

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

One of the aims of the Tallong Public School community is to provide a secure, child-centred environment where the values of respect, kindness and co-operation are a priority and each student can develop as a person of integrity, social conscience and courage.

To this end, we aim to establish a community in which everybody feels valued and safe, and where individual differences are appreciated, understood and accepted. Every student has a right to enjoy his or her time at school.

This community does not tolerate bullying or harassment. Respect for others is expected.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Each member of the Tallong community shares in the following rights and responsibilities:

- To be treated fairly and with respect
- To achieve to the best of their ability
- To be happy
- To be treated with understanding
- To expect the local community to support, respect and have pride in the school
- To work, play and learn in a friendly safe and helpful school environment
- To attend school punctually and regularly
- To care for the school environment by keeping it neat and clean
- To contribute positively in the classroom
- To apply themselves to learning
- To strive to establish positive working relationships with adults
- To support, respect and take pride in the school and staff
- To act thoughtfully in and out of school and aim to bring credit to themselves and their school
- To avoid being disruptive in the classroom environment
- To abide by the school code of conduct (see attached)

DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF ALL INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS TO BE FREE FROM BULLYING

Everyone has the right to:

- feel safe and be safe at school.
- be treated as an individual.
- be happy about coming to school.
- have his or her concerns taken seriously and appropriate action taken.
- have his or her concerns dealt with in private.

- a quality educational program devoid of disruption.

AIMS

- To reinforce within the school community what bullying is and that it is unacceptable behaviour.
- To reduce the amount of bullying that occurs at Tallong Public School.
- To assist students to resolve conflicts and differences without bullying.
- To encourage all members of the school community to be alert to signs and evidence of bullying, to have a responsibility to report it to teachers, parents and/or peers.
- To ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are followed up appropriately and that support is given to victims and the bullies.
- To seek parental and peer group support and co-operation at all times.
- To educate students, teachers and parents in anti-bullying actions.
- To foster a happy school climate where students feel safe and confident that teachers will listen and follow through concerns.

DEFINITION: WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social(including behaviour which is exclusive) or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons. Cyberbullying refers to bullying through information and communication technologies.

Bullying can involve intimidation, humiliation, domination, victimisation and all forms of harassment including that based on sex, race, disability, homosexuality or transgender. Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved including bystanders.

There are seven key elements of Bullying:

1. An intention to be hurtful.
2. This intention is carried out.
3. The behaviour harms the target.
4. The bully overwhelms the target with his or her power.
5. There is no justification for the action.
6. Action/behaviour is repeated.
7. Bully gets satisfaction/enjoyment from hurting the target. (Rigby, 1996)

Some examples of bullying include:

- Hitting, pushing, kicking, spitting, pushing
- Teasing, mocking and using put-downs
- Cyber Bullying and Digital Harassment
- Making offensive comments about others or their families
- Gossip – spreading information (true or untrue)
- Hurtful looks
- Rude gestures
- Leaving someone out of a group to be mean to them
- Messing up someone's game
- Hiding, damaging, stealing someone's belongings
- Making up rumour/stories about someone

- Using threats to stop people going to the toilet or to take their money, food or other belongings
- Writing offensive notes about someone
- Name-calling, hurtful or racist names
- Threatening
- Sending hurtful notes
- Deliberately ignoring
- Sexual innuendo and harassment
- Writing graffiti about another

IMPLEMENTATION

Students, teachers, parents and the community will be aware of the school's position on bullying which is **zero tolerance**.

The school will also adopt a four-point plan to anti-bullying, which includes:

- Primary Prevention
- Early Intervention
- Intervention
- Post Intervention

Primary Prevention

- Professional development for staff related to bullying and the strategies to counteract it.
- Community awareness and input relating to anti-bullying, its characteristics and the schools' programs and response. (e.g. weekly newsletter, parent forums)
- Provide programs that promote resilience, life skills and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and communication skills.
- Staff supervision of set area in playground.
- Ensure students know and understand what behaviour is acceptable in the school. (i.e. consistent classroom/school rules displayed in the school)
- Maintain the Student Representative Council and class meetings to help solve problems which arise regarding bully and the victim.

Early Intervention

- Students are to be encouraged to report bullying incidents involving themselves or others.
- Teachers to regularly remind students to report incidents. Reporting is not dobbing.
- Parents are encouraged to contact the school if they become aware of a problem.
- Students are recognised for positive behaviours
- Teachers use a class and playground management plan if an incident of bullying occurs.

Intervention

- Once identified, the bully, victim and witnesses are spoken with, all incidents or allegations of bullying will be fully investigated and documented by the Principal.
- Consideration as to why the bullying occurred will be investigated. (e.g. The bigger picture or contributing factors)

- Both bully and victim are to be offered basic assistance and support (i.e. outside school resources through counselling may be utilised if deemed necessary)
- A meeting of relevant persons are to be convened following identification of on-going bullying behaviour. (Principal, class teacher, parents, students, other) All issues relevant to the behaviour of the student are considered.

Post Intervention

Tallong Public School's Discipline Policy outlines appropriate procedures of the consequences for inappropriate behaviour in the classroom and in the playground.

Possible consequences may involve:

- Warning
- Timeout from the class/ yard
- Parental contact
- Negotiated contract
- On-going monitoring
- Mediation sessions with the victim to reconcile differences
- Referral to external agencies
- Group changes within the classroom
- Behaviour guidance programs (e.g. anger management, social skills)
- Suspension (in extreme cases)

ADVICE TO BE GIVEN TO STUDENTS WHO ARE BEING BULLIED

The student should be encouraged to:

- Tell the bully to stop. State quite clearly that the behaviour is unwelcome and offensive
- Seek help. Talk about the experience to someone who is trustworthy (Student Counsellor, parent, peer).
- Report the bullying to a member of staff and feel confident that any incident can be resolved satisfactorily

Other 'self protective' strategies that might be suggested include:

- Staying away from the bully, or places where bullying occurs.
- Be with friendly, supportive friends.

ADVICE TO BE GIVEN TO STUDENTS WHO KNOW SOMEONE ELSE IS BEING BULLIED

Students should be made aware that early intervention can defuse conflict situations before bullying sets in or gets out of hand.

Therefore, the following suggestions should be made:

- If possible, intervene as the bullying occurs by telling the bully to stop. This is very useful if the onlooking student has influence with the bully.
- Refuse to join in with the bullying.
- Support students who are being bullied – just standing by them can be enough.

- Tell an adult if you are concerned about the bullying.
- It is every student's right and responsibility to report bullying whether it happens to oneself or to someone else.

THE ROLE OF PARENTS

The following suggestions are made to parents through print materials and at Parent Information meetings.

Take an active interest

- in your child's social life
- in what is happening at school

Encourage your child

- to bring friends home
- to accept and tolerate differences in others

Build your child's self-confidence

- by recognising and affirming his/her positive qualities
- by valuing him/her for who he/she is.

Discuss with your child

- the school's expectations about behaviour
- ways to respond if his rights are infringed

Encourage constructive responses

- physical bullying or persistent teasing should be reported
- hitting back or retaliating with name-calling won't solve the problem

Set an example

- be firm, but not aggressive in setting behaviour limits
- be positive in things you say and do

Be alert for signs of distress

- unwillingness to attend school
- dropping off in academic performance
- damaged clothing and frequent loss of personal property
- loss of confidence and uncharacteristic mood changes
- withdrawal from social activities.

ACT

-If your child is being bullied at school, report it to a teacher, or the Principal. Your report will be followed up.