

# BULLYING PREVENTION

This policy was last ratified by School Council in September 2014

## **Rationale:**

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable within the Albion school community. We are committed to providing a friendly, safe and caring environment that promotes personal growth and positive self-esteem for all of our students. Students are taught strategies to deal with bullying and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

## **Definition:**

### ***What is bullying?***

Bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological violent or aggressive behaviour by a person or group directed towards a less powerful person or group that is intended to cause harm, distress or fear.

### ***Some examples of the violence bullies use are:***

- **PHYSICAL VIOLENCE** includes fighting, pushing, shoving, hitting, kicking, spitting, invasion of personal space or preventing someone from moving about the environment in a free manner. It includes interfering with another's property by stealing, hiding, damaging or destroying it. It includes intimidating looks and/or making obscene gestures. It includes forcing or persuading others into giving up possessions, food, money, etc. This can extend to coercing others to participate in unacceptable behaviour. It includes touching or brushing up against someone in a sexual manner.
- **VERBAL VIOLENCE** includes name calling, offensive language, putting people down behind their back, picking on people because of their appearance, race, gender or religious beliefs, making anonymous or offensive telephone calls, belittling others' abilities and achievements. It includes offensive notes or material, graffiti directed at an individual or group and making suggestive, sexual or homophobic comments.
- **EMOTIONAL VIOLENCE** includes spreading false rumours about someone, deliberately excluding someone from an event or activity.
- **CYBER VIOLENCE** includes using technology such as mobile phones, email, internet personal pages (eg Facebook, My Space) to embarrass, threaten, frighten or hurt another person.

Using any type of violence to exert power over another person is not acceptable and is bullying.

### ***What is not bullying?***

There are also some behaviours, which, although they might be unpleasant or distressing, are not bullying:

- **Mutual conflict** - which involves a disagreement, but not an imbalance of power. Unresolved mutual conflict can develop into bullying if one of the parties targets the other repeatedly in retaliation.
- **Single-episode acts** of nastiness or physical aggression, or aggression directed towards many different people, is not bullying
- **Social rejection or dislike** is not bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.

## **Roles and Responsibilities:**

### ***The Responsibilities of Students:***

*A person who experiences bullying should:*

- If you feel safe to do so, 'Name It' to the bully and ask for the behaviour to stop. Ask an adult to help 'name it' to the bully if required.  
If the violence continues, 'name it' to a person who could be a parent, teacher, friend or relative. Keep 'naming it' until the violence stop. This means that you keep naming it to people you trust and who you know will be able to help you.

*The alleged bully should:*

- Discontinue the violent behaviour
- Reflect on the consequences of their actions and be helped to understand how his/her behaviours have been harmful
- Accept consequences of their behaviour
- Co-operate with the strategies devised to address the issue.

*An observer/bystander should:*

- Not join in
- Let the bully know the actions are wrong by 'naming it' to the bully
- Support the bullied student
- Report the matter to a staff member or adult and help break down the code of secrecy

Users of violence are only powerful if they can silence victims and bystanders. Victims and bystanders are silenced because of fear and intimidation, shame or guilt. However, your silence gives permission for the bully to continue their behaviour. We all need to work on breaking the silence.

### ***The Responsibilities of Parents:***

The school recommends that parents:

- Watch for signs of distress or uncharacteristic behaviour in their child, eg. unwillingness to attend school, tears, temper outbursts, a pattern of headaches, missing equipment/personal property, request for extra money, damaged clothing or bruising.
- Determine whether any of your child's own behaviour is resulting in or contributing to the bullying and address the issue at home and/or seek support from the school.
- Do not hesitate to contact the school directly if you have any concerns regarding suspected bullying
- Encourage your child to tell a staff member about violent incidents.
- Do not encourage your child to retaliate through violence
- Support your child in developing positive strategies for dealing with bullying, in conjunction with school social skills program
- Attend interviews at the school if required.

### ***The Responsibilities of the Staff:***

- Maintain a fair, consistent and united approach to student behaviour
- Be role models in words and actions at all times and avoid all forms of bullying behaviour
- Be observant of signs of distress or suspected incidents of bullying
- Take all bullying reports seriously and assist the bullied students if required
- Make efforts to minimise occasions for bullying by actively patrolling during yard duty and by supervising effectively within the buildings.
- Respond appropriately to incidents of bullying by following designated procedures.
- Communicate the devised strategies to the student and his/her parents as appropriate. Support the Bullying Prevention policy through implementation of school based programs eg. *Albion Kids are Friendly Kids*, *Solving the Jigsaw*, *Little Jigs*, that use restorative practices.

- Provide resources and information to parents and the school community
- Undertake professional learning in the area of student wellbeing and anti-bullying

**Procedures:**

A four phase approach to bullying will be followed:

*Primary Prevention:*

- *Start Up* program at the beginning of each year ensures the school's values are worked through and understood by all students. At the beginning of each school year the school community will be reminded of the practices and procedures relating to violence and bullying.
- Curriculum to include programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving such as *Solving the Jigsaw*, *Little Jigs*, *Albion Kids are Friendly Kids* program and will implemented across the school
- Bullying survey and yard survey will be administered yearly
- *Student of the Week* awards that promote school values
- Public recognition and reward for positive behaviours and resolution of problems

*Early Intervention:*

- Report bullying incidents to appropriate staff

*Intervention:*

- Incidents will be recorded on SMaRT and regularly monitored
- Both victims and bullies will be offered support
- If violence continues, parents will be contacted and consequences will be implemented consistent with the school's Student Engagement Policy.

*Post Violation:*

- Logical consequences and strategies applied may involve:
  - Reflection on behaviour and school values
  - Verbal or written apology
  - Exclusion from class
  - Restricted play areas
  - Exclusion from yard
  - Behavioural contracts
  - Counselling and referrals to Guidance Officer
  - Specific needs programs eg. anger management, self esteem etc
  - Suspension from school (inhouse or out of school)
- Reinforcement of appropriate behaviours
- Classroom meetings
- Support structures
- On-going monitoring of identified bullies

**Evaluation:**

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