

Bullying and Harassment Policy

Daylesford Dharma School will not tolerate any form of bullying or harassment within its school community.

Our school community values and promotes inner development, reflective awareness, empathy, compassion and positive self-esteem.

We believe that all students, staff, parents and volunteers are entitled to a secure, safe and friendly environment where both physical and emotional well being is mutually supported.

Our school community commits to the Buddhist precept of non-harm and the process of learning to treat all beings with dignity, respect and tolerance.

We commit to the principle that when mistakes are made and difficulties arise, an opportunity for reflective learning is inherent within the situation.

Out of challenging and conflicting situations, real change is possible and expected.

Aims of this policy

To provide a framework of understanding that leads to a secure and nurturing environment where all school community members feel safe to learn, to lead, to explore and develop.

To provide a policy that supports the integrated programmes within the curriculum that will prevent and remedy bullying and harassment.

To provide all staff members, parents and students with clear pathways to identify, report and receive assistance in dealing with bullying and harassment.

To provide support, counseling, and active resolution for all those involved in bullying or harassment incidents.

How do we define bullying?

Bullying is any pattern of behaviour towards another that seeks to cause pain, discomfort, embarrassment or social isolation. It is usually intentional and involves the manipulation and disempowering of an individual or group. Harassment is one of the forms that bullying can take.

How do we define harassment?

Harassment is defined as any unsolicited words or conduct which is intended to annoy, alarm, distress, belittle or abuse another person.

Bullying and harassment can take many forms, and may involve:

Physical

- . Violent actions such as hitting, pushing, tripping, kicking, biting and spitting
- . Intentional intrusion on another's personal space
- . Stealing, hiding, interfering with or damaging another person's property
- . Written notes, text messages, emails and graffiti that threaten or harass others

Body Language

- . Making threatening, offensive or obscene gestures
- . More subtle forms of aggressive signals that undermine another

Verbal

- . Repeated harsh speech towards another
- . Ridiculing and humiliating another
- . Teasing, rumor spreading and offensive name calling
- . Offensive and degrading personal comments
- . Degrading another's cultural, religious or social background

Exclusion

- . Intentionally excluding another from a group or game

Extortion

- . Using threats that force others to act against their will
- . Manipulating control of someone's possessions against their will

Effects of Bullying and Harassment:

Those experiencing bullying and harassment *may*:

- . feel unsafe, afraid, disempowered, isolated, embarrassed, or angry
- . express their upset through poor sleeping, lack of concentration, or by socially withdrawing
- . lose self confidence and begin to feel a sense of hopelessness
- . begin to express low self-esteem behaviours
- . look for reasons to absent themselves from school
- . report a variety of physical illnesses

Those practicing bullying and harassment *may*:

- . be testing out a new-found and misdirected sense of power
- . be experiencing bullying themselves
- . lack confidence to clearly express their needs
- . lack the emotional maturity necessary to be flexible and open to the needs of others
- . suffer from feelings of low self-worth

Policy Implementation

Within our school curriculum and particularly our Awareness Programme, there is content aimed specifically at the issue of bullying and harassment.

While the school community welfare committee provides on-going and specific teacher and parent support and is responsible for coordinating this policy, it is our staff that is responsible for addressing this policy on a day-to-day basis.

This policy compliments our Student Code of Conduct.

School Procedures that prevent and address bullying and harassment:

STAFF ROLE

Our staff members are expected to:

- Play an active role in preventing bullying through observation of student interactions and supervision during class times and yard duty
- Actively supervise during yard duty to guide student behaviour
- Act as role models in word and action at all times in their interactions with others
- Be observant for individual signs of distress that may be the result of bullying
- Regularly reintroduce activities that support the development of natural ethical behavior
- Promote an open relationship with parents to encourage communication of child welfare concerns
- Follow the conflict resolution process to deal with bullying situations
- Always complete appropriate documentation regarding any incidents
- Seek supportive assistance and professional guidance in dealing with a bullying situation if necessary

STUDENT ROLE

We guide our students to:

- Freely and confidently speak up about bullying and report any concerns to a trusted teacher, parent, mentor or classmate
- Train our students in conflict resolution techniques
- Train our students in reflective practices to support behaviour self-awareness
- Expect our students who witness an incident to let the bully know that their behaviour is unacceptable and support those involved to seek guidance from the duty teacher
- Support our students to feel confident of their right to be fairly treated by fellow human beings and to be confident to express this expectation as situations arise

PARENT ROLE

- To familiarise themselves with the issue of bullying and to be aware of the signs that may be expressed by a child experiencing bullying
- To play an active role in supporting their child to report any incidents of concern

- To participate in the school's induction workshop for our conflict resolution process
- To work co-operatively with the school to solve any bullying incidents

BULLYING & HARASSMENT INCIDENT PROCESS

Staff should:

- Take the time to immediately investigate a complaint or an incident witnessed
- Support the victim of the incident by removing them from the source of the stress
- Make clear to the bully the nature of their inappropriate behaviour
- Begin a conflict resolution process including all parties that leads to agreements
- Complete the appropriate documentation
- Follow up by regularly monitoring the well being of all parties and that agreements are being kept
- In the instance of reoccurrence, contact the parents to begin supportive strategies
- If inappropriate behaviour continues, consequences from the Student Code of Conduct are implemented. These may include counseling, time away from school to reframe behaviour or even expulsion.

Students should:

- Feel empowered to speak up about bullying by reporting any incidents witnessed or experienced to their teacher
- Know that they can report incidents privately or during class meetings
- Practice their conflict resolution skills by asserting themselves with clear communication that bullying behaviour is not tolerated
- Practice their conflict resolution skills with the support of a mentor student
- Practice their conflict resolution skills with the support of their teacher
- Know that their school community supports them to feel safe, valued and unique
- Know that when mistakes are made and difficulties arise, real change is possible and expected

Parents should:

- Talk with their child about the bullying process

- Watch for signs that might indicate there is a bullying problem
- Feel confident to talk to teaching staff at any time about their concerns
- Know that the school supports them in actively safeguarding their child's welfare
- Be prepared to cooperate with the school in a conflict resolution process to deal with a specific problem

Policy Evaluation

Classroom and playground incident report sheets

Conflict resolution process training

Personal strategy contracts

Case conferencing with teacher/parent/student

Monitoring the effectiveness of the policy via student/parent meetings

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