THE PATCH PRIMARY SCHOOL

BULLYING

Definition:
A person is bullied when one or more other people expose them regularly and over time to negative or harmful actions or behaviours. Bullies are people who deliberately set out to intimidate, exclude, threaten and/or hurt others repeatedly. Bullying is a clear form of harassment. People who use the internet, email, intranets, phones or similar technologies to bully others are cyber bullies.

Rationale:
The school will provide a positive culture where bullying of students or staff is not accepted, and in so doing, all will have the right of respect from others, the right to learn or to teach, and a right to feel safe and secure in their school environment. Bullying in any form is unacceptable. Cyber bullying will not be tolerated at any level, and consequences exist for students who choose to bully others.

Aims:
• To reinforce within the school community what bullying is (including cyber bullying), and the fact that it is unacceptable.
• Everyone within the school community to be alert to signs and evidence of bullying and to have a responsibility to report it to staff whether as observer or victim.
• To ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are followed up appropriately and that support is given to both victims and perpetrators.
• To seek parental and peer-group support and co-operation at all times.

Implementation:
• Parents, teachers, students and the community will be aware of the school’s position on bullying.
• Teachers will be regularly reminded of their duty of care regarding protection of students from all forms of bullying.
• The school will adopt a four-phase approach to bullying.

Primary Prevention:
• Professional development for staff relating to bullying including cyber bullying, harassment and proven counter measures.
• Educate the school community about the seriousness of cyber bullying, its impact on those being bullied and how this behaviour is unacceptable
• Community awareness and input relating to bullying (including cyber-bullying), its characteristics, its effects on victims and the school’s programs and response.
• To provide programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving.
• A bullying survey and yard survey will be administered and acted upon twice annually.
• Each classroom teacher to clarify with students at the start of each year the school policy on bullying, including cyber-bullying.
• All students to be provided with individual and confidential computer and network log ins and passwords. Processes to be put in place to ensure tracking of student activity on the school’s computer equipment and network. Firewalls to be installed to eliminate outside traffic into the school’s network and intranet.
• The use of mobile phones by students will be limited with consequences to be implemented for any students who use mobile phones inappropriately.
• The curriculum to include anti-bullying messages and strategies eg: ‘The Friendly Schools’ and ‘No Blame Approach to Bullying’ programs.
• Staff and students to promote the philosophy of ‘No Put Downs’.

**Early Intervention:**
• Promote children and staff reporting bullying incidents involving themselves or others.
• Classroom teachers and principal on a regular basis reminding students and staff to report incidents of bullying.
• Regular monitoring of student traffic on school’s computer networks to identify potential problems.
• Parents encouraged to contact school if they become aware of a problem.
• A designated safe and quiet place for children to access at recess and lunch times. eg. Deck area outside Prep rooms
• Public recognition and reward for positive behaviour and resolution of problems.
• Parents to be contacted.

**C. Intervention:**
• Once identified each bully, victim and witnesses will be spoken with, and all incidents or allegations of bullying will be fully investigated and documented.
• Students and staff identified by others as bullies will be informed of allegations.
• Parents to be contacted.
• Both bullies and victims will be offered counselling and support.
• Removal of cyber-bullies from access to the school’s network and computers for a period of time. Loss of privilege to bring a mobile phone to school for student’s who bully via SMS or similar telephone functions.
• If student bullying persists parents will be contacted and consequences implemented consistent with the school’s Student Code of Conduct.
• If staff bullying persists the principal will commence formal disciplinary action.

**D. Post Violation:**
• Consequences for students will be individually based and may involve:-
  • exclusion from class.
  • exclusion from yard.
  • school suspension.
  • withdrawal of privileges.
  • ongoing counselling from appropriate agency for both victim and bully.
• Reinforcement of positive behaviours.
• Classroom Meetings.
• Support Structures.
• Ongoing monitoring of identified bullies.
• Rewards for positive behaviour.
• Consequences for staff will be individually based and may involve:-
  • counselling
  • a period of monitoring
  • a formal support group
  • disciplinary actions
• Consequences for parents will be individually based and may involve:-
  • formal letter
  • counselling
  • a period of monitoring
Evaluation:
This policy will be reviewed with whole staff, student, parent and community input as part of the school’s five-year review cycle.

References: Safe Schools are Effective Schools booklet
www.curriculum.edu.au/mindmatters
S428-2007 Cyber Bullying – Updating the Student Code of Conduct
Circular 41/2002 VicHealth Publicity for Partnership Campaign Together We Do Better:
Department Participation
www.bullyingnoway.com.au