

# BLACKSMITHS PUBLIC SCHOOL

## Anti-Bullying Plan

*Blacksmiths Public School strives to create a safe, caring school environment in which students are nurtured as they learn. We recognise the diversity within the school community and provide programs and support which acknowledge difference and promote harmony. Bullying of any kind is not tolerated and our school community actively discourages any type of bullying through our curriculum policies, values program, modelling, and daily interactions.*

### **What is Bullying**

According to the "Department of Education and Training Information Brochure for Parents 2000" bullying is repeated incidents involving:

- a bigger, stronger or more powerful child on a smaller or weaker child, or
- a group of children on a single child

This could be:

- verbal: the child is called names, put down, threatened
- physical: the child is hit, tripped, poked or belongings are stolen or damaged
- social: the child is left out, ignored or rumours are spread
- psychological: the child is stalked or given dirty looks
- cyberbullying: via email, phone, internet etc.

### **Statement of Purpose**

All members of Blacksmiths P.S. community have a responsibility to actively deter bullying and to deal appropriately with incidents involving bullies.

We believe that the policies and practises we promote will aid the development of respectful and productive relationships, where individual rights and differences are valued and we live and learn together in harmony.

### **Managing Bullying**

#### **i) Identifying bullying behaviours**

Bullying is different from ordinary teasing, rough and tumble or schoolyard fights. What makes it different is that the incidents are ongoing, and there is usually an imbalance of size, strength and power between the children involved.

Bullying can be.....

- Giving nasty looks
- Calling names
- Being rude
- Spreading stories
- Teasing
- Keeping someone out of a group
- Acting in an unpleasant way near someone (body language)
- Hurting someone physically
- Harassment
- Any form of discrimination based on disability, gender, race &/or religion or other criteria.

#### **What Are the Signs of being Bullied?**

Bullying may be very hard to see. It usually happens out of sight, away from teachers and adults. Some tell-tale signs may include :

- bruises, scratches or cuts that your child can't really explain
- torn or damaged clothing
- damaged or missing belongings
- ongoing headaches, stomach aches and other pains that the child can't explain
- unexplained tears or depression
- unusual outbursts of temper

- frequently not wanting to go to school
- not wanting to play with friends
- a decline in the quality of school work

**NB.** It is important to remember that any of these signs could also be indicators of other problems apart from bullying.

**ii) Procedures for dealing with bullying**

a) Students who feel they are being bullied should:

- **NOT** retaliate by using bullying yourself. Try not to show you are afraid or upset.

**Step 1:** Ignore it. Show that it does not upset you. The bully then is not rewarded and the bullying may stop.

**Step 2:** Talk to the person bullying you. Tell her or him to Stop. *If it still does not stop:*

**Step 3:** Talk it over openly with trusted adults (i.e. class teacher or parent. *If the bullying still does not stop:*

**Step 4:** Talk to the Principal. Allow him/her to take the action they see as necessary.

**Remember: It is your right to tell someone if you or your friends are being bullied.**

b) Students who see someone being bullied or who know someone is being bullied, should:

- Let a trusted, older person, such as a teacher or parent, know what is happening.
- Let the bullies know you don't like their behaviour
- Do not join in, or watch and let it happen.

c) Parents can help if they believe their child is being bullied

It helps if parents :

- involve the children in making decisions about what to do
- listen to what children say
- tell them what they understand

It does not help if parents :

- get angry or upset
- feel guilty or ashamed
- make the children think it is not important
- blame the children
- blame the school
- accuse people without knowing the facts
- look for scapegoats
- demand to know all the details at once, and
- look for easy solutions

Many parents do get angry, quite understandably and want to go to the school and sort it out NOW!

**As a first step it is usually best to -**

- encourage the child to talk through it as far as he or she wants to, to get the basic facts
- ask questions gently
- help the child reflect on what has been done so far and
- help the child work out what might be done

It is important to find out - what happened: who was involved: where: when: did anybody else see it and, if so, who?

It is a good idea to write down what you find out.

### **There are some important next steps to consider-**

- never try to sort out the bullies yourself. This rarely works and often makes matters worse
- once you have a clear picture of the situation, make an appointment to see the school principal or class teacher
- present the information you have as calmly as possible
- do it in a way that makes it clear to the school that you see yourself and the school as partners in trying to fix the problem. Tell the school what you and your child would like to do and ask them for ideas as well
- the school will need time to investigate matters and talk to teachers, other students
- make a note of what the school says it will do and arrange to make a follow-up call to see what has been done

### **How to Report?**

Students and parents are encouraged to make their classroom teacher aware of bullying behaviour.

When a report is made to a teacher a no blame approach is taken using the following steps:

- Step 1** \* Interview the alleged victim/s. This involves fact finding, building their awareness, reassurance, the restitution desired and preparation for the final interview.
- Step 2** \* Interview the alleged perpetrator/s. There is a situation that needs to be sorted out, encouraging them to talk about their involvement, building their awareness, exploring restitution and preparation for the final interview.
- Step 3** \* The two parties and sometimes, appropriate supporters, are brought together in a final interview.
- Step 4** \* Students involved in bullying incidents, both perpetrator/s and victim/s, will be monitored in an ongoing manner. School counsellor and/or external expertise may be involved if necessary.

***Note: If bullying persists or recurs, consequences as given in our Discipline Policy are implemented. Parents will be informed of any ongoing concerns.***

- d) Teachers and school staff who believe a child is being bullied, or is bullying, will advise the principal who will follow the above steps.
- i) Teachers and other school staff, both paid and volunteer must ensure that they are not, in any way, condoning any form of bullying.
- ii) Staff at Blacksmiths P.S. will be regularly updated on the signs of bullying and school procedures for dealing with it.
- iii) Policies and procedures relating to bullying will be regularly updated to ensure that they meet current best practise standards.
- iv) Any incidents of bullying will be recorded in the Bullying Section of the School Behaviour Folder. This will be monitored by the Principal and data analysed each term and presented to staff & P & C. Any recurring problems will require further action as deemed necessary by the principal, in consultation with staff, community, parents and students.
- v) The antibullying message is communicated to students via our PD/H/PE program, our school rules, modelling by staff and regular reminders during the year.