

Yeppoon State School's Policy Against Bullying

Yeppoon State School does not tolerate bullying in any form. All members of the school community are committed to ensuring a safe and caring environment which promotes personal growth and positive self-esteem for all.

1) What is bullying?

Bullying is an act of aggression causing embarrassment, pain or discomfort to another:

- It can take a number of forms: physical, verbal, gesture, extortion and exclusion.
- It is an abuse of power.
- It can be planned and organised or it may be unintentional.
- Individual or groups may be involved.

2) Some examples of bullying include:

- Any form of physical violence such as hitting, pushing or spitting on others.
- Interfering with another's property by stealing, hiding, damaging or destroying it.
- Using offensive names, teasing or spreading rumours about others or their families.
- Using put-downs, belittling others' abilities and achievements.
- Writing offensive notes or graffiti about others
- Making degrading comments about another's culture, religious or social background.
- Hurtfully excluding others from a group.
- Making suggestive comments or other forms of sexual abuse.
- Ridiculing another's appearance.
- Forcing others to act against their will.

3) If we are bullied:

- We may feel frightened, unsafe, embarrassed, angry or unfairly treated.
- Our work, sleep and ability to concentrate may suffer.
- Our relationships with our family and friends may deteriorate.
- We may feel confused and not know what to do about the problem.

4) What do we do to prevent bullying at Yeppoon State School?

As a school community we will not allow cases of bullying to go unreported but will speak up, even at risk to ourselves.

This requires staff to:

- Be role models in word and action at all times.
- Be observant of signs of distress or suspected incidents of bullying.
- Make efforts to remove occasions for bullying by active patrolling during playground duty.
- Arrive at class on time and move promptly between lessons when necessary.
- Take steps to help victims and remove sources of distress without placing the victim at further risk.
- Report suspected incidents to the appropriate staff member such as class teacher, deputy principal, teacher-in-charge of the Special Education Unit, Guidance Officer, Community Youth Worker or Assistant Community Liaison Officer who will follow designated procedures.

This requires Students to:

- Refuse to be involved in any bullying situation. If you are present when bullying occurs:
 1. If appropriate, take some form of preventative action*;
 2. Report the incident or suspected incident and help break down the code of secrecy.

If students who are being bullied have the courage to speak out, they may help reduce pain for themselves and other potential victims.

The school recommends that parents:

- Watch for signs of distress in their child, e.g. unwillingness to attend school, a pattern of headaches, missing equipment, requests for extra money, damaged clothes or bruising;
- Take an active interest in their child's social life and acquaintances;
- Advise your child to tell a staff member about the incident. If possible allow the child to report and deal with the problem himself / herself. He/she can gain much respect through taking the initiative and dealing with the problem without parental involvement;
- Inform the school if bullying is suspected;
- Keep a written record (who, what, where, when, why, how);
- Communicate to your child that parental involvement, if necessary, will be appropriate for the situation;
- Be willing to attend interviews at the school if your child is involved in any bullying incident;
- Be willing to inform the school of any cases of suspected bullying even if your own child is not directly involved.

Preventative Action

If you are harassed

- Ignore it, showing that it does not upset you;
- Confront your harasser and state that the behaviour is unwanted and unjustified.
- Talking it over with others, such as friends or parents who may help to make plans.
- Taking the matter to a class meeting where public disapproval of harassment may stop it;
- Reporting to your class teacher who may deal with it effectively;
- Taking the matter to a higher authority, if necessary the principal, with support from teachers or parents.

What will happen to the harasser?

- First offending bullies will have the opportunity to modify their behaviour and assure the victim of their remorse and sorrow.
- First offending bullies will also receive counselling by appropriate personnel.
- First offending bullies may also be disciplined where appropriate.

When staff, students and parents work together we create a more caring and safe environment for Yeppoon State School built upon courtesy, consideration and cooperation.