LITTLE GROVE PRIMARY SCHOOL

FRIENDLY SCHOOLS & FAMILIES PROGRAM

BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY

At Little Grove, we are committed to making a safe environment by developing authentic relationships between students, parents and staff based on care, mutual respect and open communication.

Bullying, in any form, will not be tolerated at our school.

PURPOSE:
- To give all members of the community a shared vision of what constitutes bullying
- To provide a clear procedure to deal with bullying.
- To maintain a commitment to the school ethos and purpose of providing a safe environment.

DEFINITIONS:

What is bullying?
- Bullying can be defined as: repeated incidents involving a more powerful child and/or children on another, child and/or children or by a group of children on a single child.

Verbal:
- Such as name-calling or spreading rumours.

Psychological:
- Such as exclusion or threatening gestures.

Physical:
- Such as hitting or kicking.

Power Imbalance:
- By a more powerful individual or group against an individual who is unable to effectively resist.

Cyber
- the use of mobile phones; email; chat lines and other internet base programs to demean; intimidate or scandalize another.

What is a Bystander?
Bullying is often a public display of asserting power. Bullies often need an audience to reinforce their behaviour. A bystander is part of the problem with bullying if they do nothing when bullying occurs. ‘Bystander’ behaviour can inappropriately support bullying behaviour in the following ways:-
- Ignoring or remaining silent about the bullying behaviour;
- Providing the student who is bullying with social reinforcement such as being friendly to the student bullying and not saying anything about their behaviour;
- Maintaining the victim’s role by avoiding or excluding them; and
- Gossiping about incidents and in the process enhancing the reputation of the student who is bullying.
Students can support bullying behaviour in an active way by:

- Verbally encouraging bullying behaviour or laughing and smiling at the bullying;
- Preventing the student who is being bullied from escaping the situation;
- Shielding the situation from an adult view or acting as a “look out”;
- Assisting the student to bully by holding the victim or their possessions;
- Acting as a messenger for students who are bullying; and
- Refusing to give information about the situation when asked.

Children observing bullying are encouraged, and should, report it to a teacher.

**RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES:**

Students at Little Grove Primary have the right to be an individual; to be respected and treated with kindness, to feel safe and to achieve their personal best.

Students, parents and teachers have the responsibility to respect the rights of others and to help make our school a “friendly” place by being thoughtful, respectful and courteous to others. They have the responsibility to:

- Be observant to signs of bullying
- Report incidents of bullying
- Treat reports of bullying seriously and
- Follow the correct procedure in attempting to resolve conflict

**MANAGEMENT OF BULLYING:**

**STUDENTS**

*Strategies for students to follow:*

What to do if you are bullied.

**STOP** – What is going on?

- How do I feel?
- Is the situation really bothering me?
- Am I in danger?
- What do I want?

**THINK** – What can I do?

- Is this a bullying situation?
- What strategies can I use?
- Can I handle this situation myself?
- Do I need to ask for help?

**TALK** – Who can I talk to?

- Who is the best person to talk to?
- What do I want from my support person?
- How could I talk about it?

**TO PREVENT BULLYING**

- Respect yourself and others
- Be assertive
- Learn to tolerate and accept individual differences.

**What can you do if you are a bystander?**
- Care enough to do something about it, whether it affects you personally or not.
- Early intervention can defuse a situation before it gets out of hand.
- Report it to a teacher.

**PARENTS**

**As a parent you can:**
- Talk to your child about what is happening at school.
- Support your child to be assertive but not aggressive in dealing with bullying.
- Talk to someone at school who can help.
- Be positive about your child’s qualities and what he/she does.
- Encourage your child to be tolerant, caring and not to use aggression to resolve conflicts.
- Talk to someone at school who can help, following the procedure below.
- Be aware of signs of distress in your child (see below).
- Assist your child to discuss the problem with a teacher.
- Discourage any planned retaliation either physical or verbal, if your child is bullied.
- Contact the school if you believe your child is being bullied.
- Monitor your child’s use of internet based programs and mobile phones.

**POSSIBLE SIGNS OF BULLYING**

Children may:
- Be unwilling to go to school.
- Become withdrawn.
- Begin doing poorly in school work.
- Start stammering.
- Cry themselves to sleep.
- Start bedwetting.
- Refuse to say what is wrong.

