BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY

Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact the main office of Nelson Park school (03) 52783620.

1. PURPOSE

Nelson Park School is committed to providing a safe and respectful learning environment where bullying will not be tolerated.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Explain the definition of bullying to share understanding amongst all members of the school community make clear that no form of bullying or harassment at Nelson Park School will be tolerated.
- Outline the strategies and programs at NPS to build a positive school culture and prevent bullying behaviour.
- Ask that everyone in our school community be alert to signs and evidence of bullying behaviour and accept responsibility to report bullying behaviour to school staff.
- Ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are appropriately investigated and addressed.
- Ensure that support is provided to students who may be affected by bullying behaviour (including targets, bystanders and students engaging in bullying behaviour).
- Seek parental and peer group support to address and prevent bullying behaviour at Nelson Park School.

When responding to bullying behaviour, Nelson Park School aims to:

- Be proportionate, consistent and responsive to stop the bullying from happening again.
- Restore the relationship between the students involved.

Nelson Park School acknowledges that school staff owe a duty of care to students to take reasonable steps to reduce the risk of reasonably foreseeable harm, which can include harm that may be caused by bullying behaviour.

2. SCOPE

This policy addresses how Nelson Park School aims to prevent, address and respond to student bullying behaviour.
Nelson Park School recognises that there are many other types of inappropriate student behaviours that do not meet the definition of bullying which are also unacceptable at our school. These other inappropriate behaviours will be managed in accordance with Student Engagement & Wellbeing Policy and Child Safety Code of Conduct Policy.

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions. This policy applies to both the Libau and Illinois Campus.

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3. DEFINITIONS

Bullying

In 2018 the Education Council of the Council of Australian Governments endorsed the following definition of bullying for use by all Australian schools:

> *Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening.*
>
> *Bullying can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time (for example, through sharing of digital records)*
>
> *Bullying of any form or for any reason can have immediate, medium and long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders. Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.*

Bullying has three main features:

- It involves a misuse of power in a relationship.
- It is ongoing and repeated, and
- It involves behaviours that can cause harm.

There are four main types of bullying behaviour:

- Physical – examples include hitting, pushing, shoving or intimidating or otherwise physically hurting another person, damaging or stealing their belongings. It includes threats of violence.
- Verbal/written – examples include name-calling or insulting someone about an attribute, quality or personal characteristic.
- Social (sometimes called relational or emotional bullying) – examples include deliberately excluding someone, spreading rumours, sharing information that will have a harmful effect on the other person and/or damaging a person's social reputation or social acceptance.
- Cyberbullying – any form of bullying behaviour that occurs online or via a mobile device. It can be verbal or written, and can include threats of violence as well as images, videos and/or audio.

Bullying can be a form of racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia or other type of social prejudice when the behaviour is targeted at an individual or group because of a personal characteristic, such as race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability.
For further information about bullying, refer to: Bully Stoppers (education.vic.gov.au) and the Department's Bullying Prevention and Response policy on the Policy and Advisory Library.

Other distressing and inappropriate behaviours

Many distressing and inappropriate behaviours may not constitute bullying even though they are unpleasant. Students involved in or who witness any distressing and inappropriate behaviours should

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report their concerns to school staff and our college will follow our Student Engagement and Inclusion Policy and Child Safety and Code of Conduct Policy.

Mutual conflict involves argument or disagreement between people with no imbalance of power. In incidents of mutual conflict, generally, both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution to the issue. Unresolved mutual conflict can develop into bullying if one of the parties targets the other repeatedly in retaliation.

Social rejection or dislike is not bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.

Single-episode acts of nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. However, single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression are not acceptable behaviours at our school and may have serious consequences for students engaging in this behaviour. Nelson Park School will use its Student Engagement and Inclusion Policy to guide a response to single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression.

