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PORT LINCOLN SPECIAL SCHOOL  
**ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

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## STATEMENT

***At Port Lincoln Special School all individuals have a right to be respected and a responsibility to respect others.***

In our commitment to providing a safe, inclusive, supportive and ordered learning environment free from bullying, harassment and violence, all Port Lincoln Special School community members will conduct themselves appropriately and model behaviours that foster respect for self and others.

The school will work with the school community and other services to support its students in being responsible and productive members of this community. Bullying, including cyber bullying, harassment and violence is not acceptable at this site and in all forms will be dealt with seriously and eliminated.

## DEFINITIONS

### BULLYING

Bullying is an ongoing misuse of power by an individual or group, directed towards a specific person/s, through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that causes physical and/or psychological harm.

Behaviours that characterise bullying may include victimisation and unwelcome, offensive, abusive, belittling or threatening behaviour. Bullying may lead to the person(s) subjected to the behaviour feeling victimised, offended, demeaned, humiliated, intimidated, or suffering detriment or disadvantage.

Bullying may be carried out overtly (obvious e.g. face-to-face) or covertly (hidden e.g. through repeated social exclusion or via technology).

Overt bullying (sometimes referred to as direct bullying) involves physical actions such as punching or kicking or overt verbal actions such as name-calling and insulting.

Covert bullying is a subtle type of non-physical bullying which usually isn't easily seen by others. Covert bullying behaviours mostly inflict harm by damaging another's social reputation, peer relationships and self-esteem. Covert bullying can be carried out in a range of ways (e.g. spreading rumours, conducting a malicious social exclusion campaign and/or through the use of internet or mobile phone technologies).

Cyberbullying occurs through the use of information or communication technologies such as Instant Messaging, text messages, email and social networking sites. It has many similarities with offline bullying but it differs in that the individual(s) who is/are bullying can be anonymous, it can reach a wide audience and the sent or uploaded material can be difficult to remove.

**DISCRIMINATION** occurs when people are treated less favourably than others because of their race, culture or ethnic origin; religion; physical characteristics; gender; sexual orientation; marital, parenting or economic status; age and/or ability or disability. Discrimination is often ongoing and commonly involves exclusion or rejection.

**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 it may be a single act. It may be directed randomly or towards the same person(s). It may be intentional or unintentional.

**SEXUAL HARASSMENT** is unwelcome sexual conduct which makes a person (male or female, of the same or opposite gender, same-sex attracted, bisexual or transgender) feel offended, humiliated and/or intimidated, where that reaction to the conduct is reasonable in the circumstances.

Sexual harassment can be a single incident, repeated or continuous, direct or indirect, and take various forms.

**VIOLENCE** is the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against another person/s that results in psychological harm, injury or in some cases death. Violence may involve provoked or unprovoked acts and can be a single incident, a random act or can occur over time.

**BYSTANDERS** may intervene or become aware of bullying. It is expected that they will take action, report bullying and support the resolution of the problem by being involved in reconciliation and/or documentation.

## RIGHTS OF INDIVIDUALS IN THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Individuals in the Port Lincoln Special School community have a right to a safe school environment; to work, learn and interact in an inclusive, supportive and ordered environment free from bullying, harassment and violence. All members of the PLSS community have the responsibility to;

- Abstain from bullying.
- Actively discourage bullying and be an effective bystander.
- Give support to those who are bullied.
- Report bullying through the appropriate processes.

## REPORTING AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### BULLYING INCIDENTS

The severity and seriousness of the bullying will be assessed and appropriate action will be taken. This may include the use of counselling services, the implementation of the Grievances and Complaints Resolution Policy or the Behaviour Management Policy.

