



**Government
of South Australia**

Department for Education

Governing Council

Ratified

Date: 17/2/2020

2020

Renmark West Primary School Bullying and Harassment Policy



Respect • Honesty • Responsibility

1. Statement

Renmark West Primary school is a safe and supportive school community that promotes student wellbeing and develops respectful relationships. We want all students to be safe. Our school aims to establish a community in which everyone supports our school values. We are committed to ensuring an environment where;

- Everyone is valued and respected.
- Individual differences are understood and accepted.
- Each member of the school community considers the welfare of others.

We will work with the school community and other services and agencies to support our students in being responsible and productive members of our community.

At Renmark West Primary School, we do not tolerate bullying, harassment or violence in any form and these behaviours will be dealt with seriously, promptly and appropriately.

2. Definitions

Bullying, harassment, discrimination, cyberbullying, violence and sexual harassment are all interpersonal behaviours that can create or contribute to negative social environments.

Bullying

Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening.

Bullying can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time (for example, through sharing of digital records).

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have immediate, medium and long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders. Single incidents or conflict between students with the same level of power, are not defined as bullying.

Harassment

Harassment is behaviour that offends, humiliates, intimidates or creates a hostile environment and targets an individual or group due to their:

- identity, race, culture or ethnic origin
- religion
- physical characteristics
- gender
- sexual orientation
- marital, parenting or economic status
- age
- ability or disability

It offends, humiliates, intimidates or creates a hostile environment. It may be:

- an ongoing pattern of behaviour or a single act
- directed randomly or towards the same person(s)
- intentional or unintentional

Discrimination

Discrimination occurs when people are treated less favourably than others because of their:

- identity, race, culture or ethnic origin
- religion
- physical characteristics
- gender
- sexual orientation
- marital, parenting or economic status
- age
- ability or disability.

Violence

Violence is the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against another person(s) that results in psychological harm, injury or in some cases, death. It may involve provoked or unprovoked acts and can be a single incident, a random act or can occur over time.

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual conduct which makes a person (male or female, of the same or opposite gender, same-sex attracted, bisexual or transgender) feel offended, humiliated and/or intimidated, where that reaction to the conduct is reasonable in the circumstances. Sexual harassment can be a single incident, repeated or continuous, direct or indirect and takes various forms including but not exclusive to;

- touching or kissing someone
- making comments or jokes of a sexual nature
- showing or sending pornographic pictures
- emails, texts or other messages with sexual content
- questions or comments about a person's sexual activity

It is considered sexual harassment if this behaviour makes the other person feel scared or upset and it's reasonable for them to feel that way.

It doesn't matter whether the behaviour was meant as harassment or whether it was meant as a compliment or as a joke.

3. Reporting and Responsibilities

It is the RIGHT of everyone to be safe, to learn, to be respected and to be valued. This means it is everyone's responsibility to take the necessary steps to stop bullying behaviour and harassment and report it if needed. Our school will actively promote a positive and welcoming personal environment for all members of the school community. Bullying and harassment will be reported and addressed. Individual differences will be respected and students and staff will

be enabled and supported in their pursuit of learning and teaching.

Family Responsibilities

Be a positive role model.

- Watch for signs of distress in your child (not wanting to come to school; bruising; headaches, stomach aches).
- Be available and listen to your child.
- Encourage your child to report the problem or make a report yourself to someone on staff (preferably the class teacher).
- This may be done either via a Bullying and Harassment Report form available at the office, and/or verbally. This is to be done as soon as possible.
- Discourage any form of retaliation; rather discuss positive strategies that your child could use.
- Do not approach any children involved or their parents.

Staff Responsibilities

Be a positive role model.

- Use positive classroom management strategies and explicitly teach strategies to enhance students' social skills and reduce bullying and harassment.
- Be available and listen to reports of bullying or harassment.
- Record any incidents using the "Bullying / Harassment Report Form."
- Discourage any form of retaliation, rather discuss positive strategies that the child could use.
- Monitor the situation and/or refer it directly to senior staff if necessary.
- Photocopy the form and give a copy to the Principal and Wellbeing Leader. This is to be done as soon as possible.
- Be obviously present during recess and lunch times when on duty.

Student Responsibilities

Report bullying or harassment to an adult. Do this whether it happens to you or someone else.

Use a "Bullying /Harassment Report Form" or tell someone.

- Be aware of how you speak and act towards others on or offline.
- Ask the person bullying to stop.
- Offer help to the person being bullied. Don't join in the bullying.

