Gawler Primary School
ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

At Gawler Primary School our mission is to provide a safe and positive learning environment that engages, challenges and empowers students to achieve their personal best. Our school's mission challenges us to create a positive community in which everyone feels valued and respected.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

The national definition of bullying for Australian schools says:

Bullying is an ongoing misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that causes physical and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power over one or more persons. Bullying can happen in person or online, and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert).

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders.

Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.

From *The National Safe Schools Framework, 2015*

However, one action – such as a comment or an embarrassing photo – which is repeated through sharing and forwarding to others, can be considered bullying if the individuals involved know each other, and have ongoing contact either online or in person.

Bullying has three main features:

- It involves a **misuse of power** in a relationship
- It is **ongoing and repeated**, and
- It involves **behaviours** that can **cause harm**.

All three of these aspects need to be present in order for behaviour to be called bullying.

Not all distressing or hurtful behaviour is bullying

- Single incidents of malicious or aggressive behaviour are not always considered bullying. Bullying is repeated actions. A single incident will still be responded to as part of the school's behaviour management processes as unacceptable behaviour.
- Although social rejection can be hurtful, it is not bullying unless accompanied by repeated and deliberate attempts to distress or hurt.
- Arguments can be distressing but it is not bullying when two people are both upset and neither one is misusing power over the other. Conflict may still give rise to unacceptable behaviour which will be responded to as part of the school's behaviour management processes.

EXAMPLES OF BULLYING –*when behaviour is repeated or there is a misuse of power**

Bullying behaviour can be categorised into three main types of behaviour:

Verbal bullying
- Putdowns and name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing, threats and intimidation
- Making fun of someone because of their appearance, physical characteristics, cultural background or beliefs
- Making fun of someone's actions

Physical bullying
- Hitting, punching, tripping, pushing, hair-pulling
- Taking or damaging something that belongs to someone else

Social bullying

- Being deliberately left out of a group or activity, exclusion, tormenting (eg hiding book, hat etc), ridicule and humiliation
- Sharing information or images that will have a harmful effect on the other person.

If any of these behaviours occur only once, or are part of a conflict between equals* (no matter how inappropriate) they are not bullying. The behaviours alone don't define bullying.

Cyberbullying can be described as any harassment, insults and humiliation that occur through the electronic mediums such as email, mobile phones, social networking sites, instant messaging programs, chat rooms, web-sites and through the playing of online games.

Forms of Cyberbullying can include:-

- Harassing and threatening messages
- Sending nasty SMS, IM's pictures or prank phone calls
- Using person's screen name or password to pretend to be them
- Forwarding others' private emails, messages, pictures or videos
- Posting mean or nasty comments or pictures
- Sending sexually explicit images – 'sexting'
- Intentionally excluding others from an online group

BYSTANDER/UPSTANDER

A **Bystander** is someone who sees or knows about bullying, harassment or violence that is happening to someone else. Bystanders who are passive (take no action) or behave in ways that give silent approval (watching, nodding, walking away) encourage the behaviour to continue.
An **Upstander** is a person who speaks or acts in support of an individual or cause, particularly someone who intervenes on behalf of a person being attacked or bullied.

SIGNS THAT BULLYING MAY BE OCCURING

- unexplained cuts, bruises or scratches
- damaged or ripped clothing
- vague headaches or stomach aches
- refusal to go to school
- asking for extra pocket money or food
- tearfulness, anxiety or difficulty sleeping
- 'hiding' information on mobile phones, emails or in comments on social networking

*equals: means two people of equal power or status.
*misuse of power: In a situation where there is a power imbalance, one person or group has a significant advantage over another, and if this power is misused, this enables them to coerce or mistreat another for their own ends. In a bullying situation this power imbalance may arise from the context (e.g. having others to back you up), from assets (e.g. access to a weapon) or from personal characteristics (e.g. being stronger, more articulate or more able to socially manipulate others).

WHAT ACTIONS DO GAWLER PS TAKE ABOUT INCIDENTS OF BULLYING

- We will listen and talk to the person who has been bullied and the person who has bullied others
- We will put consequences in place for the person who has been bullying others. These may include office time out, restricted play, internal suspension or external suspension
- Parents of the person being bullied or of the student who has done the bullying will be contacted where necessary
- We will use other approaches such as Restorative Counselling to help everyone involved to improve their relationships with each other.