**The Principal will:**

- Gather information from any incidents or accusations of bullying.
- All incidents or accusations of bullying will be managed in a way consistent with the *Grievances and Complaints Resolution Policy, School and DECD Discipline Policy*.
- Provide the Governing Council with updates each term in relation to school bullying data and trends and any anti-bullying programs or initiatives in place.
- Ensure all new staff members, students and their families are aware of the school's negotiated anti-bullying policy and the decision-making procedures open to them if they wish to influence school practice.
- Include the anti-bullying policy as part of the school's enrolment process.
- Ensure that all parents/carers have access to the school's anti-bullying policy, the *DECD Bullying and harassment at school: Advice for Parents and caregivers* leaflet.
- Ensure all parents/carers are aware of their rights to advocacy and of avenues open to them should they have grievances relating to the management of an incident of bullying.
- Ensure ongoing training and development of teachers and SSOs will occur.

All staff members undertake pre- and in-service training titled *Responding to Abuse and Neglect: Education and Care*. This training aims to provide staff with an understanding of-

- What underlies child abuse and neglect and its impact on children's development and well-being.
- How staff can help prevent and lessen the impact of abuse and neglect through their daily work with children and young people.

Teaching respectful relationships to children and students makes an important contribution to increasing protective factors and decreasing bullying, harassment and violence in schools. The *Keeping Safe Child Protection* curriculum will be implemented in all year levels. The four focus areas of this curriculum are:

- The Right to be Safe
- Relationships
- Recognising and Reporting Abuse
- Protective Strategies

**School staff** members will:

- Develop and foster positive relationships with students and their families.
- Communicate and interact effectively with students and engage in co-operative problem solving relationships to address issues of bullying.
- Participate in developing, implementing and reviewing the school's anti-bullying policy, curriculum and in-service offerings.
- Critically reflect on practices and develop the knowledge and skills needed to manage any incidents of bullying successfully.
- Establish, maintain, make explicit and model the school's expectations relating to bullying.

- Participate in training and development related to decreasing bullying.
- Support students to be effective bystanders.

**Students** will support the school in maintaining a safe and supportive environment if they:

- Are respectful towards other students, staff and members of the school community.
- Communicate (where possible) with an appropriate adult if bullied or harassed or if they are aware that someone else is being bullied or harassed.
- Learn to be an effective bystander, so that bullying and harassment are discouraged through peer influence.

#### **What can parents do?**

- **Learn to recognize the signs of bullying**
- Children who are bullied and those that bully are equally in need of support and guidance from caring adults. Signs may include, bruises or scratches, vague stomach aches or headaches, refusal to go to school, tearfulness, anxiety, changes in moods, eating habits, and sleeping patterns.
- **Instill confidence and pride in your child's abilities and disabilities**
- Children with special needs who have developed a sense of pride in their differences are less likely to be victimized by bullies and will respond more effectively when faced with social pressures.
- **Communicate with all parties involved**
- Parents/carers are asked to keep the school informed of concerns about behaviour, children's health issues or other matters of relevance. Communicate in a respectful manner with the principal or class teacher if you believe your child may be the victim or the instigator of bullying or issues of concern soon after your concerns are raised.
- **Become familiar with the school's anti-bullying policy**
- The anti-bullying policy is part of the school's enrolment induction and will be published in the school newsletter and website. The policy will be reviewed by parents, staff and members of Governing Council annually.

For more information on bullying:

Kids Helpline: 1800 551 800 [www.kidshelp.com.au](http://www.kidshelp.com.au)

[www.bullyingnoway.gov.au](http://www.bullyingnoway.gov.au)

[www.safeschoolshub.edu.au](http://www.safeschoolshub.edu.au)

[www.cybersmart.gov.au](http://www.cybersmart.gov.au)

Bullying No Way: [www.bullyingnoway.com.au](http://www.bullyingnoway.com.au)

Children, Youth and Women's Health Services

[www.cywhs.sa.gov.au](http://www.cywhs.sa.gov.au)

Parent Helpline: 1300 364 100

Youth Healthline: 1300 131 719

DECS Parent Helpline: 1800 222 696

Youth beyondblue [www.youthbeyondblue.com](http://www.youthbeyondblue.com)

Reach Out <http://au.reachout.com>

Equal Opportunity Commission of South Australia: equal opportunity, human rights and laws, complaints: [www.eoc.sa.gov.au](http://www.eoc.sa.gov.au)  
Phone: 82071977

Date: 11/04/17

Review date: 11/04/18