



# OAKVILLE PUBLIC SCHOOL

## Anti-Bullying Policy

Oakville Public School has amongst its aims the provision of an environment in which each student is personally involved, in which each can develop as a person of integrity, social conscience and courage. To this end, we aim to establish a community in which everybody feels valued and safe, and where individual differences are appreciated, understood and accepted. Every student has a right to enjoy his or her time at school.

This community does not tolerate bullying or harassment. Respect for others is expected.

### **RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

Each member of the Oakville community shares in the following rights and responsibilities:

- To feel safe
- To respect self
- To learn and grow
- To respect others
- To be respected
- To use commonsense
- To be valued
- To support others

### **DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF ALL INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS TO BE FREE FROM BULLYING**

- Everyone has the right to feel safe and be safe at school.
- Everyone has the right to be accepted and respected as they are.
- Everyone has the right to be happy about coming to school.
- Everyone has the right to have his or her concerns taken seriously and appropriate action taken.
- Everyone has the right to have his or her concerns dealt with in private.
- Everyone has the right to a quality educational program devoid of disruption.

### **AIMS**

- To reinforce within the school community what bullying is and that it is unacceptable behaviour.
- To reduce the amount of bullying that occurs at Oakville Public School.
- To assist students to resolve conflicts and differences without bullying.
- To encourage all members of the school community to be alert to signs and evidence of bullying, to have a responsibility to report it to teachers, parents and/or peers.
- To ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are followed up appropriately and that support is given to victims and the bullies.
- To seek parental and peer group support and co-operation at all times.
- To educate students, teachers and parents in anti-bullying actions.
- To educate teachers, students and parents about appropriate use of technology and prevention strategies for cyber bullying.
- To foster a happy school climate where students feel safe and confident that teachers will listen and follow through concerns.

## DEFINITION: WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is a form of aggressive behaviour, which is usually hurtful and deliberate; sometimes continuing for weeks, months or even years and it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. Underlying most forms of bullying behaviour is an abuse of power and a desire to intimidate and dominate. (Sharp & Smith, 1994)

Bullying occurs when a person is made unhappy by one or more other people, it can take several forms. Bullying is **not** the same thing as a disagreement between two people. Bullying is **not** an isolated incident of aggression between children. Disputes will take place, and will be dealt with accordingly. Unpleasant as these incidents are, they are not bullying and should not be reported as such.

There are seven key elements of Bullying:

1. An intention to be hurtful.
2. This intention is carried out.
3. The behaviour harms the target.
4. The bully overwhelms the target with his or her power.
5. There is no justification for the action.
6. Action/behaviour is repeated.
7. Bully gets satisfaction/enjoyment from hurting the target. (Rigby, 1996)

Some examples of bullying include:

- Hitting, pushing, kicking, spitting, pushing
- Teasing, mocking and using put-downs
- Using offensive names
- Making offensive comments about others or their families
- Gossip – spreading information (true or untrue)
- Hurtful looks
- Rude gestures
- Leaving someone out of a group to be mean to them
- Messing up someone's game
- Hiding, damaging, stealing someone's belongings
- Making up rumour/stories about someone
- Using threats to stop people going to the toilet or to take their money, food or other belongings
- Writing offensive notes about someone
- Bullying comes in many forms, including
- Name-calling, hurtful or racist names
- Threatening
- Sending hurtful notes
- Deliberately ignoring
- Sexual innuendo and harassment
- Writing graffiti about another
- Cyber bullying - sending hurtful messages to, or about, others intentionally via electronic devices

## IMPLEMENTATION

Students, teachers, parents and the community will be aware of the school's position on bullying which is **zero tolerance**.

The school will also adopt a four-point plan to anti-bullying. This four-point plan is an integral part of the Oakville P S Student Welfare System and levels of discipline. The plan includes:

- Primary Prevention
- Early Intervention
- Intervention
- Post Intervention

## Primary Prevention

- Professional development for staff related to bullying, and cyber bullying, and the strategies to counteract it.
- Community awareness and input relating to anti-bullying, its characteristics and the schools' programs and response. (e.g. weekly Bulletin, parent forums, P & C Meetings)
- Provide programs that promote resilience, life skills and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and communication skills. (e.g. "What is Bullying")
- Provide elective and structured activities at some recess and lunch breaks (e.g., drama, dance, sports equipment)
- Staff supervision of set area in playground.
- Ensure students know and understand what behaviour is acceptable in the school. (i.e. consistent classroom/school rules displayed in the school)
- Maintain the development of student leadership and class meetings to help solve problems which arise regarding bully and the victim.
- Parents will be updated of bullying programs and policy through P&C, bulletins and the school website.

## Early Intervention

- Students are to be encouraged to report bullying incidents involving themselves or others.
- Teachers to regularly remind students to report incidents. Reporting is not dobbing.
- Parents are encouraged to contact the school if they become aware of a problem.
- Students are recognised for positive behaviours
- Teachers use a class and playground management plan if an incident of bullying occurs.

