

BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact Eagle Point Primary School on (03) 5156 6382 or email on eagle.point.ps@education.vic.gov.au

PURPOSE

Eagle Point Primary School is committed to providing a safe and respectful learning environment where bullying will not be tolerated.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- explain the definition of bullying so that there is shared understanding amongst all members of the Eagle Point Primary School community
- make clear that no form of bullying at Eagle Point Primary School will be tolerated
- outline the strategies and programs in place at Eagle Point Primary School to build a positive school culture and prevent bullying behaviour
- ask that everyone in our school community be alert to signs and evidence of bullying behaviour, and understands the importance of reporting bullying behaviour to school staff
- ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are appropriately investigated and addressed
- ensure that support is provided to students who may be affected by bullying behaviour (including targets, bystanders, witnesses and students engaging in bullying behaviour)
- seek parental and peer group support in addressing and preventing bullying behaviour at Eagle Point Primary School.

When responding to bullying behaviour, Eagle Point Primary School aims to:

- be proportionate, consistent and responsive
- find a constructive solution for everyone
- stop the bullying from happening again
- restore the relationships between the students involved.

Eagle Point Primary School acknowledges that school staff owe a duty of care to students to take reasonable steps to reduce the risk of reasonably foreseeable harm, which can include harm that may be caused by bullying behaviour.

SCOPE

This policy addresses how Eagle Point Primary School aims to prevent, address and respond to student bullying behaviour. Eagle Point Primary School recognises that there are many other types of inappropriate student behaviours that do not meet the definition of bullying which are also unacceptable at our school. These other inappropriate behaviours will be managed in accordance with our Student Code of Conduct and Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy and Inclusion and Diversity policy.

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions. It also applies to bullying behaviour between students that occurs outside of school hours, where the behaviour impacts on student wellbeing and safety at school.

POLICY

Definitions

Bullying

In 2018 the Education Council of the Council of Australian Governments endorsed the following definition of bullying for use by all Australian schools:

Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening.

Bullying can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time (for example, through sharing of digital records)

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have immediate, medium and long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders. Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.

Bullying has three main features:

- It involves a misuse of power in a relationship
- It is ongoing and repeated, and
- It involves behaviours that can cause harm.

There are four main types of bullying behaviour:

- Physical – examples include hitting, pushing, shoving or intimidating or otherwise physically hurting another person, damaging or stealing their belongings. It includes threats of violence.
- Verbal/written – examples include name-calling or insulting someone about an attribute, quality or personal characteristic.
- Social (sometimes called relational or emotional bullying) – examples include deliberately excluding someone, spreading rumours, sharing information that will have a harmful effect on the other person and/or damaging a person's social reputation or social acceptance.
- Cyberbullying – any form of bullying behaviour that occurs online or via a mobile device. It can be verbal or written, and can include threats of violence as well as images, videos and/or audio.

Bullying can be a form of racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia or other type of social prejudice when the behaviour is targeted at an individual or group because of a personal characteristic, such as race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability.

For further information about bullying, refer to: [Bully Stoppers \(education.vic.gov.au\)](http://education.vic.gov.au) and the Department's [Bullying Prevention and Response](#) policy on the Policy and Advisory Library.

Other distressing and inappropriate behaviours

Many distressing and inappropriate behaviours may not constitute bullying even though they are unpleasant. Students who are involved in or who witness any distressing and inappropriate behaviours should report their concerns to school staff and our school will follow our Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy & Student Code of Conduct Policy and/or this Bullying Prevention Policy where the behaviour constitutes bullying.

Mutual conflict involves an argument or disagreement between people with no imbalance of power. In incidents of mutual conflict, generally, both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution to the issue. Unresolved mutual conflict can develop into bullying if one of the parties targets the other repeatedly in retaliation.

Social rejection or dislike is not bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.

Single-episode acts of nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. However, single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression are not acceptable behaviours at our school and may have serious consequences for students engaging in this behaviour. Eagle Point Primary School will use its Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy to guide a response to single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression.