Harassment is language or actions that are demeaning, offensive or intimidating to a person. It can take many forms, including sexual harassment and disability harassment. Further information about these two forms of harassment, including definitions, is set out in our Inclusion and Diversity Policy. Harassment of any kind will not be tolerated at Nelson Park School and may have serious consequences for students engaging in this behaviour. Nelson Park School will use its Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy to guide a response to students demonstrating harassing behaviour, unless the behaviour also constitutes bullying, in which case the behaviour will be managed in accordance with this Bullying Prevention Policy.

Discrimination is behaviour that treats someone unfavourably because of a personal characteristic (for example, race, religious belief or activity, disability, sex or intersex status, gender identity or sexual orientation).

Discrimination, harassment, and any other inappropriate behaviour is not tolerated at our school and there may be serious consequences for students engaging in this behaviour. This includes any form of racism, religious or disability discrimination, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, or any other behaviour that targets an individual or group. Further information about discrimination and harassment, including definitions, is set out in our Inclusion and Diversity Policy.

4. BULLYING PREVENTION

Nelson Park School has a number of programs and strategies in place to build a positive and inclusive school culture. We strive to foster a school culture that prevents bullying behaviour by modelling and encouraging behaviour that demonstrates acceptance, kindness and respect.

Bullying prevention at Nelson Park School is proactive and is supported by research that indicates that a whole school, multifaceted approach is the most effect way to prevent and address bullying.

At our school:

- Through the implementation of our School Wide Positive Behaviour Framework (SWPBS) into Everyday Practice, we have a positive school environment that provides safety, security and support for students and promotes positive relationships and wellbeing.
- We strive to build strong partnerships between the school, families and the broader community that means all members work together to ensure the safety of students.

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- Through SWPBS Framework into Everyday Practice, teachers are encouraged to incorporate classroom management strategies that discourage bullying and promote positive behaviour.
- In classroom, our social and emotional learning curriculum teaches students what constitutes bullying and how to respond to bullying behaviour assertively. This promotes resilience, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving.
- Through the Real School's Restorative Practices model, the school staff encourage positive relationships between students within and across different year levels. We seek to empower students to be confident communicators and to resolve conflict in a non-aggressive and constructive way.

5. INCIDENT RESPONSE

Reporting concerns to Nelson Park School
Bullying complaints will be taken seriously and responded to sensitively at our school.

Students who may be experiencing bullying behaviour, or students who have witnessed bullying behaviour, are encouraged to report their concerns to school staff as soon as possible.

Our ability to effectively reduce and eliminate bullying behaviour is greatly affected by students and/or parents and carers reporting concerning behaviour as soon as possible, so that the responses implemented by Nelson Park School are timely and appropriate in the circumstances.

We encourage students to speak to their classroom teacher, student wellbeing officer or health & wellbeing leader however, students are welcome to discuss their concerns with any trusted member of staff.

Parents or carers who develop concerns that their child is involved in or has witnessed bullying behaviour at Nelson Park School should contact their Assistant Principal by phone.

Foundation – Year 6	**Year 7 – Year 9**	**Year 10 – Year 12**
Mel Vago - 5278 3620	Sarah Yates - 5278 3620	Nathan Bush - 5278 3620

Investigations
When notified of alleged bullying behaviour, school staff are required to:

1. Record the details of the allegations in Compass and
2. Inform the relevant Student Wellbeing Officer, Health & Wellbeing Leader, Assistant Principal or School Principal.

The above staff are responsible for investigating allegations of bullying in a timely and sensitive manner. To appropriately investigate an allegation of bullying, the staff member may:

- Speak to the those involved in the allegations, including the target/s, the students allegedly engaging in bullying behaviour/s and any witnesses to the incidents.
- Speak to the parents of the students involved speak to the teachers of the students involved.
- Take detailed notes of all discussions for future reference obtain written statements from all or any of the above.

All communications with the staff in the course of investigating an allegation of bullying will be managed sensitively. Investigations will be completed as quickly as possible to allow the behaviours to be addressed in a timely manner.