**PROCEDURE FOR REPORTING INCIDENTS**

A) When you hear of an incident from a sibling or student from the school, try to establish:
- *Where* the incident took place – in the classroom, in the playground, on the way to or from school.
- *When* the incident took place – during class times, during morning or lunch break, before or after school.
- *Who* was involved – single student, group of students – any names where possible.
- *Why* it took place – money, equipment, friends, power, other

Pass on this information to –
- The Classroom Teacher if it happened during class time or you are unsure of the time.
• The Administration if it happened before, after school or in the playground.

B) If you witness an incident:
1) Before or after school, report it to the Administration.

All reports will be recorded on the schools ‘Integris’ data base. Where appropriate the school will communicate with the reporting adult reinforcing that action has been taken.

Any incident that you think warrants attention can go through the same process.

Confidentiality will be maintained.

The schools ‘Bullying Prevention Policy’ will be communicated to parents via a pamphlet such as the one in appendix C.

**STAFF**

Staff will:

- Adopt positive classroom management strategies and incorporate anti-bullying message in the curriculum with the Friendly Schools and Families resources reflecting the whole school approach to bullying prevention.
- Use a variety of strategies such as role plays, individual, group and home based activities.
- Provide positive role models for students.
- Actively counteract bullying behaviour
- Respond appropriately to any reported incidents of bullying
- Be obviously present during recess and lunchtimes when they are on duty, as a deterrent to possible incidents of bullying in the playground.
- Ensure ‘Internet Use’ agreements are signed and adhered to.

**STAGES IN ADDRESSING THE BULLYING**

1. Report the occurrence of bullying to the appropriate staff member (see previous section on reporting procedures).
2. Teachers to address lower level bullying concerns and to use the Method of Shared Concern with students where appropriate.
3. For serious bullying issues or if no improvement has been achieved from teacher interventions (e.g. from using the Method of Shared Concern) the case is to be reported directly to the Principal or Deputy Principal for further intervention.

**USING THE METHOD OF SHARED CONCERN**

The key to stopping bullying is getting those involved to talk about what is happening and decide on some ways to overcome the problem. The Friendly Schools, Friendly Families Project recommends that schools use the Method of Shared Concern where appropriate, which concentrates on finding a solution to the problem for all students involved. This strategy can also be used at home by parents.

**The aim of the Shared Concern Method**

The Method of Shared Concern aims to change the behaviour of students involved in bullying incidents and improve the situation for the student being bullied. This method helps students to develop empathy
and concern for others and gives them strategies that will help them to get along better with others in the school and at home.

What happens in ‘shared concern’
1. Individual meetings are held, with each of the students involved in the bullying incident e.g. The student or students bullying, the person being bullied and any bystanders who may have seen what was happening;
2. Each student is asked about the problem and to suggest ways he/she personally could help to improve the situation;
3. The student being bullied is also given the opportunity to discuss what happened and encouraged to think of ways to improve the situation; and
4. There is a follow-up meeting or meetings, discussion and planning that give the students the opportunity to change and improve attitudes and behaviour and to put these into practice in a supportive environment.

Note: this process can be undertaken as a group problem solving session where each individual has the opportunity to describe the problem and to suggest ways of resolving it. This can be particularly effective where the incident involves ‘friends’ where a degree of empathy already exists.

5. POLICY REVIEW & MAINTENANCE:
   - The Whole School Bullying Policy will have input from the school community through the School Council.
   - The policy will have input from the students through the Student Council.
   - The policy will be reviewed at regular intervals.
   - The School will promote the policy through the newsletter, bullying prevention pamphlet for parents and assembly items.
   - The administration will allocate time to review and maintain the policy.

6. BULLYING RECORDING PROTOCOLS

Within the classroom environment individual teachers can manage low level bullying behaviour within their Classroom Behaviour Management. The focus of prevention requires all teachers to attend to the interpersonal, resiliency, communication and problem solving skills of the students in their care. Interventions into bullying behaviour must be documented by the teacher. That documentation should include Date; Place; Time; Students Involved; Nature of the Behaviour; Nature of the Intervention. A sample recording sheet is included as Appendix A.

Where the in-class bullying is repeated or the intervention fails to correct the behaviour then the Deputy Principal and/or the Principal should be advised. At this point a member of the administration team will manage the intervention. The teacher’s role will then be to support the strategies that will be implemented and to continue to attend to developing the skills of the students as described in the paragraph above.

The Administration will be responsible for recording the behaviour, interventions and communications using the Behaviour Module of Integris. (see appendix B)