## Intervention

- Once identified, the bully, victim and witnesses are spoken with, all incidents or allegations of bullying will be fully investigated.
- Consideration as to why the bullying occurred will be investigated. (e.g. The bigger picture or contributing factors)
- Both bully and victim are to be offered basic assistance and support (i.e. outside school resources through counselling may be utilised if deemed necessary)
- A meeting of relevant persons are to be convened following identification of on-going bullying behaviour. (Principal, class teacher, parents, students, other) All issues relevant to the behaviour of the student are considered.

## Post Intervention

- Oakville Public School's Discipline Policy outlines appropriate procedures of the consequences for inappropriate behaviour in the classroom, using technology and in the playground.
- Possible consequences may involve:
  - I. Warning
  - II. Removal to the class supervisor or principal
  - III. Parental contact
  - IV. Negotiated contract
  - V. On-going monitoring and/or removal of school computer privileges
  - VI. Timeout from the class/ yard
  - VII. Mediation sessions with the victim to reconcile differences
  - VIII. Referral to external agencies
  - IX. Class/group changes
  - X. Behaviour guidance programs (e.g. anger management, social skills)
  - XI. Detention
  - XII. Suspension (in extreme cases)

## **ADVICE TO BE GIVEN TO STUDENTS WHO ARE BEING BULLIED**

The student should be encouraged to –

- Tell the bully to stop. State quite clearly that the behaviour is unwelcome and offensive
- Seek help. Talk about the experience to someone who is trustworthy (Student Counsellor, parent, peer).
- Report the bullying to a member of staff and feel confident that any incident can be resolved satisfactorily

Other 'self protective' strategies that might be suggested include:

- Staying away from the bully, or places where bullying occurs.
- Not having electronic contact with the bully.
- Be with friendly, supportive friends.

## **ADVICE TO BE GIVEN TO STUDENTS WHO KNOW SOMEONE ELSE IS BEING BULLIED**

Students should be made aware that early intervention can defuse conflict situations before bullying sets in or gets out of hand.

Therefore, the following suggestions should be made:

- If possible, intervene as the bullying occurs by telling the bully to stop. This is very useful if the onlooking student has influence with the bully.
- Refuse to join in with the bullying.
- Support students who are being bullied – just standing by them can be enough.
- Tell an adult if you are concerned about the bullying.
- It is every student's right and responsibility to report bullying whether it happens to oneself or to someone else.

## **THE ROLE OF PARENTS**

The following suggestions are made to parents through print materials and at Parent Information meetings.

### **Take an active interest**

- in your child's social life
- in what is happening at school
- in their use of the internet, mobile phone or other electronic devices

### **Encourage your child**

- to bring friends home
- to accept and tolerate differences in others

### **Build your child's self-confidence**

- by recognising and affirming his/her positive qualities
- by valuing him/her for who he/she is.

### **Discuss with your child**

- the school's expectations about behaviour and appropriate technology use
- ways to respond if his rights are infringed

### **Encourage constructive responses**

- physical bullying, persistent teasing or cyber bullying should be reported
- hitting back or retaliating with name-calling won't solve the problem

### **Set an example**

- be firm, but not aggressive in setting behaviour limits
- be positive in things you say and do

### **Be alert for signs of distress**

- unwillingness to attend school
- dropping off in academic performance
- damaged clothing and frequent loss of personal property
- loss of confidence and uncharacteristic mood changes
- withdrawal from social activities.

