



Promoting Positive Behaviour & Prevention & Management of Bullying

2021

Rights and Responsibilities

At East Fremantle Primary School, it is the right of every individual in the school community — students, staff, and parents — to learn and work in a safe and comfortable environment and if bullied, to be provided with help and support.

It is also the responsibility of every individual in the school community to prevent and respond to observations and reports of bullying.

Definition of Bullying

When an individual or group misuses power to target another individual or group to intentionally threaten or harm them on more than one occasion.

This may involve verbal, physical, relational and psychological forms of bullying. Teasing or fighting between peers is not necessarily bullying.

Note: Bullying is different to other forms of aggression in three key aspects:

1. It is deliberate and is repeated between the same individuals over a prolonged length of time.
2. There is an imbalance of power used to intimidate or dominate such that the person bullied cannot self-protect and is therefore vulnerable.
3. There is no justification for the action of the bully.

Types of Bullying

<i>Verbal</i>	The repeated use of words to hurt or humiliate another individual or group. Verbal bullying includes using put-downs, insulting language, name-calling, swearing, nasty notes and homophobic, racist or sexist comments.
<i>Physical</i>	Repetitive low level hitting, kicking, pinching, pushing, tripping, “ganging up”, unwanted physical or sexual touching, and damage to personal property. High levels of physical assault may be classified as violence
<i>Psychological</i>	Repeated stalking, threats or implied threats, unwanted email or text messaging, abusive websites, threatening gestures, manipulation, emotional black-mail, and threats to an individual’s reputation and sense of safety.
<i>Relational</i>	This usually involves repeatedly ostracizing others by leaving them out or convincing others to exclude or reject another individual or group from their social connections, making up or spreading rumours and sharing or threatening to share others personal information.
<i>Cyber</i>	This involves the use of information and communication technologies such as e-mail, text messages, instant messaging and websites to engage in the bullying of other individuals or groups. This technology provides an alternative means for verbal, relational and psychological forms of bullying.

Whole School Prevention of Bullying

Teachers' Responsibilities

- Understanding bullying
- Promote pro-social, cooperative behaviour among all students
- Appropriate bystander behaviour;
Children who may not be directly involved in bullying nor directly bullied are referred to as "bystanders". A bystander is someone who sees the bullying or knows it is happening to someone else.
- Responsible reporting of bullying incidents
- Skills and strategies for students who may be bullied (assertiveness, conflict resolution and peer mediation)

School organisation

- Provision of sanctuary – eg. Library
- Ensuring grounds duty teachers closely supervise playground areas where bullying incidents are likely to occur.
- Use of specialist EA to 'teach' games and fair play
- Monitor incidents of bullying and review anti-bullying procedures annually

Parents

Ensure parents have:

- A shared understanding of the definition of bullying
- Knowledge of the school's procedures for managing bullying incidents
- Strategies to use if their child is bullied or is involved in bullying

Management of Bullying Incidents

Reporting bullying incidents **during class or breaks:**

- i. Staff are to investigate all instances reported to them by students and record details.
- ii. Details are to be recorded by a member of the school executive on a Bullying Incidents Report form (Appendix 1). Reporting teacher signs the form as being an accurate record of the incident.
- iii. Any patterns of repeated incidents are to be reported to and discussed with the child's class teacher. If it is decided that a pattern of bullying is in evidence, teachers complete a Bullying Incidents Report form and discuss it with a member of the school executive to decide on further action.

Reporting bullying incidents **during instructional time:**

- i. Teachers are to deal with and record instances as per the school Behaviour Management policy.
- ii. Once a pattern of bullying is in evidence, teachers complete a Bullying Incidents Report form and discuss it with a member of the school executive to decide on further action.
- iii. Analysis of bullying incidents and existing processes will be part of the school's annual review.

Dealing with Students Involved in Bullying

The school's aim in working with students involved in a bullying incident is:

- i. for the person being bullied, to be supported and rebuilt.
- ii. for the person responsible for the bullying, to understand the unacceptable nature of their actions and the need to change his/her behaviour in the future.
- iii. At all times the focus is to be on the behaviour — not the person. Conciliatory and restorative measures are far more successful in bringing about immediate and lasting changes in behaviour than authoritative or punitive measures.