Harassment is language or actions that are demeaning, offensive or intimidating to a person. It can take many forms, including sexual harassment and disability harassment.

Discrimination is behaviour that treats someone unfavourably because of a personal characteristic (for example, race, religious belief or activity, disability, sex or intersex status, gender identity or sexual orientation).

Discrimination, harassment, and any other inappropriate behaviour is not tolerated at our school and there may be serious consequences for students engaging in this behaviour. This includes any form of racism, religious or disability discrimination, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, or any other behaviour that targets an individual or group. Further information about discrimination and harassment, including definitions, is set out in our Inclusion and Diversity Policy.

Bullying Prevention

Eagle Point Primary School has a number of programs and strategies in place to build a positive and inclusive school culture and relationships to promote wellbeing. We strive to foster a school culture that prevents bullying behaviour by modelling, encouraging and teaching behaviour that demonstrates acceptance, kindness and respect.

Bullying prevention at Eagle Point Primary School is proactive and is supported by research that indicates that a whole school, multifaceted approach is the most effect way to prevent and address bullying. At our school:

Staff will:

- Identify and implement evidence-based programs and initiatives from the [Schools Mental Health Menu](#) that are relevant to preventing and addressing bullying and help us to build a positive and inclusive school climate.
- Develop & maintain strong positive partnerships between the school, families and the broader community that means all members work together to ensure the safety of students.
- Be positive role models at all times.
- Be vigilant in monitoring for signs of bullying behaviour and student distress.
- Actively seek appropriate assistance from Staff, Principal, Chaplain and or Counsellors to support student to develop resilience.
- Discuss, act upon and record suspected incidents of bullying with staff and parents.
- All students participate in the Respectful Relationships initiative, which aims to embed a culture of respect and equality across our school, to assist with the development of student's awareness and coping skills.

- Plan & teach curriculum directly related to safety when using the Internet and ICT.
- Provide guidance and support in the use of the 3-step approach.
- Teaching staff will contact the parents/carers of students involved if a disclosure is made regarding occurrences of disrespectful or bullying behaviours online during out of school hours.
- We celebrate the diverse backgrounds of members of our school community and teach multicultural education, including Aboriginal History, to promote mutual respect and social cohesion.
- We participate in the Respectful Relationships program to help us foster a safe environment that is supportive and inclusive of LGBTIQ+ students.
- Teachers are encouraged to incorporate classroom management strategies that discourage bullying and promote positive behaviour.
- A range of year level incursions and programs are planned for each year to raise awareness about bullying and its impacts.
- In the classroom, our social and emotional learning curriculum teaches students what constitutes bullying and how to respond to bullying behaviour assertively. This promotes resilience, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving.
- Provide range of year level incursions and programs are planned for each year to raise awareness about bullying and its impacts.
- Participate in the Safe Schools program to help us foster a safe environment that is supportive and inclusive of LGBTIQ+ students.
- Provide the Peer Support Program and the Peer Mediation program encourage positive relationships between students in different year levels. We seek to empower students to be confident communicators and to resolve conflict in a non-aggressive and constructive way.
- Promote upstander behaviour as a way of empowering our students to positively and safely take appropriate action when they see or hear of a peer being bullied.
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Students will:

- Make a conscious decision not to be involved in any incidents of bullying.
- Take some form of preventative action (eg, seek assistance from an adult) if present when a bullying incident occurs to another person or occurs to them.
- Report any incidents which impact negatively on other people.
- Clearly use the 3-step approach at times when others are impacted on an individual's rights as listed above.
- Communicate their concerns to a staff member, parent or carer.
- Students will discuss their concerns of online bullying behaviours with their parents or a member of staff at school.
- Celebrate the diverse backgrounds of members of our school community and learn multicultural education, including Aboriginal History, to promote mutual respect and social cohesion.
- Participate in the Peer Support Program and the Peer Mediation program encourage positive relationships between students in different year levels. We seek to empower students to be confident communicators and to resolve conflict in a non-aggressive and constructive way.
- Students are encouraged to look out for each other and to talk to teachers and older peers about any bullying they have experienced or witnessed.

