



Inverloch / Kongwak prevention and management of incidents of Bullying POLICY (ratified June 2014).



Preamble

At Inverloch / Kongwak Primary School we aim to prevent incidents of bullying through a school culture that is based on positive relationships, a spirit of co-operation and promotion of pro-social behaviours and respectful communication in a safe, effective learning environment. We recognize that children are less inclined to bully others, and more likely to stop their bullying behaviour when they experience pro-social influence and education from people who most matter in their lives and whose opinions they respect. This includes other students, parents/carers, teachers and support staff.

Incidents of bullying and harassment are considered a violation of people and relationships and a breach of a person's right to be safe, respected and happy.

All members of our school community have the right to be free of bullying and, if bullied, have the right to be provided with help and support.

All members of the school community have the responsibility to abstain personally from bullying others; to actively discourage bullying when it occurs; and to give support to those who are bullied. All members of the school community are encouraged to intervene to stop bullying: to let the person know that their behaviour is to stop, &/or to walk away from the scene of the bullying and to get help from an adult. Bystanders who observe bullying behaviour and do not take action to stop it, or at least walk away and report it to someone who can help, are inadvertently condoning the unacceptable behaviour.

Definitions (Source: *Building Respectful and Safe Schools*, DEECD, 2010.)

What is bullying?

Bullying is when someone, or a group of people, deliberately upset or hurt another person or damage their property, reputation or social acceptance on more than one occasion. There is an imbalance of power in incidents of bullying with the bully or bullies having more power at the time due to age, size, status or other reasons.

Types of bullying - There are four broad types of bullying:-

1. **Direct physical** bullying includes hitting, kicking, tripping, pinching and pushing or damaging property.
2. **Direct verbal** bullying includes name-calling, insults, teasing, intimidation, homophobic or racist remarks or verbal abuse.
3. **Indirect bullying** is often harder to recognise and often carried out behind the bullied person's back. It is designed to harm someone's social reputation and/or cause humiliation. Indirect bullying includes:
 - lying and spreading rumours
 - playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate
 - mimicking
 - excluding someone or encouraging others to socially exclude someone
 - damaging someone's social reputation and social acceptance

4. **Cyber-bullying** is direct verbal or indirect bullying behaviours using digital technologies to harass, humiliate and distress. This includes harassment via a mobile phone, setting up a defamatory personal website or deliberately excluding someone from social networking spaces.

What bullying is not:-

Many distressing behaviours are not examples of bullying even though they are unpleasant and often require teacher intervention and management. There are three common unpleasant situations that are often confused with bullying:-

1. **Mutual conflict** involves an argument or disagreement between people but not an imbalance of power. Both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution. However, unresolved mutual conflict sometimes develops into a bullying situation with one person becoming targeted repeatedly for 'retaliation' in a one-sided way.
2. **Social rejection or dislike**, eg choosing not to play with someone or not to like someone is not bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.
3. **Single-episode acts** of nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. If someone is verbally abused or pushed on one occasion they are not being bullied. Nastiness or physical aggression that is directed towards many different people is not the same as bullying. However, single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression are not to be ignored or condoned.

The IKPS approach to preventing and managing bullying

At IKPS we use a preventative and restorative approach to managing inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour, including bullying. Our intent in managing inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour, including bullying is to stop the behaviour causing the harm, maintain or repair relationships and to educate. Consequences may be applied when necessary in conjunction with a restorative approach. Direct punitive action (ie punishment) is used when necessary for serious incidents in accordance with DEECD Guidelines regarding Student Conduct, Suspension and Expulsion.

Incidents of bullying will generally be addressed using one of the six major approaches that may be applied in cases of bullying in schools (Ken Rigby, 2010) and in line with our school's Relationships, Rights and Responsibilities guidelines where the roles and responsibilities of all members of our school community are outlined.

All school staff will be vigilant to bullying behaviour and will take action to stop it.

Students are strongly encouraged to report incidents of bullying at the time of the incident or, if necessary, as soon as possible after an incident, and especially to their own classroom teacher/s, and to persist in their reporting if incidents continue.

References:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers/Pages/parents.aspx>

<http://www.parentingideas.com.au/Parents/Bullying>

<https://www.kidsmatter.edu.au/primary/mental-health-information/mental-health-basics/children-bullying>

This policy was ratified by School Council on 16th June, 2014. This policy is to be reviewed in 2017, earlier if required.