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The objective of completing a thorough investigation into the circumstances of alleged bullying behaviour is to determine the nature of the conduct and the students involved. A thorough understanding of the alleged bullying will inform staff about how to most effectively implement an appropriate response to that behaviour.
Serious bullying, including serious cyberbullying, is a criminal offence and may be referred to Victoria Police. For more information, see: Brodie's Law.

Responses to bullying behaviours
When the staff member has sufficient information to understand the circumstances of the alleged bullying and the students involved, a number of strategies may be implemented to address the behaviour and support affected students in consultation the staff and Department of Education and Training specialist staff etc.

There are a number of factors that will be considered when determining the most appropriate response to the behaviour.
When making a decision about how to respond to bullying behaviour, Nelson Park School will consider:

- The age and maturity of the students involved.
- The severity and frequency of the bullying, and the impact it has had on the target student.
- Whether the student/s engaging in bullying behaviour have displayed similar behaviour before whether the bullying took place in a group or one-to-one context.
- Whether the students engaging in bullying behaviour demonstrates insight or remorse for their behaviour the alleged motive of the behaviour, including any element of provocation.

Appropriate staff members may implement all, or some of the following responses to bullying behaviours:

- Offer counselling support to the target student or students, including referral to the Positive Behaviour Support Advisory Team, Student Support Services or external provider.
- Offer counselling support to the students engaging in bullying behaviour, including referral the Positive Behaviour Support Advisory Team, SSS or external provider.
- Offer counselling support to affected students, including witnesses and/or friends of the target student, including referral to the Positive Behaviour Support Advisory Team, SSS or external provider.
- Facilitate a restorative practice meeting with all or some of the students involved. The objective of restorative practice is to repair relationships that have been damaged by bringing about a sense of remorse and restorative action on the part of the person who has bullied someone and forgiveness by the person who has been bullied.
- Facilitate a Student Support Group meeting and/or Behaviour Support Plan for affected students.
- Prepare Critical Incident and Safety Plan restricting contact between target and bullying behaviour students.
- Provide discussion and/or mentoring for different social and emotional learning competencies of the students involved, including social pragmatic groups conducted by Speech Therapist, Engaged Play groups.
- Monitor the behaviour of the students involved for an appropriate time and take follow up action if necessary.
- Implement year group targeted strategies to reinforce positive behaviours, for example social pragmatic groups conducted by Speech Therapist, Engaged Play groups.
- Implement disciplinary consequences for the students engaging in bullying behaviour, which may include removal of privileges, detention, suspension and/or expulsion consistent

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with our Student Wellbeing and Engagement policy, Ministerial Order on Suspensions & Expulsions and any other relevant Department policy.

- Nelson Park School understands the importance of monitoring and following up on the progress of students who have been involved in or affected by bullying behaviour. Where appropriate, school staff will also endeavour to provide parents and carers with updates on the management of bullying incidents. The Principal is responsible for maintaining up to date records of the investigation of and responses to bullying behaviour.

6. FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Complaints Policy.
- Duty of Care Policy.
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy.
- Statement of Values.
- Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy.

The following websites and resources provide useful information on prevention and responding to bullying, as well as supporting students who have been the target of bullying behaviours:

Kids Helpline
Office of the eSafety Commissioner
Lifeline
Australian Student Wellbeing Framework
Bullying. No way!
School Wide Positive Behaviour
Student Wellbeing Hub

7. EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed on 2-year basis, or earlier as required, following analysis of school data on reported incidents of, and responses to bullying to ensure that the policy remains up to date, practical and effective. Data will be collected through:

- Discussion and consultation with students and parent/carers.
- Assessment of other school-based data, including the number of reported incidents of bullying in each year group and the effectiveness of the responses implemented.
- Attitudes to School Survey.
- Parent Opinion Survey.

Proposed amendments to this policy will be discussed in consultation with student representative groups, parent groups, school council and school community.

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8. REVIEW CYCLE

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's two-year review cycle.

Policy last reviewed	12/06/2025
Approved by	Principal / School Council
Next scheduled review date	JUNE 2027