



## STUDENT ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

### Aim

Pioneer Village School is committed to ensuring school is a place where students can learn in a safe environment. Pioneer Village School does not tolerate bullying. Our school is a nurturing environment where positive interactions, positive social values, and positive behaviours are expected.

### What is Bullying?

“Bullying is a behaviour which can be defined as the repeated attack, physical, psychological, social or verbal, which is formally or situationally defined, on those who are powerless to resist, with the intention of causing distress for their own gain or gratification.” *Besag (1989)*

Bullying involves a desire to hurt + hurtful action + a power imbalance + an unjust use of power + (typically) repetition + evident enjoyment by the aggressor and generally a sense of being oppressed on the part of the victim. *Ken Rigby (2002)*

Bullying is;

- Repeated and unjustifiable behaviour
- Intended to cause fear, distress and/or harm
- Physical, verbal, psychological, and/or relational
- Inflicted by a more powerful individual or group
- Against a less powerful individual unable to effectively resist.

The following three definitions of bullying contain the same three main parameters of bullying.

- Repetitive behaviour – prolonged over time
- The involvement of an imbalance of power
- May be verbal, physical, emotional or psychological.

### Identifying Bullying

Bullying can often go unnoticed as it takes many forms. Bullying is best categorised under the following three categories:

Emotional bullying.

- Being excluded from group conversations and activities
- Making up or spreading rumours to facilitate dislike for someone
- Being ignored repeatedly
- Purposeful misleading or being lied to

- Making stories up to get others into trouble
- Written notes (unpleasant and threatening)

Physical bullying.

- Can be, but is not limited to, repeated hitting, kicking, pushing, shoving, scratching, biting, or tripping
- Unwanted physical touching
- Throwing objects with the intent to injure or annoy

Cyber Bullying.

- Cyber bullying includes offensive messages, gossip and rumours through email, telephone, internet, including personal information and photographs. Refer to Cyber Safety Policy for further information

### **What is not bullying?**

- Mutual conflict where there is no imbalance of power
- Social rejection where there is no deliberate, repeated attempt to cause distress
- Random 'one-off' acts of meanness, intimidation and violence. These issues will be dealt with through the PVS Behaviour Management Policy.
- Other forms of conflict, including teasing and fighting amongst peers are not necessarily bullying. These may represent the normal dynamics of a particular friendship and children need to develop the skills to deal with these situations. Conflict between students of roughly equal physical strength and/or social status/age will be dealt with through use of the Behavioural Policy.

