Safe Behaviour and Wellbeing Policy.

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. Davis Creek Primary School will use its Student Engagement, Safe Behaviour and Wellbeing 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.

Discrimination is behaviour that treats someone unfavourably because of a personal characteristic (for example, race, religious belief or activity, disability, sex or intersex status, gender identity or sexual orientation).

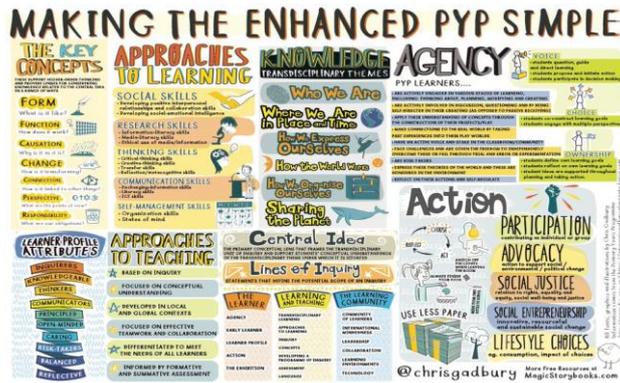
Discrimination, harassment, and any other inappropriate behaviour is not tolerated at our school and there may be serious consequences for students engaging in this behaviour. This includes any form of racism, religious or disability discrimination, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, or any other behaviour that targets an individual or group. Further information about discrimination and harassment, including definitions, is set out in our Inclusion and Diversity Policy.

Bullying Prevention

Davis Creek 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, encouraging and teaching behaviour that demonstrates positive and respectful relationships.

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

- Our curriculum framework is purposefully designed to support the sequential development of students' physical, psychological, social and emotional capabilities. All staff will also be trained to implement the *Berry Street Education Model* which emphasises five domains (Body, Relationships, Stamina, Engagement and Character) which will support teachers to develop and breadth of strategies. We are focused on the development of the whole child. It is designed to be responsive to the needs of children and young people as these needs emerge. In the classroom, our social and emotional learning curriculum teaches students what constitutes bullying and how to respond to bullying behaviour assertively. Strong lines of inquiry will be developed to support deep learning around the transdisciplinary theme 'Who we are'.



- We create a positive school environment that provides safety, security and support for students and promotes positive relationships and wellbeing. This includes developing Classroom Essential Agreements and explicitly teaching the school expectations that are outlined in the Student Engagement, Behaviour Management and Wellbeing Policy. These agreements are developed and aligned to the school values **C**uriosity, **A**gency, **R**espect and **E**xcellence. The overarching value of our school is C.A.R.E. displayed in each learning space will be the school's values and expectations of behaviour so we can live our values and also have consistent expectations at Davis Creek Primary School.
- The school will have a wellbeing team consisting of the Principal and Assistant Principal and the P.L.C leaders of each area. At each P.L.C meeting, time will be set aside to discuss the following questions: Where are we at right now? (What are students' current needs? How can I best support them?) Where do we want to go? (What are our students' needs for growth?) Teachers will use each of the five areas of the Berry Street Education Model to identify strategies and recommendations to inform classroom practice.
- 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. Our partnerships are supported by Codes of Conduct for all stakeholders that are designed around our core school values and based on the acronym of C.A.R.E.
- Each year a range of incursions and programs will be planned to educate and support students to understand and raise awareness about bullying and its impacts.
- The School Buddy Program and the explicit teaching of social and emotional learning skills encourage positive relationships between students in different year levels.
- As part of the school's values system, we promote and celebrate a culture of care through encouraging students to look out for each other and to talk to teachers and older peers about any bullying they have experienced or witnessed. We have a Student Support Space where children can go if they are feeling unsafe during recess and lunch times. A member of the school's leadership team will staff this space during break times. This supports our building of relationships with students at the school.
- We participate and celebrate cultural days, National Day of Action against Bullying, Reconciliation Week and Harmony Day to promote an understanding of culture and build global awareness. We hold assemblies to promote whole school awareness and understanding of these days. The school will also develop a Reconciliation Action Plan.

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

How will the school respond to an alleged incident of bullying?

Bullying is not tolerated at our school. Bullying complaints will be taken seriously and responded to sensitively at our school. Please report any concerns you have to your child's teacher.

1. 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 (promoted through assemblies and newsletters).
2. 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 Davis Creek Primary School are timely and appropriate in the circumstances (promoted through assemblies and newsletters).
3. We encourage students to speak to their classroom teacher. However, students are welcome to discuss their concerns with any trusted member of staff including teachers, wellbeing staff, social worker etc. This will be emphasised through the classroom essential agreements.
4. Parents or carers who develop concerns that their child is involved in, or has witnessed bullying behaviour at Davis Creek Primary School should contact their classroom teacher or a member of the school's leadership team.

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 Assistant Principal supporting the classroom teacher.

The classroom teacher, supported by the Assistant Principal, is responsible for investigating allegations of bullying in a timely and sensitive manner. To appropriately investigate an allegation of bullying, the teacher and/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 classroom teacher, supported by the 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](#).

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How will the school respond?

When the classroom teacher, supported by the 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 Student Wellbeing Team. This includes the Principal.

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, Davis Creek 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 Student Wellbeing Team (initially consisting of Principal, Assistant Principal and P.L.C leaders) and the classroom teacher may implement all, or some of the following responses to bullying behaviours:

- Offer wellbeing support to the target student or students, including referral to Student Wellbeing Team, Student Support Services (SSS) or an external provider.
- Offer counselling support to the students engaging in bullying behaviour, including referral to the Student Wellbeing Team, SSS or/and external provider.
- Offer counselling support to affected students, including witnesses and/or friends of the target student, including referral to the Student Wellbeing Team, SSS or/and external provider.
- 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 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 cohort, year group, or whole school targeted strategies to reinforce positive behaviours, for example Introducing Conflict Resolution skills.
- Implement proportionate disciplinary consequences for the students engaging in bullying behaviour, which may include removal of privileges, detention, suspension and/or expulsion consistent with our Student Engagement, Safe Behaviour and Wellbeing Policy, the Ministerial Order on Suspensions and Expulsions and any other relevant Department policy.

Davis Creek 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 classroom teacher, in consultation with the Student Wellbeing team, are responsible for maintaining 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 and Compass
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in our staff handbook/manual
- Discussed at staff briefings/meetings as required
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Included as annual reference in school newsletter
- Discussed at student forums/through communication tools
- 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:

- Complaints Policy
- Duty of Care Policy
- Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- Student Engagement, Safe Behaviour and Wellbeing 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!](#)
- [Student Wellbeing Hub](#)
- [Office of the eSafety Commissioner](#)
- [Australian Student Wellbeing Framework](#)
- [Report Racism or Religious Discrimination in Schools](#)
- [ReachOut Australia](#)

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed on a 2 year basis, or earlier as required, following analysis of school data on reported incidents of, and responses 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
- regular staff surveys
- [Bully Stoppers Data Collection](#) tool
- 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 conducted by the Student Wellbeing Team
- [Parent Opinion Survey](#)

Proposed amendments to this policy will be discussed with parents, student representative council and school council.

Review Cycle

This policy will be reviewed as part of the two year review cycle or if guidelines change.

Ratification Date	Review Date	Policy Number	Version Number	Date Produced
September 2022	2024	8	3	July 2019