

Freeling P-7 School

Harassment and Bullying Policy



Rationale

Freeling Primary School is committed to the wellbeing of all members of our school community. Our policies and procedures support us in providing a safe, caring, orderly and productive environment for learning. Behaviour, which respects the rights of all students to learn and teachers to teach, is fundamental to the success of all students at school. At Freeling our Behaviour and Wellbeing Code acknowledges positive behaviours and supports students to change their inappropriate behaviour while protecting the rights of the wider school community.

Our Values

Respect - We show respect by speaking and acting with courtesy. We treat others with dignity and honour the rules of our family, school and nation. Respect yourself, and others will respect you.

Responsibility - Being responsible means others can trust you to do things with excellence. When you make a mistake, you offer amends instead of excuses. Responsibility is the ability to respond ably and to make responsible choices.

Trust - Trust is having faith in someone or something. It is a positive attitude about life. You are confident that the right thing will happen without trying to control it or make it happen. Even when difficult things happen, trust helps us to find the gift or lesson in it.

Honesty - Honesty is being truthful and sincere. It is important because it builds trust. When people are honest, they can be relied on not to lie, cheat or steal. Being honest means that you accept yourself as you are. When you are open and trustworthy, others can believe in you.

STUDENTS are expected to:

- Participate actively in their learning
- Take responsibility for their own learning and behaviour
- Show respect for themselves, peers, staff and the environment
- Behave in a way that respects the rights of others, including the right of other to learn and teach

STAFF are expected to:

- Provide a safe and supportive learning environment
- Provide an inclusive and engaging curriculum
- Have high expectations for all students in both behaviour and learning
- Ensure consistency and fairness in managing student behaviour and learning
- Initiate and maintain constructive communication and relationships with students and parents

PARENTS and CARERS are expected to:

- Show an active interest in their child's learning
- Cooperate with the school to achieve the best outcomes for their child
- Support the school in maintaining a safe and respectful learning environment for all students
- Contribute positively to behaviour support plans that concern their child
- Initiate and maintain constructive communication and relationships with school staff regarding their child's learning, wellbeing and behaviour

Definitions

Bullying – is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons.

Cyber-bullying – is bullying through information and communication technologies such as the internet and mobile phones.

Harassment – is behaviour that targets an individual or group due to their identity, race, culture or ethnic origin; religion; physical characteristics; gender; sexual orientation; marital, parenting or economic status; age; ability or disability; and that offends, humiliates, intimidates or creates a hostile environment.

Harassment may be an ongoing pattern of behaviour or a single act.

Characteristics of harassment and bullying

Bullying and harassment may include (but is not limited to):

- Physical violence such as hitting, kicking, pinching, biting
- Verbal bullying/harassment such as name calling, teasing, threats
- Visual or written bullying/harassment such as notes, graffiti, text messages, filmed or photographed images, comments on social networking sites.
- Psychological bullying/harassment including stand-over tactics and gestures
- Social exclusion such as rumours, put downs, 'de-friending' on social networking sites
- Sexual bullying/harassment including sexual comments, touching or 'sexting'

Bullying and harassment:

- May be done directly (face to face) or indirectly (via the internet or mobile phones)
- Involves the misuse of power and may be motivated by jealousy, distrust, fear, misunderstanding or lack of knowledge
- Has an element of threat
- Can continue over time
- Is often hidden from adults
- Will be sustained if adults or peers do not take action

If a child is being bullied or harassed

Children who are being bullied or harassed may not talk about it with their friends or staff at the school. They may be afraid that it will make things worse or they may feel it is wrong to 'tell tales'. When people are being bullied or harassed they may feel angry, embarrassed, frightened, humiliated, uncomfortable, scared or unsafe. Parents have an important part to play in helping the school and the student deal with bullying. A change in behaviour in children may be a signal that they are being bullied or that they have some other concern.

Some signs that a child is being bullied or harassed may include:

- Unexplained cuts, bruises or scratches
- Damaged or ripped clothing
- Vague headaches or stomach aches
- Refusal to go to school
- Asking for extra money or food
- Tearfulness, anxiety or difficulty sleeping
- 'Hiding' information on mobile phones, emails or in comments on social networking pages
- Reduced ability to concentrate or learn

Reporting & responsibilities

Parents and/or students can report bullying and harassment to the class teacher in the first instance. If the incident is serious, ongoing or unresolved, parents or students should report incidents to a member of the leadership team. Staff are unable to follow up incidents unless we are aware of them; therefore, reporting of incidents to the school is encouraged. Reporting of an incident should occur as soon as possible after the incident. This gives the school the best opportunity to follow up on the incident. Parents and/or students may find it helpful to write down the details of the incident, even if they choose to report face to face or over the phone. This will ensure important details are not forgotten. All reports of bullying and harassment are investigated by the classroom teacher and /or a member of the leadership team. The school will advise parents of any serious incident involving their child.