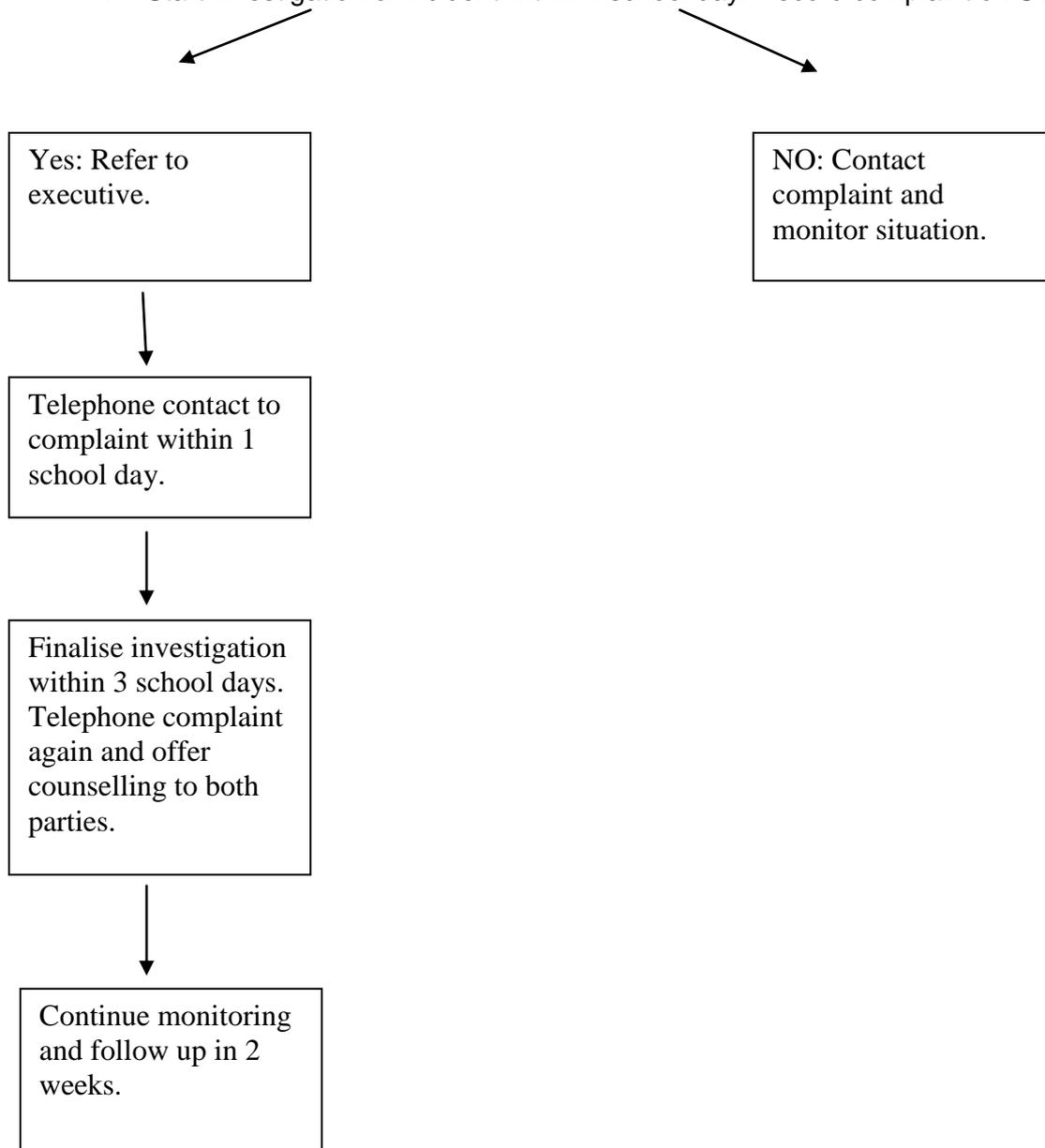
### **ACT**

- If your child is being bullied at school, report it to a teacher, or the Principal. Your report will be followed up.

## **Response to Bullying:**

At Oakville Public the staff will follow the following procedures in response to bullying claims made by students or parents/caregivers:

1. Start investigation of incident within 1 school day. Record complaint on STARS.



## **Interventions and Consequences to match bullying incident:**

In alignment with the school discipline policy the following behaviours and consequences will be followed:

( See attached flowchart - listed as a separate document)

## **Procedures for reporting incidents involving assaults, threats, intimidation or harassment.**

Parents have the right to report assaults, threats, intimidation or harassment to police. The school also has the right to report assaults, threats and intimidation or harassment to the police, child well being unit or Community Services. The telephone number for the local police is (02) 45606999 . The telephone number for Child Well Being unit is 1300 480 420 and will take calls from staff between 8.30am and 5.30pm, Monday to Friday.

Parents and Caregivers have the right to feel their complaint has been handled appropriately and have the right to appeal procedures through the DEC Complaints Handling Policy. This policy provides the guidelines for handling complaints. While most complaints should be resolved informally with the relevant employee, there are provisions for the use of formal procedures depending on the nature and seriousness of the complaint. The Complaints Handling Policy is available on the internet at the following web address:

[https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/general\\_man/complaints/resp\\_sugg/PD20020051.shtml](https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/general_man/complaints/resp_sugg/PD20020051.shtml)

### **Reporting and Monitoring:**

At Oakville Public School the staff will track and monitor student behaviour on a system called STARS. Reports are run twice a term for the PBL committee and executive staff to look at. When analysing the report staff will look for patterns of bullying behaviour. STARS will also help monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the school's Anti-Bullying Plan through the monitoring reports.

At Oakville Public school the staff will communicate with school community annually the effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Plan at a P&C meeting and through the school bulletin. The Anti Bullying Policy is available to the school community of the school website.

The school will review the Anti-Bullying Plan every three years.

### **Additional Information:**

Police Youth Liaison Officer: Contact Windsor Police: (02) 45606999

Support Services: Kids Helpline: Kids helpline 1800 55 1800 website: [www.kidshelp.com.au](http://www.kidshelp.com.au)

### **Principal's Comment:**

Instances of bullying are treated very seriously at Oakville P S. The staff regularly review the procedures and the PBL team, along with the school executive, monitors all reports made on the STARS program.

The above policy is implemented by the whole school community and all steps are followed as written.

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