Bystanders

A bystander is someone who sees or knows about bullying / harassment that is happening to someone else. Bystanders can either be part of the bullying /harassment or an important part of stopping it.

Supportive bystanders will take action and/or use words to help someone who is being bullied/harassed.

This may include:

- Never standing by, watching or encouraging bullying / harassment.

- Supporting the person being bullied/harassed to ask for help.
- Reporting it to someone in authority or to someone they trust.
- Never forwarding on or responding to messages or photos that may be upsetting or offensive.
- Not harassing, teasing or spreading gossip about others. This includes on social networks like Facebook.

Responding To Cyber-Bullying

The school is required to act in cases of cyber-bullying outside of school hours and off site. Bullying and harassment may include activities that are against the law and should be reported to the police.

If a website or mobile phone was used as part of the bullying it will help with tracking and blocking people engaging in the bullying behaviour. If you can, save the messages and details of the senders. If you are the person who was bullied and you don't want to keep reading the messages, ask someone you trust save them for you. Provide information about which websites or social networks were used. Provide the name of your internet service provider or mobile phone provider.

4. How to recognise a student being bullied

Watch for signs that your child / student may be being bullied /harassed e.g.

- Is unwilling to go to school.
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence.
- Feels sick in the morning
- Refusal to go to school
- Vague headaches or stomach aches
- Has possessions go “missing”
- Asks for money or steals money
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises.

If you think your child / student is being bullied you can;

- Talk with the child / student about your concerns and listen calmly to them.
- If possible, first allow your child / student to report the situation and deal with it.
- Avoid blaming your child / student for the bullying / harassment.
- Discourage any planned retaliation; rather discuss positive strategies they can use.
- Report any cases of bullying / harassment even if your child is not directly involved or affected. Find out what happened, who was involved, where it happened, and if anyone else saw it.

5. Actions

All incidents of bullying are communicated to the Wellbeing Leader and or the Principal. Each situation is managed according to the circumstances and is investigated by staff as soon as possible. Restorative justice practices are implemented where possible and caregivers are

informed about incidents involving their child. Consequences will depend on the nature, severity and extent of the bullying.

Restorative Justice Practices

In this approach to behaviour management, the term 'restorative' is used to stress that when a student misbehaves, restoring relationships, repairing harm and learning perspective-taking and social responsibility is more important and effective than simply delivering punishment for their misbehaviour.

Restorative practices include:

- Peer Mediation in which students use a structured format, discuss and problem solve an issue that has affected an individual or group.
- A 'restorative interview' where the teacher or Wellbeing Leader uses an incident of misbehaviour as an educative opportunity for teaching empathy, consequential thinking and the importance of making amends in order to repair harm and relationships.
- A more formal 'restorative conference' is used with more serious or ongoing misbehaviour and usually involves senior staff, parents / carers.

Different children have different capacities to participate in a restorative process and the process may look different for each child.

Consequences

Consequences which the school may impose includes any one, or a combination of the following:

- Mediation/Restorative Practices
- Written or verbal warnings
- Loss of privileges including exclusion from yard or yard restrictions
- Informing and consulting parents/carers
- Ongoing counselling for both victim and bully
- Social skills training
- Wellbeing program
- Internal or external suspension
- Exclusion

Other actions deemed appropriate by the School may include:

- Police notification
- Reinforcement of positive behaviours
- Classroom meetings
- Support structures (Literacy support etc.)
- Ongoing monitoring of identified bullies
- Rewards for positive behaviour

Other Considerations

Other considerations include:

- The involvement of students with a disability (including learning disabilities).
- Students under the Guardianship of the Minister (GOM).
- Actions responding to incidents will vary according to the nature and frequency of the bullying or harassment and the individual circumstances of the victim and the offender.
- The severity of disciplinary action will be increased for repeat offenders.

6. Prevention, Intervention and Coping Strategies

What we do to reduce bullying and harassment

Building children's resilience, skills to manage big feelings and having strategies to deal with life's ups and downs, helps children be in charge of their decisions, life experience and to take responsibility for their behaviours. We foster an environment where children feel connected to their peers and have an adult they can trust. All adults in the Renmark West Primary School community can support this all the time, whether children are experiencing a specific problem or not. These are all effective ways to Bully Proof our children.