It is important to note that these steps may change. At Gawler PS we do not use a 'one size fits all' approach. This is because each person and each incident of bullying is different.

WHAT WE DO TO REDUCE BULLYING AT GAWLER PRIMARY SCHOOL

If an incident of bullying happens at Gawler PS we use prevention, intervention and post-intervention strategies.

Prevention strategies include:
- Use of Friendly Schools program to develop and maintain a safe environment
- Using the curriculum to teach students about respectful relationships, responsibility and honesty; what is bullying behaviour and the difference between bullying behaviour and "mean on purpose" behaviour
- Having programs that highlight social skills, language expression, non-violent problem solving and give students' skills in emotional intelligence, emotional regulation and anger management. An example of this is What's the Buzz?
- Developing peer connectedness and resilience among students
- Teaching for and about diversity
- Providing professional learning for staff

Intervention strategies include
- Counselling and supporting students who have been bullied
- Talking with parents/carers about the situation
- Putting consequences in place for those who bully others
- Teaching students about bystander/upstander behaviour
- Ensuring that all staff know how to address bullying effectively and respectfully

Post– intervention strategies include:
- Monitoring the situation between the students to ensure that their safety and wellbeing are maintained eg. bullying audits
- Talking with parents/carers about strategies
- Reviewing our yard duty procedures to make sure they are effective
- Reviewing and evaluating behaviour codes and policies

NEED MORE INFORMATION?
The following telephone numbers and internet web sites can provide support and useful information about bullying and harassment.
Kids Helpline: 1800 551 800
Child and Youth Health Parent Helpline 1300 364 10

Useful websites include:
The Office of the eSafety Commissioner – Online help and reporting www.esafety.gov.au
Reach Out www.reachout.com.au
Beyondblue www.beyondblue.org.au
Headspace www.headspace.org.au
Safe Schools www.safeschools.deewr.gov.au
Department for Education Parent Complaint www.education.sa.gov.au/doc/raising-complaint-decd
Bullying. No Way!: www.bullyingnoway.gov.au

GAWLER PS ANTI-BULLYING RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES

RESPONSIBILITIES

It is the responsibility of all members of our school community to actively promote a safe and secure environment by taking appropriate actions to stop bullying behaviours if they encounter them.

Students

If a student feels they are being bullied or have witnessed bullying behaviour they should:

- Tell the person who is bullying to stop, if they feel safe to do so. State clearly that the behaviour is unwelcome and offensive.
- Support the person who is being bullied and request help from a trusted adult at the time of the incident
- Report the behaviour and/or ask for help from the class teacher or trusted adult
- Do not encourage the bully through their presence or inaction (witness)
- Refrain from bullying others

All staff

If a student reports a bullying incident or a staff member witness incidents of bullying behaviour, they should:

- Be familiar with and act in accordance to the school's bullying policy and procedures.
- Treat all reports of bullying behaviour seriously.
- Listen and provide support to the target of the bullying by acknowledging the nature and seriousness of bullying behaviour.
- Report incidents to the Class teacher and/or Leadership.
- Record and monitor incidents of bullying behaviour as required
- Put in place anti-bullying strategies as appropriate eg using Restorative Practices
- Encourage targeted students to report similar behaviour if repeated.
- Encourage bystanders to report similar behaviour if repeated.
- Contact parents/caregivers where necessary
- Document incidents of serious violence on the behaviour and critical incident forms.
- Keep other relevant staff informed
- Follow up concerns raised by parents

The School

The School, through its Leadership, should:

- Promote, maintain and review the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedures
- Actively follow up all incidents
- Communicate effectively and appropriately with staff, students and parents concerning bullying incidents
- Collect, record and report relevant data as appropriate or required

- Develop and maintain a bully-free culture
- Ensure staff have effective, on-going training in relation to anti-bullying in schools
- Ensure new members of the school community (staff, students or parents) are informed of the schools policy and procedures in regards to bullying and harassment

Parents and Caregivers

If bullying occurs, it is best resolved by parents and the school working together.

