

Daylesford Dharma School

Conflict Resolution Policy

"The concept of war is outdated. Your neighbor's interest is your interest. If you destroy your neighbor, ultimately you suffer. When we face disagreement, we have to find true dialogue. Each individual has great potential to make a contribution. We should start to develop a wider perspective and to look at everything in a holistic way – from all angles. We have to promote non-violence with compassion. Others are part of our society, like one body. If the leg is part of the body, the hand should go to help. We should create non-violent methods in our own homes and nations..."

His Holiness the Dalai Lama.
Central Park, New York, 1999

Definition:

Conflict is a natural part of daily life. Learning how to resolve conflict in a positive way is essential for a harmonious and peaceful world.

Conflict resolution processes provide a core opportunity to explore the Buddhist philosophy of non-harm that forms an important principle in our mission statement.

The opportunity to resolve conflicts in a proactive and peaceful manner teaches our children how to play and relate in a conscious non-violent way. This policy reinforces the Daylesford Dharma School culture of being a caring and mindful environment to learn and grow in.

Aim:

Daylesford Dharma School views conflict as the opportunity for reasoned thinking, creative problem solving, inner development and supportive change. Conflict resolution can promote self-confidence, teach problem solving skills and help to develop a world view that values caring, tolerance, justice and the capacity for change.

Strategies:

- We are committed to providing training for our teachers, staff, students and school community in how to resolve conflict peacefully.
- Our conflict resolution process directs the responsibility for solving the conflict to the people involved.
- We support our conflict resolution policy by creating cooperative classroom and school environments where behavior expectations, human rights and responsibilities are clearly articulated.
- Our children are trained and encouraged to resolve their minor conflicts (such as teasing, annoying, taking property without permission), and to sort out problems as they arise and to decide on solutions.
- We offer parents and learning volunteers opportunities for training in our conflict resolution processes to provide continuity of practice within our greater school community.

- We are committed to developing a peer mediation programme so that children feel supported in the playground and classroom to practice their conflict resolution skills through having access to trained peer mentors.
- We provide training and on-going support to children interested in learning to be peer mediators so that they can assist and guide their fellow students in how to practice our school's conflict resolution processes.
- Our peer mediation programme encourages our children to develop natural leadership and nurturing qualities and provides a model for aspiration in the younger students as future mentors. This reflects our school's mission of supporting universal responsibility.

- At Daylesford Dharma School we view our teachers as primary role models for ethical behavior who practice peaceful dialogue and conflict resolution.
- Our teachers are committed to the on-going development and support of an integrated and consistent approach to peace making and conflict resolution where conflict is seen as a primary opportunity to promote inner change and self development.
- Our teachers honor the process of conflict resolution by providing time and support to address problems as they arise.