Responses to Bullying & Harassment

In determining an appropriate response to incidents of bullying and harassment there are several factors that the school will consider. These include:

- Severity of behaviour
- Frequency of the behaviour or similar previous behaviour – students are aware that repeated low level behaviour leads to the possibility of suspension
- Chronological and developmental age of the student – this impacts on the student’s understanding of their behaviour and the consequences of that behaviour
- Disability, trauma and mental health of the student (consequences for some students may be detailed in a personal behaviour management plan)
- repeated behaviour patterns - schools analyse behaviour to identify potential triggers

Levels of Response

CLASS	SCHOOL	SYSTEM
Logical consequence	Office rethink	Suspension
Class time out		exclusion
Buddy class		
Office rethink		

Take Home - Take home may be implemented if a student fails to respond to strategies put in place by the school. The student is taken home for the remainder of the day to enable them to regain control over the behaviour.

Internal Suspension - Internal suspension is a process, which may be implemented by the school, or by the school in consultation with parents of a student. A child who has a period of internal suspension will work under supervision, isolated from the remainder of the student body. This will involve alternative recess and lunch breaks to other students.

Suspension - Suspension from school means that the student does not attend school for a period of time ranging from one to five school days.

Exclusion – Exclusion from a school means that the student does not attend their regular school for either a set period of time ranging from 4- 10 weeks or for the remainder of a term.

The length of Suspension/Exclusion, is determined by the Principal depending on the severity and frequency of an individual’s behaviour and the time deemed necessary to achieve specific negotiated behavioural goals .

For more information regarding Suspension & Exclusion, please refer to DECD website.

Levels of response to types of behaviour

DECD School Discipline Policy

Aside from the natural or logical consequences of a student’s inappropriate behaviour that the school may employ, other options can be applied according to DECD School Discipline Policy. These may include Take Home, Internal Suspension, Suspension and Exclusion. In consultation with the parent/caregiver, schools can also refer students to Regional Support Services - Interagency Student Behaviour Management for additional support and guidance.

Levels of response to types of behaviour continued

	CLASS	SCHOOL	SYSTEM
Off task behaviour	✓	✓	
Work avoidance	✓	✓	
Distracting others - noises	✓	✓	
Distracting others - touching	✓	✓	
Not following school behaviour code – out of bounds/leaving school grounds	✓	✓	✓
Not following school behaviour code – not completing consequence	✓	✓	✓
Not following school behaviour code – non-compliance with reasonable instructions	✓	✓	✓
Misuse of property	✓	✓	✓
Verbal abuse – staff, students or other		✓	✓
Theft		✓	✓
Bullying		✓	✓
Harassment		✓	✓
Physical assault		✓	✓
Property destruction		✓	✓
Cyber crime		✓	✓
Threats – verbal, written or gestures		✓	✓
Threats of violence using a weapon		✓	✓
Threatening gestures using a weapon		✓	✓
Sexual behaviour		✓	✓

Prevention, Intervention and coping

Students at Freeling Primary School are aware of the school 'Code of Conduct' and what to expect if they are involved in bullying, harassment or inappropriate behaviour. All students are involved in learning based on the Child Protection Curriculum.

Students who bully, harass or make inappropriate behaviour choices are expected to take responsibility for their behaviour and consequences for this behaviour as outlined above or their individually negotiated behaviour management plans.

Students who are bullied or harassed are supported by school staff to develop positive relationships with other students.

Training and development

Staff are involved in Responding to Abuse and Neglect training and updates. They are involved in SMART training as required and all teachers are trained in the delivery of the Child Protection Curriculum.

Documented Processes

This policy was developed with reference to the following documents:

- National Safe Schools Framework Resource Manual
- School Discipline Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy – School Audit Checklist and Support Information
- Bullying and Harassment at School – Advice for Parents and Caregivers
- Cyber Bullying, e-crime and the Protection of Children and Young People – Advice for families
- Response Level and Types of Behaviour

Monitoring and review

This policy has been developed in accordance with the DECD Policies (outlined above), and in consultation with Freeling Primary School Staff and Governing Council. This policy has been approved by the Governing Council and will be reviewed every year. School Behaviour Data is presented to Governing Council each term, published in the school newsletter and published annually as a part of the Annual Report.