

Anti-bullying Guidelines

Behaviour Management Policy Statement

At Canning Vale Primary School bullying in any form is a totally unacceptable behaviour.

Rationale

CVPS operates on the belief that all our students have the ability and right to learn in a safe, structured and supportive environment. As a school community, CVPS works hard to create a climate that is inclusive, positive and productive.

It is our firm belief that no individual student (or group of students) has the right to choose behaviour that infringes upon the rights of others.

Bullying, harassment or any form of discrimination, is immoral and can be unlawful because it interferes with the right of a person to feel safe and valued as a member of the community.

Bullying at school is everyone's problem. Our priority therefore is to stop the bullying and to try to reduce the chance of it happening again.

What is bullying?

Bullying is when one or more of the following happen again and again to someone who finds it hard to stop it from happening again.

Bullying is when a person or group of people offline or online:

Makes fun or tease someone in a mean and hurtful way again and again;

Gives another person "the look";

Tells lies or spread nasty rumours again and again about someone to try to make others not like them;

Leaves someone out on purpose or not allow them to join in again and again;

Hits, kicks or pushes someone around again and again;

Deliberately damages, destroys or steals someone's things again and again; and

Threatens or makes someone feel afraid of getting hurt again and again.

The key features of bullying are threefold; it causes hurt and distress, is repeated, and involves the use of power in an unfair way. Bullying need not always be done by the older and stronger. "Bullying up" is bullying done by the smaller, the younger and the weaker, who either use anonymous means to bully, such as cyber bullying, or overt means to bully, knowing that any retaliation would make the provoked person look like they are the bully.

General conduct

All students are expected to show respect, courtesy and consideration to all others. Any form of bullying is unworthy of a Canning Vale Primary School student and is against all the school stands for. Those who are identified as bullies will be dealt with firmly and may be suspended from the school.

Symptoms of bullying

For behaviour to be classified as bullying, it needs to involve repeated actions that are designed to cause hurt. A lack of friends or popularity does not necessarily suggest that a person is being bullied. It may simply mean a person has not yet developed sufficient inter-personal skills. There is a difference between bullying and what can be described as normal interpersonal conflict such as two people who are as strong as each other arguing.

The symptoms associated with bullying include, but are not limited to; not wanting to go to school, anger, tears, depression, low self-esteem and a raft of physical symptoms such as headaches and stomach aches. Bed wetting and sleeplessness can also be symptoms of bullying, particularly in the young. Withdrawal and reluctance to "join in" can be a warning sign, as can truancy, misbehaviour and aggressive behaviour. Cuts, bruising, torn clothing, requests for extra food or money as well as a decline in academic performance can also be clues that a student may be suffering from bullying.

What are students being taught at school to help them deal with bullying situations?

All students at our school are being taught that when there is a problem I can:

- Try to stand up for myself in a positive way;
- Try to talk with the person with whom I am having a problem;
- Walk away and ignore the person completely;
- Get help from a teacher or another person I trust;
- Ignore the situation and keep playing or working;
- Talk to a friend to get some ideas to help me make a decision (for example, the School Chaplain);
- Try coming to an agreement with the other person.

We also work hard to support the both victims of bullying and the bully. We help the victim to recover and retain their resilience. Resilience can be viewed as the happy knack of bungy jumping through the pitfalls of life. We counsel the bully about the consequences of their behaviour and assist them to think how they will behave differently. We often will involve the parents as part of the intervention strategy.

What can parents do to help their child?

Try to talk to your child/children about what is going on;

Listen to their concerns and believe them;

Be aware of your own response and react in a calm and helpful manner;

Talk with your child's teacher and calmly discuss the situation and some possible strategies; and

Encourage your child to ask for help at school if they are being bullied, e.g. talk about who they could talk to at school, and how to ask for help.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is bullying using a mobile phone or other device and/or the Internet; in other words it is bullying using technology. It is both insidious and pervasive. Modern forms of communication, such as: email, chat rooms and messaging, enable bullying to be much more subtle, and, at the same time, much more damaging to a victim's social reputation.

A person may:

- Send nasty or threatening emails or messages;

- Send mean or nasty comments or pictures/photographs about others to websites, e.g. My Space, Facebook, MSN, Instagram etc. or to other students' mobile phones;

- Deliberately ignore or leave out others over the Internet

- Pretend to be someone else online to cause hurt or make a person look foolish.

Cyberbullying can happen through text messages, pictures, photographs, video-clips or emails etc being sent to you, but also when these things are sent to others, about you.

How can parents help if your child is a victim of cyber bullying?

If cyber bullying is occurring a useful acronym to remember is **I-CURRB**

- Investigate what your child is doing online;

- Communicate regularly with your children to understand what they enjoy doing online;

- Use family safety software to keep track of what your children are able to access online;

- Research the school and Internet Service Provider's (ISP) policies on Cyberbullying. Online applications, such as Instant Messenger (IM) will also have their own policies;

- Report always cyber bullying to your child's school and/or ISP; if you have serious concern for your child's safety, contact your local police. Do not delete the hurtful message. Rather save it as evidence to give to the Police;

- Block communications from students who cyber bully others; most (IM) applications, chat rooms and email account providers allow you to block messages from identified people

Look at <http://www.thinkuknow.org.au/site/cyberbullying.asp>

Bystanders

Bullying often (but not always) involves more than the students who are bullied and those who bully others. Bullying often continues because people who are involved do not talk about it and seek help. This includes people who observe bullying – the bystanders. A bystander is someone who sees the bullying or knows that it is happening to someone else.

What can bystanders do?

- Ask a teacher or support person for help;
- Let the person doing the bullying know that what they are doing is bullying;
- Refuse to join in with the bullying and walk away;
- Support the person being bullied
- Support their friends and protect them from bullying

Some useful contacts

www.bullyingnoway.gov.au

Kids Helpline 1800 551 800

Crisis Care 1800 199 008

www.thinkuknow.org.au

www.takeastandtogether.gov.au/under13