



# Anti-Cyber Bullying Policy

## **POLICY STATEMENT:**

Epping Views Primary School is committed to providing a safe and caring environment and culture which enables positive relationships to be formed amongst all students and staff and which encourages self-esteem, cooperation, personal growth and a positive attitude to learning and teaching. A clear policy on cyber bullying and harassment will inform the community that **bullying and harassment in any of its forms will not be tolerated.**

## **AIMS:**

- To reinforce within the school community that no form of bullying is acceptable.
- Everyone within the school community is alerted to signs and evidence of bullying and has a responsibility to report it to staff whether as observer or victim.
- To ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are followed up and that support is given to both victim and perpetrator.
- To seek parental and peer-group support and co-operation at all times.

## **What are cyber bullying and harassment?**

**Cyber-bullying** consists of covert, psychological bullying, conveyed through the electronic mediums such as cell-phones, web-logs and web-sites, on-line chat rooms, 'MUD' rooms (multi-user domains where individuals take on different characters) and Xangas (on-line personal profiles where some adolescents create lists of people they do not like). It is verbal (over the telephone or mobile phone), or written (flaming, threats, racial, sexual or homophobic harassment) using the various mediums available.

**Harassment** is any verbal, physical or sexual conduct (including gestures) which is uninvited, unwelcome or offensive to a person.

Our school will actively promote a positive and welcoming personal environment for all members of the school community. When people are bullied or harassed some effects might be anger, embarrassment, fear and humiliation, loss of self-confidence and reduced function and potential. Bullying and harassment will be addressed, individual differences will be respected and students and staff will be enabled and supported in their pursuit of learning and teaching.

## **GUIDELINES:**

A school-wide approach will be taken to deal with bullying and cyber bullying and harassment in a consistent and systematic way.

All new students and staff will be informed of the anti-harassment policy and practices at the commencement of their time at the school.

All complaints of harassment will be heard in confidence and taken seriously.

Our school will organise preventative curriculum programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving.

Staff programs will occur periodically to keep staff informed of current issues/strategies for dealing with these issues.

There will be disciplinary consequences, covering a range of strategies, for those in breach of the Anti-Cyberbullying Policy.

## PROGRAM:

Constructive strategies to deal with harassment will include: education in coping strategies; assertiveness training; problem solving and social skills; counselling and behaviour modification. These strategies will be employed in preference to punitive sanctions and negative consequences.

The Anti-Cyber bullying Policy of the school will be widely promoted to students, staff, parents/carers and the local community. A summary of the policy will be included in the Student Enrolment Package while new staff will receive extensive documentation as part of the school's induction process.

The school leadership team and the teachers will work together to promote the safety of all school members in situations of cyber bullying and harassment, by thoroughly investigating all complaints while respecting the need for confidentiality, notifying parents/carers and planning interventions.

If a teacher feels a student is at serious and imminent risk from cyber bullying and harassment then it is their professional duty to pass on the information to an appropriate person in order to ensure appropriate support for the student.

Student programs will be organised to raise student awareness about cyber bullying and harassment, to provide a forum for discussion of matters and to aid development of attitudes. Some matters will be dealt with formally in the curriculum and in peer support programs, leadership programs, the digital learning program, extra-curricular programs and occasional activities run by outside experts and workers.

Professional development will be provided for staff relating to cyber bullying and harassment and strategies to address these issues in classrooms will be shared with all staff. This includes staff actively supervising students during their use of digital devices at school.

Disciplinary consequences for cyber bullying and harassment will comply with the school's Student Engagement, Wellbeing and Inclusion Policy. The principal or their nominee will provide disciplinary consequences which may include suspension and restricted use of digital devices in accordance with Department of Education and Training (DET) Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines.

## RELATED POLICIES AND RESOURCES:

*Links which are connected with this policy are:*

- *DET's [Effective Schools are Engaging Schools: Student Engagement Policy Guidelines](#)*
- *DET's [Safe Schools are Effective School's](#)*
- *The school's Internet Use Policy (re cyber-bullying)*
- *<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/aboutschool/childhealth/bullying.htm>*
- *<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/safety/bullying/default.htm>*
- *<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/safety/bullying/schoolstrategy.htm#7>*
- *<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/healthwellbeing/wellbeing/engagement/default.htm>*
- *<http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/stuman/wellbeing/segministerorder.pdf>*
- *<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/elearningsupportservices/www/default.htm>*

## EVALUATION:

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

This policy was last ratified by School Council in....

July 2019