



# ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY V2

2023

## Rational

Chrysalis Montessori School recognizes the importance of ensuring the safety and well-being of its students. The school acknowledges that school authorities, schools, and teachers have a legal duty of care towards their students, which arises from the nature of the relationship between them. This duty extends to all situations and locations where the student is under the care of the school.

The duty of care does not require the prevention of every possible injury but necessitates that reasonable care is taken to prevent reasonably foreseeable injuries. Chrysalis Montessori School is committed to exercising reasonable care to provide a safe and supportive environment where students can feel safe, valued, and empowered.

## Implementation

In line with this commitment, the school has adopted the Child Safe Standards developed by the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse. These standards define the essential requirements for creating a child-safe institution and guide the school's actions and practices to ensure the safety and well-being of its students. By adhering to these standards, the school aims to establish best practices and uphold the highest standards of child safety, continually driving and guiding its performance.

Chrysalis Montessori School recognizes that promoting a child-safe environment is a collective responsibility shared by all members of the school community, including staff, parents, and students. By embracing the Child Safe Standards, the school endeavours to create an inclusive and nurturing environment where the rights of students to safety, well-being, and dignity are upheld and respected at all times. Further, the Child Safe Standards are a benchmark against which institutions can assess their child safe capacity and set performance targets. The Standards are:

1. Leadership, Governance and Culture
2. Children's participation and empowerment
3. Family and community involvement
4. Equity and diverse needs

5. Human resource management
6. Child-focused complaints process
7. Staff education and training
8. Physical and online environment
9. Continuous improvement and review
10. Policies and procedures

Chrysalis shall communicate this anti-bullying policy to the whole school community annually, so that there are common understandings throughout the school, that everyone knows what the school's anti-bullying policy is and how it is applied, and that there is a commitment to reduce bullying. The Anti-Bullying Policy reflects the purposes and practices of the school's Behaviour Support Policy.

## DEFINITION OF BULLYING

*"Bullying is a behaviour which can be defined as the repeated attack, physical, psychological, social or verbal, which is formally or situationally defined, on those who are powerless to resist, with the intention of causing distress for their own gain or gratification."* Besag (1989)

The Child Health Promotion Research Centre – ECU (2005) defines bullying as:

- Repeated and unjustifiable behaviour
- Intended to cause fear, distress and/or harm
- Physical, verbal, psychological, relational
- By a more powerful individual or group
- Against a less powerful individual unable to effectively resist.

These definitions contain the same three main parameters of bullying. These are:

- repetitive behaviour – prolonged over time;
- imbalance of power; and
- may be verbal, physical, emotional or psychological.

## FORMS OF BULLYING

Bullying can include:

- Physical bullying (hitting, tripping, damaging property)
- Verbal bullying (insults, teasing, intimidation)
- Social bullying (lying, spreading rumours, excluding, damaging someone's social reputation)
- Cyberbullying (hurtful texts, posts, images or videos, imitating others online).

Social bullying and cyberbullying can be considered 'invisible' or covert forms of bullying, as they are particularly difficult for teachers and parents to detect and address. As students get older, they are increasingly likely to bully others using these covert behaviours.

## Why do some students bully?

Research from the Friendly Schools Plus program states that some students bully for the following reasons:

- To be popular and admired
- They are afraid of being left out
- Jealousy of others
- They enjoy the power
- They see it as their role e.g. leader
- It seems like fun/boredom
- To maintain their self-esteem.

The student who bullies others may not necessarily stand out as having any behavioural issues and may in fact be liked by staff and regarded as a school leader.

## INDICATORS THAT A CHILD MAY BE BEING BULLIED

Parents may be the first to notice the signs that their child may be being bullied. The signs for parents often include the child not wanting to go to school, saying they are sick to avoid attending school and generally not enjoying going to school anymore. The child can often withdraw, have emotional outbursts, get upset easily, have difficulty concentrating, or complain of headaches or stomach aches. Listed below are some indicators that a child is being bullied:

**Emotional:** Changes in behaviour – becomes withdrawn, mood changes, stops eating irritability and temper outbursts, appearing tearful, distressed, unhappy, anxious, depression

**Physical:** Psychosomatic complaints, headaches, stomach aches, negative body language, tics

**Social:** Social withdrawal, increased sibling rivalry

**Behavioural:** Outbursts of temper, problematic behaviour

**School/academic:** Erratic/decline in school attendance, truancy, decline in work standards

**Cyberbullying:** Cybersmart, a national cybersafety and cybersecurity education program managed by the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA) has listed some common signs of children being bullied online. These signals are:

- changes in their general behaviour;
- a decline in physical health;
- changes in friendship groups;
- change in sleep patterns;
- avoiding school or clubs.

