

Definition:

Bullying is when someone, or a group of people, deliberately upset or hurt another person or damage their property, reputation or social acceptance on more than one occasion. There is an imbalance of power in incidents of bullying with the bully or bullies having more power at the time due to age, size, status or other reasons.

This table describes the categories of bullying.

Category	Description
Direct physical bullying	hitting, kicking, tripping, pinching and pushing or damaging property
Direct verbal bullying	name calling, insults, teasing, intimidation, homophobic or racist remarks, or verbal abuse.
Indirect bullying	action designed to harm someone's social reputation and/or cause humiliation. Indirect bullying includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lying and spreading rumours • playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate • mimicking • encouraging others to socially exclude someone damaging someone's social reputation or social acceptance
Cyberbullying	direct verbal or indirect bullying behaviours using digital technologies. This includes harassment via a mobile phone, setting up a defamatory personal website or deliberately excluding someone from social networking spaces.

Note: many distressing behaviours are not examples of bullying even though they are unpleasant and often require teacher intervention and management.

Mutual conflict involves a disagreement between people but not an imbalance of power. Both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution. Unresolved mutual conflict can develop into bullying if one of the parties targets the other repeatedly in retaliation.

Single- episode acts of nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. If someone is verbally abused or pushed on one occasion they are not being bullied.

Nastiness or physical aggression that is directed towards many different people is not the same as bullying. However, this does not mean that single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression should be ignored or condoned as these are unacceptable behaviours.

Rationale:

- The school will provide a positive culture where bullying is not accepted, and in so doing, all will have the right of respect from others, the right to learn or to teach, and a right to feel safe and secure in their school environment.

Aims:

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

Implementation:

- A school-wide approach will be taken to deal with bullying (including cyber-bullying) and harassment in a consistent and systematic way.
- Parents, teachers, students and the community will be aware of the school's position on bullying.
- This policy will be made available to all parents through the school website www.reservoirviewsps.vic.edu.au
- All complaints of bullying will be heard in confidence and taken seriously.
- There will be disciplinary actions covering a range of consequences for those in breach of the Bullying Policy dependent upon a number of factors, including the severity of the incident, frequency and age of students involved. Disciplinary actions will comply with the school's Student Engagement Policy Policy and DEECD guidelines.
- The school will adopt a four stage response to bullying as detailed below:

A. Creating a zero-tolerance culture

- Active promotion of the school values- respect, responsibility, trust, caring, fairness and learning- within the school community as the expected norms for all interactions.
- Professional development for staff relating to bullying, harassment and proven counter measures.
- Community awareness and input relating to bullying, its characteristics and the school's programs and response.
- Provision of classroom programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving.
- Classroom teacher/ staff to clarify at the start of each year the school policy on bullying as part of the student induction program.
- School Community, staff and students to promote the philosophy of 'No Put Downs' and zero tolerance to bullying on an on-going basis.
- Provision of play equipment, electives and structured activities available to students at recess and lunch breaks to support respectful and responsible play.

- Classroom teachers/staff and the Principal on a regular basis reminding students and staff to report incidents of bullying.
- School involvement in the E-Smart program to inform and educate all community members with regard to the safe use of digital technologies.
<https://www.esmartschools.org.au/Pages/default.aspx>
- Support students to adopt a whole school approach to problem solving in challenging situations:
 - Tell the person you do not like what they are doing and ask them to stop!
 - Move away to another part of the yard
 - If behaviour continues tell the teacher/ staff member
 - Seek immediate help by ringing the emergency bell outside the staffroom if needed.
 - Tell your teacher/ staff member/ buddy/ trusted adult as soon as possible after the undesired behaviour occurs.

B. Early Intervention:

- Staff to follow-up all incidents of bullying at this level of intervention with individual students involved in order to seek a resolution and cessation of behaviours, with reference to the list of possible consequences/ actions listed as part of this document.
- Classroom teachers to utilise a range of strategies to raise the profile of acceptable behaviours within their area/team including class meetings to discuss issues more generally, moral stories, role playing etc. Resource materials can be downloaded from a range of sources including:
<http://www.kidsmatter.edu.au/primary/programs/bully-busters> and
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers/Pages/default.aspx>
- Parents encouraged to contact the school if they become aware of a problem.
- Recognition and reward for positive behaviour and resolution of problems.
- Staff mandated to report bullying incidents, as per the definitions, to a member of the Leadership Team using Student Incident Form for formal school follow-up for repeated or severe bullying episodes by a child. At this stage the school response would escalate to the next level.
- School Council President will be informed of serious and ongoing bullying incidents.

C. Intervention:

- Once identified each bully, victims and witnesses will be spoken with, and all incidents or allegations of bullying will be fully investigated and documented.
- Students and staff identified by others as bullies will be informed of allegations.
- Both bullies and victims will be offered counselling and support.
- Consequences will be implemented as per the list below.
- If student bullying persists parents will be contacted and consequences implemented consistent with the school's Student Engagement and Well Being Policy.
- If staff bullying persists the Principal will commence formal disciplinary action.

D. After the Bullying has occurred

- Reinforcement of positive behaviours with individual students and class cohort using strategies such as classroom meetings etc.
- Support structures continued for all students involved including on-going counselling and other referrals to external professionals where required.
- Ongoing monitoring and documenting of inappropriate behaviours of identified bullies by all staff.

- Continuation of Parent Support Group meetings between school and parent to continue to monitor student's behaviour and interactions.
- Behaviour Management Plans and Student Management Plans to continue to be reviewed and adapted to accommodate improvements in behaviour and interactions.
- Rewards for positive behaviour.

Possible Consequences/Actions:

Consequences for students will be individually based depending upon the age of the students involved, the severity of the incident/s, their past history with regard to bullying behaviours and other factors which may need to be considered, eg disability.

These factors will also influence the entry level for consequences used, as below.

Consequences could include:

- Re-statement of rules and expectations
- Conference with teachers/ leadership
- Think time detention
- Restorative conversations with persons involved with a view to developing empathy by the bully for the impact of their actions on others.
- Exclusion from yard
- Exclusion from class
- Withdrawal of privileges eg laptops, specialist classes, sporting events, excursions, camps etc
- Parents notified and Parent Support Group Meetings for the student involved convened on a regular basis
- Behaviour Management Plan developed in consultation with parents
- Student Management Plan developed to manage students interactions in the classroom, yard, special events to minimise contact between the bullying and the student being bullied.
- Counselling from appropriate agency for both victim and bully.
- Referrals made to external agencies eg psychologists, paediatricians, Baltara , AUSTINCAMHS as appropriate
- School suspension
- Possible School Conditional Placement.
- Expulsion
- Trespass Order where the bullying behaviour is from a parent or outside person.
- Formal processes involving the Performance Review process and Conduct and Ethics where staff are involved in bullying incidents.
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Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed with whole staff, student, parent and community input as part of the school's policy review cycle or as required after any significant or critical incident.

This policy was last ratified by School Council on September 17th 2014