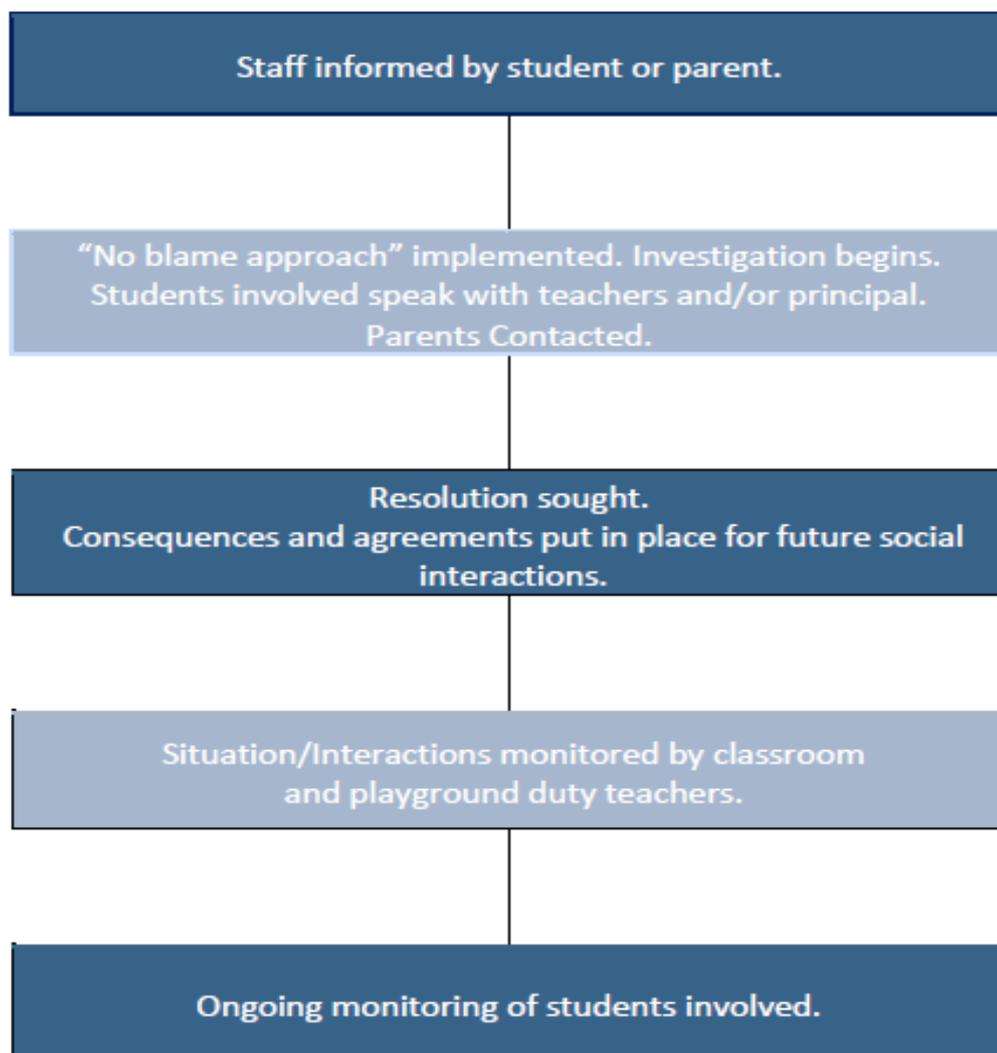
### **Prevention of Bullying**

Pioneer Village School has pastoral care strategies in place to support the students and to create a safe and happy school environment. Long term, whole school prevention curriculum starts in the Early Years and includes:

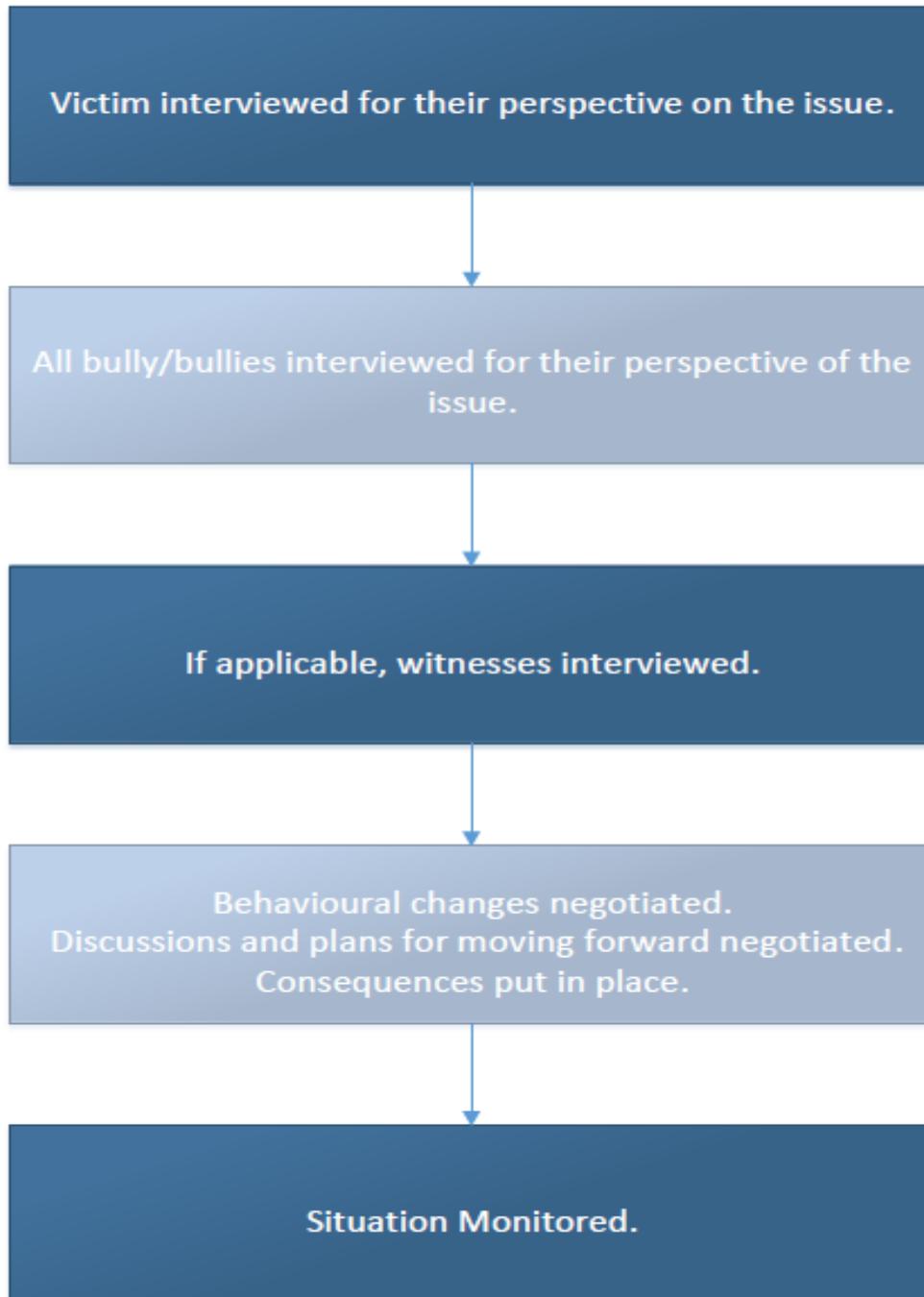
- Education regarding the behaviours that constitute bullying and why bullying is unacceptable
- The development of effective bystander behaviour
- Understanding the school's processes for preventing bullying
- Understanding how bullying is investigated bullying (see flowchart)
- Understanding how the 'No Blame Approach' works
- Raising awareness of cyber-bullying and strategies to deal with it
- A coordinated, highly visible (orange jackets) and active approach to playground supervision
- Identification and supervision of adjustments to high-risk situations
- Recognising and reinforcing positive behaviour and positive social relationships
- Recording and managing of incidents
- Quick response by school to issues raised by students, parents, staff
- School psychologist, admin available when required
- Student Code of Conduct Policy in place to assist in the prevention of bullying
- Provide students with strategies to respond positively to incidents of bullying behaviour, including responsibilities as bystanders

