SPS ANTI BULLYING and HARASSMENT POLICY

RATIONALE

Sherbourne Primary School is committed to providing a safe and caring environment and to have a welcoming culture. It fosters positive relationships to be formed amongst all students, staff and other community members which encourages self-esteem, co-operation, personal growth alongside a positive attitude to learning and teaching. A clear policy on bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment will inform the community that bullying and harassment in any form will not be tolerated.

All members of our school community have the right to feel safe and respected.

At Sherbourne we value:

- Respect
- Responsibility
- Teamwork
- Learning

Bullying is not acceptable in the positive culture of Sherbourne Primary School.

AIMS:

- To reinforce within the school community what bullying is, and the fact that it is unacceptable.
- To ensure everyone within the school community be alert to signs and evidence of bullying and have a responsibility to report it to staff whether as observer or victim.
- To ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are followed up appropriately and that support is given to both victims and instigator/s.
- To seek parental and peer-group support and co-operation at all times.

DEFINITIONS

A person is bullied when they are intentionally exposed regularly and over time to negative or harmful actions by one or more other people. It is not a one-off disagreement between two or more people or a situation of mutual dislike.

Bullying is the inappropriate use of power over another. It is when a person, or a group of people, repeatedly upset or hurt another person or damage their property, reputation or social acceptance. Bullying is a clear form of harassment that can be physical, social, verbal, psychological, cyber or telecommunications based.

Bullying can be:

Harassment is any verbal, physical or sexual conduct (including gestures) which is uninvited, unwelcome or offensive to a person.

Cyber-bullying consists of psychological bullying, conveyed through electronic mediums such as mobile phones, social media websites, Xangas (on-line personal profiles where some adolescents create lists of people they do not like) or ‘MUD’ rooms (multi-user domains where individuals take on different characters). It could be verbal, audio visual, still image, video-image or written using the various mediums available.

Direct verbal bullying includes name calling, insults, verbal abuse, homophobic or racist remarks.

Direct physical bulling includes hitting, tripping, pushing or damaging property.
Indirect bullying includes spreading rumours, playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate, mimicking, encouraging others to socially exclude a person, damaging a person's social reputation or social acceptance.

GUIDELINES

- A school-wide approach will be taken to deal with bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment in a consistent and systematic way.

- All new students and staff will be informed of the anti-bullying and harassment policies and practices at the commencement of their time at the school.

- Any form of bullying behaviour, including cyber bullying and/or harassment will be taken seriously and investigated in confidence.

- Constructive and restorative intervention strategies will include: counselling; behaviour modification education; problem solving and social skills development; resilience and coping strategies; assertiveness training; restorative meetings.

- Where disciplinary measures are required, they will be in accordance with the Student Engagement & Wellbeing policy. The principal or nominee will provide disciplinary consequences including suspension where applicable in accordance with Department of Education and Training (DET) guidelines.

- Where a bullying and/or harassment incident has been verified by the school, parents will be informed. Parents are also encouraged to contact the school if they have any information regarding alleged bullying or harassment incidents.

- The school will provide preventative curriculum programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving. The school will access external providers and resources as appropriate to promote and ensure that all students are given the opportunity to develop and strengthen their mental health, personal and social well-being. eg Life Education, Brainstorms production

- Implementation of the school's Values Program along with Acceptable Use (Internet) agreements will provide the basis for a safe, secure, respectful and supportive environment for all students and staff.

- Students, staff and parents all have a responsibility to ensure the safety, security and well-being of each member of the school community. This responsibility extends to ensuring the privacy of information relating to school community members.

- Multimedia technologies have created new domains in which young people learn and interact. Technology such as mobile phones, SMS, in-phone cameras, emails and social learning sites can be an effective way to learn and a great way to communicate. As a consequence, cyber bullying education and privacy requirements regarding the use of these technologies will be taught.

- Where appropriate, the school will utilise and refer parents and students to outside agencies in an effort to provide further support to both victim and perpetrator.
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STAFF WILL:

- If a teacher feels a student is at serious and imminent risk from bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment then it is their professional duty to pass on the information to an appropriate person in order to ensure appropriate support for the student. It is important that teachers document fully their interaction with the student and verify any actions taken.

- Staff professional development will occur periodically to keep staff informed of current issues/strategies for dealing with bullying and/or harassment issues.

STUDENTS WILL:

- If students believe they are being bullied they may contact their teacher, a staff member they would prefer to talk to, the welfare co-ordinator, the Principal or their parents to discuss the matter with.

LINKS AND APPENDICES (including processes related to this policy)

Links which are connected with this policy are:

- DET’S Student Engagement Guidance
- DET’S Bully Stoppers : Make a Stand, Lend a Hand
- DET’S Vulnerable Students
- The school’s Acceptable Use of ICT Agreement
- DEECD’s Respectful Schools

Appendices which are connected with this policy are:

- Appendix A: Anti-Bullying (including cyber-bullying) and Anti-Harassment Procedures
- Appendix B: Reporting on Incident of Bullying / Harassment – Template
- Appendix C: Formal Referral of Student who has bullied / harassed other to Student Welfare Coordinator – Template

EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed annually or more often if necessary due to changes in regulations or circumstances.