Prevention strategies

- Positive role modeling by staff.
- Teaching students our values of Respect, Honesty and Responsibility.
- Re-enforce the Golden rule of Play is the Way; "Treat others as you would like them to treat you".
- Encourage students to take responsibility for the decisions they make.
- Promote self-mastery.
- Teach students social skills, problem solving and conflict resolution skills.
- Ensuring students have choice, voice and relevance in learning programs, including social learning.
- Teaching student social skills that help them manage their feelings eg the 5 point scale.
- Encourage students to be tolerant of differences including the whole school involvement in Harmony Day.
- Implement the "Keeping Safe" child protection curriculum.
- Explicitly teaching about bullying and harassment. Teaching internet safety skills and knowledge.

Intervention strategies

- Talk to parents of those being bullied and those doing the bullying.
- Follow through may involve counselling, support groups or support plans or consequences.

- All responses use a restorative justice approach. This gives the person using the reported behaviours the opportunity to repair damage done.
- The behaviour will be investigated and determined if it is bullying / harassment or a random act of unkindness.
- Efficient record keeping of all reported incidents.
- Ensure children receive clear information about appropriate behaviours and feedback when they are learning new behaviours.

Post intervention Strategies

Staff are to be made aware of students who have been involved in Bullying incidents. This includes SSOs and yard duty teachers so we can work as a team to further monitor interactions between children who are having difficulty. The school will also;

- Talk with parents about strategies to support their child
- Keep an eye on problem areas in the yard
- Review and implement behaviour procedures and plans
- Invite support from the Regional Office, DfE and/or counselling services when needed.
- Provide opportunities for parents or staff to arrange a follow up meeting

Coping strategies

There's always something you can do. Ideas include;

- Keep your distance from bullying
- Don't suffer in silence.
- Reach out to anyone, parents, older sister/brother, Aunt, Uncle, Cousin, Teachers, anyone. Tell someone what is going on and together make a plan of action.
- Don't bully them back
- Tell them what they are doing is not ok
- Talk to an adult you trust
- Have someone help you report cyberbullying or assault
- Keep a supportive network around you.

7. Training and development

All teachers have undertaken Reporting Abuse & Neglect (RAN) training, as is a requirement of employment.

All teachers are trained in delivering the Keeping Safe Curriculum (KS:CPC). This is taught each year. The program follows two main themes:

- We all have the right to be safe
- We can help ourselves to be safe by talking to people we trust.

These two themes are explored through four focus areas:

- The right to be safe
- Relationships

- Recognising and reporting abuse
- Protective strategies.

The focus areas are examined in varying complexity according to the age of the learners.

Student voice is promoted, sought, listened to and responded to both in the classroom, and at a whole school level to ensure students feel safe and feel they belong.

Renmark West Primary School annually takes part in the DfE ‘Student Wellbeing and Engagement Survey’ (year levels 4-7).

8. Distribution list

Staff – access the Anti Bullying Policy through the common shared drives on the network. Dedicated time is allocated at staff meetings to review practices and a copy of the policy will be included in the staff information booklet.

Students – will be educated in identifying and preventing Bullying through the Child Protection Curriculum. Class teachers to reinforce learning of the schools Anti Bullying Policy will use selected elements of the policy.

Governing Council – members will be supplied with a copy of the policy, will have opportunities to give feedback and ratify the Policy

Parents – will have access to the full policy on the School’s website which will be updated after the new version has been ratified by the Governing Council. An abridged version will be included in the new parent information booklet.

9. Review date

Term 1, 2021

10. Documented processes

- Bullying and Harassment Report forms are available to students and parents to report suspected cases of bullying and harassment.
- Bullying audits are conducted annually to monitor levels of perceived bullying.
- Engagement and Wellbeing surveys are reviewed annually.
- Biannual reports on Bullying and Harassment are presented to Governing Council.

11. Further Information

The following contacts can provide support and information about bullying and harassment for parents and students:

- DfE Parent Helpline - 1 800 222 696 <https://www.education.sa.gov.au/>
- Beyond Blue Support Services 1300 22 4636
<https://healthyfamilies.beyondblue.org.au>
- Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800 www.kidshelp.com.au
- Parent Helpline 1300 364 100
- Keep safe child protection curriculum
<https://www.education.sa.gov.au/teaching/curriculum-and-teaching/keeping-safe-child-protection-curriculum/about-keeping-safe-child>
- Bullying No Way! <https://bullyingnoway.gov.au>
- ACMA Australian Communication and Media Authority www.cybersmart.gov.au
- ThinkUKnow the Australian Federal Police internet safety program
www.thinkuknow.org.au
- Cyber security website for internet users: www.staysmartonline.gov.au
- Parenting SA Parent Easy Guide <https://parenting.sa.gov.au/>