Bullying and Cyberbullying Prevention
POLICY

A. **Definitions:**

A.1. 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.

A.2. Bullying can be:

A.3. *direct* physical bullying -– e.g. hitting, tripping, and pushing or damaging property.

A.4. *direct* verbal bullying – e.g. name calling, insults, homophobic or racist remarks, verbal abuse.

A.5. *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

A.6. *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.

A.6.1. Pranking: Repeated hang ups, anonymous, mocking or threatening phone calls.

A.6.2. Image sharing: Forwarding or sharing unflattering or private images without permission.

A.6.3. Sexually explicit images: People of any age, who forward or share images of a sexual nature of a person under 18 need to be aware that this is a criminal offence (child pornography) that may result in prosecution.

A.6.4. Text and email: Sending insulting or threatening text messages or emails.

A.6.5. Personal online information: Publishing online someone's private, personal or embarrassing information without permission, or spreading rumours online.

A.6.6. Identity theft: Assuming someone's identity online and negatively representing them in a way that damages their reputation or relationships.

A.6.7. Hate sites: Creating hate sites or implementing social exclusion campaigns on social networking site

A.7. Cyberbullying vs bullying: While cyberbullying is similar to bullying in some ways, there are also differences. Cyberbullying is invasive and it can be difficult to escape. It is more likely to occur outside of school, including while at home, and can happen at any time. Cyberbullying can involve harmful material being widely and rapidly shared to a large audience.

B. Rationale:

B.1. Bullying in any form is unacceptable. Most students don't want bullying to occur but often don't know what to do about it. It's important that all forms of bullying are taken seriously and that schools, parents and students work together to ensure that everyone understands that bullying is not acceptable - ever.

B.2. It is important to recognise bullying behaviours and make it clear they are unacceptable, but it is also important to try not to label students as 'a bully'.

B.3. Our school will actively promote a positive and welcoming personal environment for all members of the school community. When people are bullied some effects might be anger, embarrassment, fear and humiliation, loss of self-confidence and reduced function and potential. Bullying and cyberbullying will be addressed, individual differences will be respected and students and staff will be enabled and supported in their pursuit of learning and teaching.

B.4. Bullying has a negative impact on everyone involved

C. Aims:

C.1. To reinforce within the school community what bullying is (including cyberbullying), and the fact that it is unacceptable.

C.2. To ensure everyone within the school community is alert to signs and evidence of cyberbullying and to have a responsibility to report bullying behaviour to school staff

C.3. To ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are appropriately investigated and addressed

C.4. To ensure that support is provided to students who may be affected by bullying behaviour (including targets, bystanders and students engaging in bullying behaviour)

C.5. To seek parental and peer-group support and co-operation at all times.

D. Implementation:

D.1. Parents, teachers, students and the community will be aware of the school's position on bullying. Teachers will be regularly reminded of their duty of care regarding protection of students from all forms of bullying.

D.2. The school will adopt a four-phase approach to bullying.

D.3. Phase 1: Primary Prevention:

D.3.1. Professional development for staff relating to all forms of bullying including cyberbullying, harassment and proven countermeasures.

D.3.2. Educate the school community about the seriousness of cyberbullying, its impact on those being bullied and how this behaviour is unacceptable

D.3.3. Community awareness and input relating to bullying (including cyberbullying), its characteristics and the school's programs and response.

D.3.4. Provide programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving.

D.3.5. Each classroom teacher to clarify with students at the start of each year, and at regular intervals, the rights and responsibilities of students when using Digital Technology

D.3.6. All students in Years 3-6 to be provided with individual and confidential logins. Processes to be put in place to ensure tracking of student activity on the school's computer equipment and network. Firewalls to be installed to eliminate outside traffic into the school's network and intranet.

D.3.7. Students are not able to use their mobile phones at school. Students bring them to school at their own risk and are advised to hand in mobile phones before school and collected from the office after school. Consequences to be implemented for any students who use mobile phones inappropriately at school.

D.3.8. The curriculum to include bullying prevention messages and strategies

D.3.9. Staff and students to promote the school's values of Respect, Inclusion, Responsibility, Integrity and Life-long Learning.

D.3.10. Maintain accreditation as an eSmart school.

D.3.11. A summary of the school approach against bullying and harassment will be included in the Student Enrolment Package and/or the beginning of the year permission form and information package, while new staff will receive extensive documentation as part of the school's induction process.

D.4. Phase 2: Early Intervention:

D.4.1. Encourage children and staff to report incidents involving themselves or others which make them feel uncomfortable.

D.4.2. Classroom teachers and principal on a regular basis reminding students and staff to report incidents of bullying.

D.4.3. Regular monitoring of traffic on school's computer networks to identify potential problems.

D.4.4. Parents encouraged to contact the school if they become aware of a problem.

D.4.5. Public recognition and reward for positive behaviour and resolution of problems.

D.5. **Phase 3: Interventions**

D.5.1. Once identified, incidents or allegations of bullying will be fully investigated and documented.

D.5.2. Parents to be contacted.

D.5.3. Students involved will be offered counselling and support.

D.5.4. Removal from access to the school's network and computers for a period of time.

D.5.5. If student bullying persists, parents will be contacted and consequences implemented consistent with the school's Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy.

D.6. **Phase 4: Post Violation**

D.6.1. Consequences for students will be individually based and may involve:-

D.6.1.1. Withdrawal of privileges.

D.6.1.2. Exclusion from class.

D.6.1.3. Exclusion from the yard.

D.6.1.4. School suspension.

D.6.1.5. Ongoing monitoring of identified bullies.

D.6.1.6. Rewards for positive behaviour.

D.6.1.7. Criminal charges being laid by police.

E. **Evaluation:**

E.1. This policy will be reviewed with the whole staff, student, parent and community each year

F. **References:**

F.1. Bullystoppers https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers/Pages/default.aspx

F.2. S428-2007 Cyber Bullying – Updating the Student Code of Conduct www.bullyingnoway.com.au

F.3. eSmart: 'eSmart Schools' is a behaviour-change framework that guides the introduction of policies, practices and whole-school change process to create a cyber safe environment. https://www.esmartschools.org.au/Pages/default.aspx

G. **APPENDICES:**

G.1. Appendix A – A Restorative Approach to Behaviour Management

G.2. Appendix B – Reflect and Rethink Template

G.3. Appendix C – Report Template for Incident of Bullying

G.4. Appendix D – Formal Referral Template for a Student who has Instigated Bullying

G.5. Appendix E – Acceptable Use Agreement 2020 Dig Tech and BYOD 3-6

G.6. Appendix G – Acceptable Use Agreement Dig Tech F-2

G.7. Appendix H – Cyber-Safety Incident Form

This policy was last ratified by School Council in.....   **Mar 2020**