



Broadmeadows Valley Primary School

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, 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 Cyber 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.

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 cyber bullying and undertakes the responsibility to report it to staff, whether as observer or victim.
- To ensure that all reported incidents of 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 cyber bullying through the Cyber Bullying Policy, newsletters and information sessions.
- Teachers will also receive updated professional learning, and through the 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

- Each classroom teacher to clarify with students at the start of each year the school policy on cyber-bullying.
- Specific teaching of the safe use of technologies for students in all neighbourhoods.
- All students sign an acceptable use agreement at the commencement of the year to encourage cyber safe behaviour. These agreements relates to:
 - Using a range of technology such as for iPads, computers and netbooks for learning
 - Reporting any inappropriate material or usage
 - Use of email in a positive manner
 - Confiding in an adult if cyber bullying is heard of or sighted.
- Professional development for staff relating to all forms of bullying including cyber bullying.
- All students to be provided with individual and confidential computer and network logins and passwords.
- Processes to be put in place to ensure tracking of student activity on the school's computer equipment and network.
- Firewalls installed to protect traffic into the school's network and intranet.
- Home login pages set to the school web site.
- Community awareness and input relating to bullying (including cyber-bullying), its characteristics and the schools' programs and response.
- The use of mobile phones by students will be limited with consequences to implement for any students who use mobile phones inappropriately

2. Early Intervention:

- Encourage children and staff to report bullying incidents involving themselves or others.
- Classroom teachers and principal to remind 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.
- Any special programs which the school provides, e.g. the School's Anti-Bullying, Cyber safety Programs should be referred to.

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.
- If any of the above rules are broken, investigation and possible disciplinary action will be undertaken.
- All incidents or allegations of cyber bullying and /or inappropriate use of technology will be fully investigated. Once identified, the bully, victim and witness(es) 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 cyber bullying may be implemented.

4. Post Violation:

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

- 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
- School suspension
- Ongoing monitoring of identified cyber bullies.