

# COUNTERING BULLYING POLICY

## Parent / Caregivers Information

*At North Haven School we want all students to develop resilience and the ability to bounce back from life's challenges.*

### WHAT IS BULLYING?

**Bullying is a deliberate and repetitive act where one or more people intimidate and/or hurt others with the intention of making them feel unsafe.**

#### ***Bullying can include the following:***

##### ***Exclusion:***

Being ignored, left out on purpose, or not allowed to join in.

##### ***Physical Behaviours:***

Being hit, kicked or pushed around.

##### ***Lies or Rumours:***

Lies or nasty stories are told about someone to persuade other children to dislike them or to get them into trouble.

##### ***Verbal Abuse and Teasing:***

Being made fun of and teased in a mean and hurtful way.

##### ***Threats:***

Being made to feel afraid of getting hurt.

##### ***Cyber Bullying:***

Being bullied by SMS on mobile phones or through the internet using email or social media.

### HOW CAN I TELL IF MY CHILD IS BEING BULLIED?

As a parent or caregiver, you have an important part to play in helping your child and the school deal with bullying.

Signs that a child is being bullied may include:

- Refusal to go to school, and finding excuses not to go (eg. pretending to be sick).
- Unexplained cuts, bruises or scratches.
- Illnesses without any possible cause.
- Unexplained change of mood, tension or emotional distress (crying, acting out, periods of sadness).
- Damaged or missing clothing / possessions.

### What should I do if I suspect my child is being bullied?

You may feel anxious or upset if your child tells you they have been bullied. However, it is important that you remain calm.

- Listen to your child.
- Find out what happened. Who was involved (including bystanders / witnesses), and when and where did the bullying take place.
- It is important to let your child know that telling you about the bullying was the right thing to do.
- Encourage your child to report bullying to their teacher as soon as it occurs.

## INFORMING THE SCHOOL

### Grievance Procedures

We believe that it is important that grievances are kept confidential.

Talking with the school staff about your concern is an important step in solving it.

Tell the school staff as soon as possible so we can work together to solve the problem.

Parents and caregivers can address their grievances at the school in the following way:

1. Making an appointment to see the classroom teacher to discuss the concern.
2. If you feel as though your concern has not been resolved, make an appointment to see the School Counsellor / Assistant Principal or Principal.
3. If the issue has not been successfully resolved, contact the Regional Director: 8416 7333
4. If you are still dissatisfied you may wish to direct concerns to the DECD Parent Complaint Unit 1800 677 435

Parents or caregivers must not discipline other students.

You should not approach parents of children who you think have bullied

Talk to the school staff and let them work through the issue with you and your child.

## WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL DO TO REDUCE BULLYING?

If an incident of bullying happens at North Haven School we use a range of preventative, intervention and follow-up strategies to best deal with the situation.

## We prevent bullying by:

- Having specific focus lessons on where students are explicitly taught how to handle bullying and what to do about it.
- Teaching students how to be confident and to cooperate and get along with others.
- Encouraging students to bounce back and be resilient when bad things happen.
- Teaching students about conflict resolution, anger management, problem solving and assertiveness training.
- Teaching students about diversity. We learn about differences in others and the need for acceptance.
- Promoting student voice with all students at the school.
- Identifying 'hotspots' and 'safe spots' in the yard.
- Providing professional development for all staff on bullying and how to deal with it.

## We intervene in bullying by:

- Counselling students who have been bullied.
- Counselling students who have bullied others.
- Communicating with parents or caregivers about the situation.
- Putting consequences in place for students who bully others.
- Principal / Assistant Principal conducting Restorative Practices conferences with all students involved.
- Giving negotiated consequences such as time out, restricted play, school planning centre, take home or suspension.
- Conducting confidential 'Bullying Surveys' with students from Rec-Year 7.

## We follow-up incidents of bullying by:

- Monitoring the situation between the students to ensure their safety and well being.
- Communicating with parents or caregivers in an ongoing manner.
- Reviewing our yard duty procedures and bullying policy to ensure their effectiveness.

*We need to work together to stop bullying!*