Broadmeadows Valley Primary School
BULLYING and CYBER BULLYING POLICY

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to support the promotion of a safe and respectful school environment at Broadmeadows Valley Primary School (BVPS), and to prevent and address all forms of bullying and harassment, cyber bullying and other unacceptable behaviours.

Rationale:

At BVPS, we believe that everyone has the right to feel safe and to be treated with respect. Hence, as we strive to provide a positive and inclusive culture within our school, any form of bullying will not be tolerated.

Definition of Bullying:

Bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological aggressive behaviour by a person or group directed towards a less powerful person or group that is intended to cause harm, distress or fear. Bullying is a clear form of harassment; unwanted, annoying and intimidating actions.

Cyber-bullying is direct or indirect bullying behaviour using digital technologies. This includes harassment via a mobile phone, setting up a defamatory website, deliberately excluding someone from social networking spaces, or people who use the internet, email, intranets, short messaging services (SMS) or similar technologies to bully and harass others.

Aims:

- To reinforce within the school community what bullying and cyber bullying are, and that any act of bullying is unacceptable.
- To ensure that everyone within the school community is alert to the signs and evidence of bullying and cyber bullying and undertakes the responsibility to report it to staff, whether as observer or victim.
- To ensure that all reported incidents of bullying and cyber bullying are investigated appropriately and that support is given to both victims and perpetrators.
- To seek and encourage parental and peer group support and co-operation at all times.

Implementation:

- Parents and students and school staff will be made aware of the school's position on bullying and cyber bullying through the Bullying/Cyber Bullying Policy, newsletters and information sessions.
- Teachers will also receive updated professional learning, and through the Bullying/Cyber Bullying and Student Supervision Policies, be reminded of their duty of care regarding the safety and protection of all students.
- BVPS will adopt a four phase approach to supporting cyber safety and combating cyber bullying.

1. **Primary Prevention:**
   - Professional development for staff relating to all forms of bullying including cyber bullying, harassment and proven counter measures
   - Educate the school community about the seriousness of cyber bullying, its impact on those being bullied and how this behaviour is unacceptable
   - Community awareness and input relating to bullying (including cyber-bullying), its characteristics and the school's programs and response
   - Provide programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving such as Rock and Water, M-Power and Personal Development Program
   - Teachers will clarify with students at the start of each year the school policy on bullying, including cyber-bullying.
   - All students to be provided with individual and confidential computer and network log-ins and passwords. 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.
   - The use of mobile phones by students will be limited with consequences to be implemented for any students who use mobile phones inappropriately.
   - The curriculum to include anti-bullying messages and strategies eg: 'The Friendly Schools' and 'No Blame Approach to Bullying' programs.
   - Young Leaders, peer supports, staff and students to promote the philosophy of 'No Put Downs'.
   - A vigilant and accountable yard duty roster for teachers will be put in place.
   - Electives and structured activities available to students at recess and lunch breaks

2. **Early Intervention:**
   - Encourage children and staff to report bullying incidents involving themselves or others,
   - All staff reminding students on a regular basis to report incidents of bullying.
   - Regular monitoring of student traffic on school's computer networks to identify potential problems.
   - Parents are encouraged to contact the school if they become aware of a problem.
   - A student may voluntarily approach a teacher for assistance if they have become aware of, or have engaged in cyber bullying or related behaviours.
   - A student may be identified as needing assistance as a result of involvement in an incident requiring disciplinary action.
   - School staff to inform the school leadership about concerns relating to students engaging in, or being subject of cyber bullying.
   - Make reference to special programs which the school provides, e.g. the School's Anti-Bullying, Cyber safety
   - Recognition of positive behaviour and resolution of problems

3. **Intervention**:
   - School rules prohibit the inappropriate and threatening use of email, Facebook, Twitter, internet and mobile phone facilities both in the school, at any school function and away from school where the behaviour seriously impacts on other students or staff at the school.
   - All incidents or allegations of bullying or cyber bullying and /or inappropriate use of technology will be fully investigated.
   - Once identified, the bully, victim and witnesses will be spoken with and information documented.
   - Parents of all parties will be contacted.
   - Counselling for the victim or bully may be considered or offered.
   - A range of consequences for students involved in bullying or cyber bullying may be implemented.

4. Post Violation:

Consequences for students involved in bullying or cyber bullying will be considered on an individual basis and may include:

- Counselling, allied health, external agency supports
- DET and school based programs
- Exclusion from learning neighbourhood and/or school playground
- Restricted access to specific school technology
- Withdrawal or loss of a range of privileges
- Implementation of specific school support structures; SSG, student contract, BMP
- In school or out of school suspension
- Ongoing monitoring of identified cyber bullies.

Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's four year review cycle.

Ratification

This school policy was ratified at the Broadmeadows Valley Primary School Council meeting on ……/……/20…..

School Council President _____   **Principal** _____