# Bullying Investigation Flowchart

*Each incident will require thorough investigations. The consequence and actions undertaken will depend on the nature and extent of the bullying.*



# No Blame Approach



## **FURTHER INFORMATION REGARDING BULLYING BEHAVIOURS**

### **Why do some students bully?**

Research from the *Friendly Schools Plus Program* states that some students bully for the following reasons; to be popular and admired, because they are afraid of being left out, are jealous, enjoy power or boredom.

### **Indicators that a child may be being bullied.**

Parents may be the first to notice the signs that their child may be being bullied. The signs for parents often include the child not wanting to go to school, saying they are sick to avoid attending school and generally not enjoying going to school anymore. The child can often withdraw, have emotional outbursts, get upset easily, have difficulty concentrating, or complain of headaches or stomach aches. Listed below are some indicators that a child is being bullied:

Emotional- Mood swings, sleep disturbance, eating disorders, depression.

Physical- Psychosomatic complaints, headaches, stomach aches, negative body language, tics.

Social- Social withdrawal, increased sibling rivalry.

Behavioural- Outbursts of temper, problematic behaviour.

School/academic- Erratic/decline in school attendance, truancy, decline in work standards.

Cyber- Changes in their general behaviour, decline in physical health, changes in friendship groups, change in sleep patterns and avoiding school or clubs.

Please also note- while these are signs of possible bullying, they may also be signs that something else is happening with the child. Referral to the appropriate school personnel to determine the cause of the issues is recommended.

## **Guidelines for Parents and Bystanders on how to respond to Bullying Behaviours.**

### **Response of Bystanders**

The bystander is the name given to the group of children who are not directly involved in either the bullying or being bullied. The action taken by this group has been shown to either discourage or support the person bullying. Bystanders can play an important role by being supportive of the person being bullied by seeking help, asking the person bullying to stop, by showing support for the behaviour or walking away. A bystander is someone who sees the bullying happening or knows it is happening elsewhere. A bystander must;

- Care enough to act
- If feeling able, tell the bully to stop
- Report it to a staff member
- Never be a bystander who does nothing – this exacerbates the problem.

## Response of Parents

When a situation has occurred:

- Calmly encourage your child to talk through it so you can get the facts straight
- Determine if it is a 'once off' incident or if it is ongoing
- Encourage them to use the PVS Child Friendly Complaints process to report the incidents
- Keep an open mind, remembering you are hearing only one side of the story
- Help your child to reflect on what he/she has done so far and to work out what might be done
- Contact the School – the best first port of call is your child's teacher
- Present the information you have as calmly as possible
- Talk to your child about positive ways of dealing with bullying such as: pretending not to hear hurtful comments; using silent self-talk e.g. "That's their problem, not mine." to develop confidence; developing greater self-assertiveness; believing it is important to tell someone when bullying happens or reoccurs.

## Report suspected incidents to the school. It does not help to do the following:

- Get angry or upset
- Feel guilty or ashamed
- Make the child feel it is not important
- Blame the child
- Blame the other child/children involved
- Blame the School
- Accuse people without knowing all the facts
- Demand to know all the facts at once
- Look for easy solutions
- Try to sort the bullies out yourself.

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