



Bethal Primary School

Cyberbullying Policy

Definition:

Cyber bullying involves the use of Digital Technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour by an individual or group that is intended to harm others. Bullies deliberately set out to intimidate, exclude, threaten and/or hurt others repeatedly. Bullying is a clear form of harassment. People who use the internet, email, intranets, phones or similar technologies to bully others are cyber bullies and are breaking the law.

Rationale:

- Bullying in any form is unacceptable. Bullying that is carried out through an internet service, such as email, chat room, discussion group or instant messaging or through mobile phone technologies such as short messaging service (SMS) is cyber bullying. Cyber bullying will not be tolerated at any level at Bethal Primary School, and consequences are in place.

Aims:

- To reinforce within the school community what bullying is (including cyber bullying), and the fact that it is unacceptable.
- To alert everyone within the school community of the signs and evidence of cyberbullying.
- To ensure that all reported incidents of cyber bullying are investigated appropriately, and that support is given to both victims and perpetrators.
- To seek parental and student support in working towards eliminating cyberbullying.

Implementation:

- Parents, teachers, students and the community will be aware of the school's position on cyber bullying. Teachers will be regularly reminded of their duty of care regarding protection of students from all forms of bullying.
- Students will participate in nationwide initiatives such National Day against Bullying and eSmart Week.
- Students, teachers and parents will participate in cyber safety workshops run by experts each year.
- Students will be involved in the Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships program where they will learn strategies that can be applied in a cyber-bullying situation.
- The school will adopt a four-phase approach to bullying: *Primary Prevention, Early Intervention, Intervention and Post Violation.*

A. Primary Prevention:

- Professional development for staff relating to all forms of bullying including cyber bullying.
- eSmart lessons incorporated in our Fresh Start Program and in the curriculum across the year.
- Educate the school community about the seriousness of cyber bullying, its impact on those being bullied and how this behaviour is unacceptable.
- Community awareness and input relating to bullying (including cyber-bullying), its characteristics and the school's programs and response.

References:

www.bullyingnoway.com.au

<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/cybersafety/policy>

- Provide programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving (RRRR program).
- Each classroom teacher to clarify with students at the start of each year the school policy on bullying, including cyber-bullying.
- Processes to be put in place to ensure tracking of student activity on the school's computer equipment and network. Firewalls to be installed to eliminate outside traffic into the school's network and intranet.
- The use of mobile phones by students during the day is prohibited. In special circumstances phones are to be left at the office during school hours. Refer to Mobile Phone Policy.
- Junior School Council, staff and students to promote the anti-bullying message.

B. Early Intervention:

- Encourage children and staff to report cyber bullying incidents involving themselves or others.
- Staff to remind students to report incidents of bullying and cyberbullying.
- Leadership to remind staff to report incidents of bullying and cyberbullying and record them in Compass.
- Regular monitoring of traffic on school's computer networks to identify potential problems.
- Parents encouraged to contact school if they become aware of a problem.
- Public recognition and reward for positive behaviour and resolution of problems.

C. Intervention:

- Once identified, each bully, victim and witnesses will be spoken with, and all incidents or allegations of bullying/cyberbullying will be fully investigated and documented.
- Parents to be contacted.
- Students and staff identified by others as bullies will be informed of allegations.
- Both bullies and victims will be offered counselling and support.
- Removal of cyber-bullies from access to the school's network and computers for a period of time.
- If student bullying persists, parents will be contacted, and consequences implemented consistent with the school's Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy.

D. Post Violation:

- Consequences for students will be individually based and may involve:
 - exclusion from class.
 - exclusion from yard.
 - school suspension.
 - withdrawal of privileges.
 - ongoing counselling from appropriate agency for both victim and bully.
- Criminal charges being laid by police.
- Support Structures.
- Ongoing monitoring of identified bullies and victims.
- Rewards for positive behaviour.

Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed with whole staff, student, parent and community input as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

This policy was last updated in June 2021.

References:

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Bethal Primary School Policy Documents – CYBERBULLYING POLICY