The No Blame Approach

The No Blame Approach is the method to be used by all staff. The approach is based on the following principles:

- ❖ Problem solving approach giving responsibility rather than blame to the group
- ❖ Bullying occurring in the context of group behaviour
- ❖ Developing empathy and concern for others

Parents of students involved in bullying incidents are to be informed of the situation prior to implementing the above approach.

The process of each instance of using the No Blame Approach is to be recorded on the No Blame Approach Record form (Appendix 2) by the teacher and/or deputy principal carrying out the process.

Once completed, the form is to be recorded and forwarded to the Principal.

THE 'NO BLAME APPROACH' TO DEALING WITH BULLYING – Step by Step Guide

Step 1 Interview the Target of the Bullying

The teacher interviews the bullied student to find out about his or her feelings. The teacher does not need to know all about the incident but does need to know who is involved. Permission must be gained from the bullied student to tell the bullies how he or she is feeling about the incident. The target is reassured that the bullies will not be in trouble so there is no concern for reprisal.

Step 2: Convene a meeting with the students involved

An informal but powerful peer situation is being established. The main bullies, bystanders and colluders are included. This may be a small group of six students who meet together with the teacher separately from the target. The support group often needs reassurance at the beginning of the meeting that they are not in trouble. The teacher explains that they have been chosen as they can all offer help in some way.

This is what the group has in common. An informal atmosphere is created by arranging seating in a circular fashion and, if possible, using a room that is neutral ground for those involved.

Step 3: Share with the individual/group the target's feelings

The teacher shares indirectly how the bullied student is feeling, not apportioning blame with details of the actual incident. The teacher may have a poem, story, drawing or diary entry done by the target to illustrate how she or he feels. (Research indicates that effective education for bullies is empathy.)

The teacher's aim is to raise empathy within the group, asking questions such as: 'Has anyone ever been bullied at school?'

The teacher listens to the student's responses, suggesting that the target must be feeling like that too. The teacher does not ask why questions. In the end it serves only to waste time and distracts students from offering solutions.

Step 4: Hand over responsibility to the individual/group

The teacher emphasizes in a non-judgmental way that everyone has the right to feel safe and happy at school.

The teacher reassures the group that they can support the target, thus handing over the responsibility to them. The focus becomes the solution not the blame.

Step 5: Ask the individual/group for their ideas and solutions

The teacher asks students to suggest ways that they could make the bullied student feel happier at school. The teacher then offers approving comments but does not extract a promise from the students regarding their solutions. Students' suggestions may include:

- I'll invite him to join in our game.
- I'll ask if she wants to join our group at lunchtime.

It is advised to ignore negative and resentful comments, and to focus on praising suggestions offered from the group. This often reassures the quieter students to make a contribution or to reinforce someone else.

Some teachers believe including a couple of responsible students (who may be in leadership roles) can help raise the social conscience of the group and the flow of the process.

Step 6: Let the students implement their plan

The teacher ends the meeting by giving the students the responsibility to solve the problem and together develop a plan. It is vital that the responsibility is passed on to the group, encouraging ownership in terms of implementing the plan. The teacher expresses confidence in the group and arranges a time and place to follow up and review the situation with each student individually.

Step 7: Follow-up interviews with each student

As arranged, the teacher meets with each of the students a week later to review solutions. It is best to check in with the target first. The teacher ascertains whether the bullying has stopped. If so, each student is complimented and thanked. Reviews can be continued for as long as required. Usually two reviews are adequate.

Appendix 1

Record of Bullying Incident & Intervention

Name of Bullied Child: _____ Yr _____ Room _____

Class Teacher: _____

Incident Date: _____ Incident Time: _____ Location: _____

Bullying Incident Description:

Intervention Record:

Student Name: _____ Yr _____ Room _____ Parent Notified? ____

Student Name: _____ Yr _____ Room _____ Parent Notified? ____

Student Name: _____ Yr _____ Room _____ Parent Notified? ____

Action: _____ Date: _____

Administrators Signature: _____ Date: _____