Parents should:
- Support the school and its policies and procedures
- Speak positively about the school to and around their child.
- Support and encourage their children to interact appropriately with others.
- Support their children if they do become involved in bullying/victim difficulties and be prepared to share the problem and work collaboratively with the school to solve it.
- Not air their views on Social Media as it can exacerbate the issue.

Parents who witness bullying should:
- Not take matters into their own hands
- Speak to the relevant school staff (not the students concerned)
- Speak in a calm, respectful manner with school staff
- Not air their views on Social Media as it can exacerbate the issue.

REPORTING BULLYING

If you believe you are being bullied or you believe someone who is being bullied please report it. It is difficult for the school to follow up on an incident if we are unaware of it so don't be a bystander, be involved but keep yourself safe.

Who to report to

Talk with someone you trust, this may be your teacher, the school counsellor, Senior Leaders or a professional counsellor in an outside agency. Tell your parents or caregivers too.

How to report it

Tell the trusted adult where the bullying incident happened and who is responsible. How often it has happened and what you have done to try to stop it happening.

When to report it

Report the bullying incident to a trusted adult as soon as it happens. This gives the school the best opportunity to follow up the incident and intervene. Do not ignore it. When bullying is ignored it may get worse.

Reporting Cyberbullying

In addition to reporting Cyberbullying to the school, you can also report to the Office of the eSafety Commissioner (https://www.esafety.gov.au/complaints-and-reporting/cyberbullying-complaints/i-want-to-report-cyberbullying) .

The steps to take are:
1. Report to the Social Media Service- Social media services should remove Cyberbullying material that is reported to them. Most social media services have a reporting area on their website.
2. Collect evidence including URLs or web addresses, screenshots, scanned printouts of any messages or photos and videos (up to 80MB).
3. Make a report to the eSafety Commissioner . Reports can be made anonymously.
   https://submit.esafety.gov.au/Produce/wizard/ca3accd-07bf-4a12-9c0e-f93e50a46ab6?portal=1

ACTIONS

In the actions taken when dealing with bullying, there needs to be a degree of flexibility depending on the nature, extent and severity of the bullying. Consequences may be applied according to the severity of the offence.

Consequences may include (but are not restricted to):
- Office timeout
- Restricted play
- Removal from the yard at recess and/or lunch
- Internal suspension
- External suspension

Here are examples of what may be used to intervene and resolve incidents of bullying at Gawler PS.

Bullying in Schools: Six Methods of Intervention by Professor Ken Rigby is used in supporting effective interventions following a bullying incident.

1. **The Traditional Disciplinary Approach** Setting out clear behaviour standards and using punishment to prevent and deter students who have used bullying behaviour from repeating their behaviour; punishment could include detention, loss of privileges, chores to be undertaken and even suspension.

2. **Restorative Practice** Encouraging admission of bullying behaviour by the students who have used bullying behaviour and stimulating genuine remorse; helping the student take steps to restore damaged relationships.

3. **Strengthening the Victim** Helping and coaching students to confront a student who has used bullying behaviour assertively; to stand firm and discourage the bullying behaviour through calm and controlled language; to redress the balance of perceived power.

4. **Mediation** Assisting the student who has used bullying behaviour and the person affected by the bullying behaviour in resolving their differences and helping them find a peaceful win-win solution or compromise.

5. **The Support Group Method** Gaining the cooperation of the students who have used bullying behaviour by revealing to them the distress that has been experienced by the person affected by the bullying behaviour at a meeting in which students supportive of the student affected are also present.

6. **The Method of Shared Concern** Empowering the students who have used bullying behaviour to assist in resolving the problem through the use of individual and group meetings with the participants.

In all cases:

- Reports of incidents of suspected bullying or suspected signs of bullying will be investigated
- The student being bullied will receive support and assistance from the school dependent upon individual needs and circumstances.
- Follow-up will occur with both the student using bullying behaviour and the student who affected by the bullying behaviour dependent upon individual needs and circumstances.
- Parents of both the student using bullying behaviour and the student affected by the bullying behaviour will be kept informed as required