Parents/Carers will:

- Watch for signs of distress in their child and discuss their concerns with staff.
- Support their child to clearly use the 3-step approach if uncomfortable with behaviours of others.
- Encourage and support their child to discuss harassing or inappropriate behaviours with a trusted staff member.
- Encourage their child not to retaliate or respond in any physical way or engage in payback.
- Be willing to work positively, cooperatively and supportively with the school if their child experiences or initiates bullying or any other form of harassment or inappropriate treatment.
- Be willing to inform the School of any cases of suspected bullying behaviours even if their child is not directly involved.
- Act upon incidences of online bullying behaviours once notified by a staff member of the school.

Incident Response

Reporting concerns to Eagle Point Primary School

Bullying is not tolerated at our school. We ensure bullying behaviour is identified and addressed with appropriate and proportionate consequences. All concerns about unpleasant behaviour will be taken seriously and responded to sensitively.

Students who may be experiencing unpleasant or bullying behaviour, or students who have witnessed such behaviour, are encouraged to report their concerns to school staff or another trusted adult as soon as possible.

Our ability to effectively reduce and eliminate unpleasant and bullying behaviour is greatly affected by students and/or parents and carers reporting concerning behaviour as soon as possible, so that the responses implemented by Eagle Point Primary School are timely and appropriate in the circumstances.

We encourage students to speak to their classroom teacher. However, students are welcome to discuss their concerns with any trusted member of staff including other teachers, education support staff, wellbeing staff, school chaplain, school counsellor, Principal etc.

Parents or carers who develop concerns that their child is involved in, or has witnessed unpleasant or bullying behaviour at Eagle Point Primary School should contact their child's classroom teacher, The Student Wellbeing Coordinator Blaire Wassink or a member of the school's Leadership Team by calling the school office 51566382.

Investigations

When notified of alleged bullying behaviour, school staff are required to:

1. record the details of the incident and
2. inform the Child's classroom teacher and/or a member of the school's Leadership Team.

The classroom teacher or yard duty teacher is responsible for investigating allegations of bullying in a timely and sensitive manner. To appropriately investigate an incident of unpleasant behaviour or bullying, the teacher may:

- speak to the those involved in the allegations, including the target/s, the students allegedly engaging in bullying behaviour/s and any witnesses to the incidents
- speak to the parent/carer(s) of the students involved
- speak to the teachers of the students involved
- take detailed notes of all discussions for future reference
- obtain written statements from all or any of the above.

All communications with the students in the course of investigating an incident will be managed sensitively. Investigations will be completed as quickly as possible to allow for the behaviours to be addressed in a timely manner.

The objective of completing a thorough investigation into the circumstances of alleged unpleasant or bullying behaviour is to determine the nature of the conduct and the students involved. A thorough understanding of the alleged incident will inform staff about how to most effectively implement an appropriate response to that behaviour.

Serious bullying, including serious cyberbullying, is a criminal offence and may be referred to Victoria Police. For more information, see: [Brodie's Law](#).

Responses to bullying behaviours

When the teacher has sufficient information to understand the circumstances of the alleged incident and the students involved, a number of strategies may be implemented to address the behaviour and support affected students in consultation with the Student Wellbeing Team, other teachers, Leadership Team, Principal or Department of Education specialist staff etc.

There are a number of factors that will be considered when determining the most appropriate response to the behaviour. When making a decision about how to respond to bullying behaviour, Eagle Point Primary School will consider:

- the age, maturity and individual circumstances of the students involved
- the severity and frequency of the bullying, and the impact it has had on the target student
- whether the student/s engaging in bullying behaviour have displayed similar behaviour before
- whether the bullying took place in a group or one-to-one context
- whether the students engaging in bullying behaviour demonstrates insight or remorse for their behaviour
- the alleged motive of the behaviour.