## THE BYSTANDER

Bullying is a social dynamic that involves all students, not just those bullying or being bullied.

The bystander is the name given to the group of children who are not directly involved in either the bullying or being bullied. The action taken by this group has been shown to either discourage or support the person bullying.

Bystanders can play an important role by being supportive of the person being bullied by seeking help, asking the person bullying to stop, by showing support for the behaviour or walking away. A bystander is someone who sees the bullying happening or knows it is happening elsewhere.

Bystanders can also passively or actively prevent or stop bullying. The role of the bystander is becoming increasingly prominent as an effective means to counter bullying.

An essential component of Chrysalis' Health education includes explicit instruction on the role of bystanders to provide students with the scripts and other social tools to intervene. Students are made aware that even taking action by telling a responsible adult can make a substantial difference.

## RESPONSES TO BULLYING INCIDENTS

**Chrysalis Montessori School strictly prohibits any form of child abuse, corporal punishment, or degrading punishment. Such practices are strictly forbidden within the school community, ensuring the physical and emotional well-being of students.**

Chrysalis Montessori School has a clear and comprehensive approach to addressing bullying incidents. This includes:

- Immediate intervention by any staff member who observes bullying.
- Reporting of all instances of perceived bullying to the child's teacher or the Principal.
- Encouraging students to report any bullying they experience to their parents and their teacher or another staff member.
- Prompt action by the School in response to complaints, employing a 'no blame' approach in the first instance.
- Ensuring discipline strategies are fair, firm and non-violent when dealing with bullying incidents, applying the school's Behaviour Support Policy with a particular focus on group systems and dynamics.
- Keeping parents and carers well-informed and involved in monitoring the progress and improvement of group dynamics and their impacts.

To address behavioural issues consistently, the school's Behaviour Support Policy is applied as the initial step in resolving all behavioral concerns. However, the treatment of bullying incidents may vary based on the type and severity of the incident. Each case is treated individually to ensure a successful resolution. Special attention is given to the roles played by all members of the group involved, including bystanders, in possible bullying situations.

## **Low Severity Bullying**

For cases of low severity, it is important not to ignore them. Communication is initiated with the bully or bullies, highlighting the distress experienced by the victim and explaining why the behavior is unacceptable. Pro-social responses from the bully or bullies are encouraged and reinforced. The victim is also engaged in conversation to understand if any provocation occurred and to provide suggestions on dealing with the situation and accessing support resources. Close monitoring of the situation takes place, with intervention ready if the situation deteriorates.

## **High Severity Bullying**

The following methods have all been used at Chrysalis:

- **No Blame Approach**

The school employs the "No Blame Approach" for less serious bullying incidents, where both the person bullying, and the person being bullied express a desire to stop the bullying. This approach aims to build empathy for the feelings of the person being bullied and encourages collaborative problem-solving toward a mutually agreeable solution. It has been particularly successful in addressing issues like teasing or exclusion within a group of friends.

- **Restorative Justice**

Restorative justice is employed to encourage bullies to take responsibility for their actions and make amends for the harm caused. This can involve actions such as offering apologies, returning stolen items, or engaging in community service. Restorative justice involves both the victim and the bully, focusing on their personal needs and providing support to help the bully avoid future offenses.

- **Method of Shared Concern**

In the "Method of Shared Concern," bullies are seen individually rather than as a group. The teacher or interviewer expresses concern for the victim and encourages the bully to take responsible action to remedy the situation. Group work involving the victim and the bullies is then undertaken to facilitate a genuine reconciliation, with progress closely monitored throughout the process.

## RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF SCHOOL COMMUNITY MEMBERS

MEMBERS	RIGHTS	RESPONSIBILITIES
All students, teachers, parents, wider school community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• are safe and supported in the school environment</li> <li>• are included</li> <li>• are treated with respect</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• participate and contribute to school positive behaviour programs</li> <li>• build positive relationships</li> <li>• demonstrate respect and tolerance towards others</li> </ul>
School leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is supported in developing the school's plan to prevent and effectively manage bullying</li> <li>• is supported in implementing the strategies and programs under the school's plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provides leadership in resourcing the school's plan</li> <li>• ensures the school community is informed of the plan</li> <li>• implements the plan</li> <li>• supports staff to implement the strategies and programs under the plan</li> </ul>
Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• feel safe and supported in the workplace</li> <li>• are informed of the school's plan on bullying</li> <li>• have access to professional learning in preventing and effectively managing bullying</li> <li>• have access to curriculum resources suitable for supporting students in building positive relationships, resiliency, safety and bullying prevention (including social/emotional learning)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promote and model positive relationships</li> <li>• participate in developing the school plan</li> <li>• identify and respond to bullying incidents</li> <li>• deliver the strategies and programs to students in responding to bullying effectively</li> <li>• promote effective bystander behaviour</li> <li>• promote social problem-solving</li> <li>• use appropriate terminology when referring to bullying and the students involved</li> </ul>
Students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have access to curriculum that supports the building of resiliency and social skills</li> <li>• are informed of the school's plan on bullying</li> <li>• are provided with supports to stop bullying</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understand and value the concepts of inclusion and tolerance</li> <li>• identify and respond effectively to bullying</li> <li>• are aware of themselves as bystanders</li> <li>• seek help for themselves and others as needed</li> </ul>
Parents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• are treated with respect</li> <li>• are confident their children are provided with a safe and supportive school environment</li> <li>• are provided with access to information on the prevention and management of bullying</li> <li>• are informed of the school's plan and opportunities to participate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• support and encourage children to treat others with respect and tolerance</li> <li>• act in accordance with the school plan if they observe/ know about bullying</li> <li>• encourage children to report bullying incidents</li> <li>• work effectively with the school in responding to bullying</li> </ul>
Wider community: including other professionals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• are strategically included in prevention and bullying management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide support and input into the school's approach to preventing and managing bullying</li> </ul>

## CYBER BULLYING

Cyber bullying is a form of bullying that can have an impact on children who use email, text messaging, chat rooms, mobile phones, mobile phone cameras, discussion groups or web pages.

Methods of cyber bullying include:

- texting derogatory messages on mobile phones.
- sending threatening emails.
- forwarding a confidential email to several other people.
- ganging up on one student and bombarding him/her with emails.
- setting up a derogatory web site dedicated to a targeted student and inviting others to comment.
- participants in a chat room saying derogatory comments about or excluding someone.

While all of the above are signs of possible bullying, they may also be signs that something else is happening with the child. Referral to the Principal or Deputy Principal to determine the cause of the issues is recommended.

## RESPONDING TO CYBER BULYING

Chrysalis School acknowledges the significant and beneficial impact of technology in education and social interactions. The school is dedicated to promoting a comprehensive understanding among all members of the school community regarding the advantages as well as the potential risks associated with technology. It is our commitment to empower students with the necessary knowledge and skills to utilize technology in a safe and responsible manner, thus minimizing the occurrence of cyberbullying incidents.

To achieve this goal, Chrysalis School implements the following strategies:

- Implement comprehensive and age-appropriate cyberbullying education programs.
- Foster a positive and inclusive school culture that promotes kindness, empathy, and respect.
- Encourage open communication and establish a safe reporting system for cyberbullying incidents.
- Provide training for teachers and staff on identifying and addressing cyberbullying.
- Collaborate with parents/guardians to educate them about cyberbullying risks and prevention strategies.
- Regularly monitor and supervise students' online activities at school.
- Establish clear policies and consequences for cyberbullying incidents.
- Promote digital citizenship and responsible online behavior through curriculum integration.
- Encourage students to think critically about their online interactions and consider the impact of their words and actions.

Related Documents:

Information Communication Technology (ICT) and Internet Acceptable Use Policy

Approved by Mark Panaia, Principal

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<b>Owner</b>	Principal
<b>Principal Author</b>	Veronica Massang
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