The teacher may implement all, or some of the following responses to bullying behaviours:

- Offer wellbeing support, including referral to [insert i.e. the Student Wellbeing Team, SSS, external provider] to:
 - the target student or students
 - the students engaging in the bullying behaviour
 - affected students, including witnesses and/or friends of the target student.
- Facilitate a restorative practice meeting with all or some of the students involved. The objective of restorative practice is to repair relationships that have been damaged by bringing about an understanding of why the behaviour occurred, how this has impacted the other person and what could be done differently in the future to achieve success for both parties.
- Facilitate a mediation between some or all of the students involved to help to encourage students to take responsibility for their behaviour and explore underlying reasons for conflict or grievance. Mediation is only suitable if all students are involved voluntarily and demonstrate a willingness to engage in the mediation process.
- Co-create a plan with both the impacted student and student/s engaging in unpleasant or bullying behaviours.
- Record Strategies for Change in the designated folder as part of the plan. These strategies are uploaded into UeducateUs at the end of each term.
- Monitor the behaviour of the students involved for an appropriate time and take follow up action if necessary.
- Implement proportionate disciplinary consequences for the students engaging in unpleasant or bullying behaviour, which may include removal of privileges, detention, suspension and/or expulsion consistent with our Student Wellbeing and Engagement policy, the Ministerial Order on Suspensions and Expulsions and any other relevant Department policy.

Eagle Point Primary School understands the importance of monitoring and following up on the progress of students who have been involved in or affected by bullying behaviour. Where appropriate, school staff will also endeavour to provide parents and carers with updates on the management of bullying incidents.

The Principal is responsible for maintaining up to date records of the investigation of and responses to bullying behaviour.

Consequences:

- Removal from situation.
- Discussion with people involved.
- Parent involvement with principal, teacher and students when bullying has been identified.
- Reflection of behaviour and choices made.
- Student will identify what changes need to be made, the strategy required for change and make a commitment for this to occur.
- A behavioral plan will be drawn up in consultation with student, teacher and parents if required.
- Counselling will be offered from appropriate sources for both the impacted person and the person enacting the behaviour. This may be ongoing.
- Assistance in developing new skills through specialised programs offered to student/s.
- An internal suspension may be given involving the student to be removed from the classroom and/or yard after consultation with principal, parents and student.
- A formal school suspension may be given after consultation with principal, parents and student.

For further information about our engagement and wellbeing initiatives, please see our Student Wellbeing and Engagement policy

Incidents which are reported will be managed in accordance to our School Expectations:

Every school member has the right: To learn, to be safe, to belong & to have fun.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in our staff handbook/manual
- Discussed at staff briefings/meetings as required
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Included as annual reference in school newsletter
- Discussed during class meetings and student forums
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Parent Complaints policy
- Duty of Care Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy

Our school also follows Department of Education policy relating to bullying including:

- [Bullying Prevention and Response](#)
- [Cybersafety and Responsible Use of Digital Technologies](#)
- [Equal Opportunity and Human Rights - Students](#)
- [LGBTIQA+ Student Support Policy](#)

The following websites and resources provide useful information on prevention and responding to bullying, as well as supporting students who have been the target of bullying behaviours:

- [Bully Stoppers](#)
- [Report racism or religious discrimination in schools](#)
- [Kids Helpline](#)
- [ReachOut Australia](#)
- [Lifeline](#)
- [Bullying. No way!](#)
- [Student Wellbeing Hub](#)
- [eSafety Commissioner](#)
- [Australian Student Wellbeing Framework](#)

EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years, or earlier as required following an incident or analysis of new research or school data relating to bullying, to ensure that the policy remains up to date, practical and effective.

Data to inform this review will be collected through:

- discussion and consultation with students and parent/carers
- regular student, staff and parent/carer surveys
- assessment of other school-based data, including the number of reported incidents of bullying in each year group and the effectiveness of the responses implemented
- Attitudes to School Survey
- Parent Opinion Survey

Proposed amendments to this policy will be discussed with school council.

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	February 2026
Consultation	School council, School Community, Staff and Students
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	February 2028