Penola Primary School
Anti-Bullying Policy

Penola Primary School is committed to providing a safe and orderly environment for students to learn and interact with others. Members of the school community will uphold the values of being respectful, being responsible and being inclusive.

What is bullying?

Bullying is a deliberate action which **repeatedly** threatens the safety and well-being of others. A **power imbalance** exists because the bully is physically stronger, and/or older, and/or has the backing of a group. Bullying may be physical, verbal, or indirect/relational and is intended to cause physical and/or psychological harm.

Sometimes you might have a fight or argument with someone. If it happens once, it is not bullying even though it can be upsetting. It is also not bullying if you sometimes fight with a friend and you can sort it out.

Types of Bullying

Type	Examples – occurring repeatedly
Physical	Hitting, slapping, punching. Kicking. Pushing. Throwing objects.
Non Physical	Hurtful name calling. Teasing. Demanding money or possessions. Spreading rumours.
Non-verbal/Indirect	Threatening/obscene gestures. Deliberate exclusion from an activity. Removing/hiding others' belongings.
Cyber bullying	Hurtful emails, text messages, chat room conversations/other multi-media forums.
Racial/Religious/ Sexual/Disability	Inappropriate touching and actions. Inappropriate conversations/comments.

Bystanders

A bystander is someone who sees the bullying or knows that it is happening to someone else. Bystanders can be identified in the following categories:

- Supporters: Support the person bullying, either by helping the child to bully the other person or by encouraging the person bullying.
- Spectators: Gather or deliberately stay to watch the incident.
- Witnesses: Are aware that the incident is occurring (know about the bullying).

What can you do if you are being bullied or if you are a bystander?

If bullying is happening to you, or someone else:

- Tell the student who is bullying to stop. State very clearly that the behaviour is unwelcome and offensive.
- Ignore them and walk away.
- Be a friend to the person being bullied.
- Encourage the person being bullied to inform someone.
- Seek help. Talk about it to someone you trust.

- Report it to a member of staff, a trustworthy friend or buddy. Feel confident that an incident can be solved, talking about it helps.
- Talk it over openly with your parents; they can help you make a decision.
- Write a description of the event and give it to your teacher.

Do you Bully?

- Do you tease, abuse or hit others?
- Do you call people names?
- Do you belong to a group that hurts or insults others?

If you are bullying:

You will be spoken to by your classroom/yard duty teacher. You will be given the opportunity to resolve the situation and discuss the issue with the person you bullied. The school's Behaviour Guidelines will also be used to address bullying behaviour.

How can you help?

As parents you can:

- Be positive about your child's qualities and encourage your child to be tolerant and caring.
- Assist your child to discuss the problem with a teacher.
- Discourage any planned retaliation, either physical or verbal.
- Discuss positive strategies your child can use.
- Visit "Bullying No Way" website for information regarding your role in preventing and responding to bullying – https://bullyingnoway.gov.au

As staff you can:

- Adopt positive classroom management strategies and incorporate anti-bullying messages into the learning.
- Provide positive role models for students.
- Actively counteract bullying behaviour.
- Respond appropriately to any incident of bullying.
- Be obviously present during recess and lunchtime when you are on duty.
- Return promptly to the classroom at the end of breaks.

Responses to Bullying

We use a 'Restorative Practice' approach to deal with incidents of bullying. Restorative Practice creates opportunities for those involved in a conflict to work together to understand, clarify and resolve the situation. This process is applied when deemed a suitable strategy for dealing with a particular situation. Other situations may require the immediate application of behaviour management consequences.

Restorative Questions

The following questions enable a fair process to be facilitated:

- What happened?
- What were you thinking at the time?
- What have you thought about since?
- Who has been affected by what you have done?

Cyber Safety

Cyber safety encompasses technology such as the Internet and electronic communication devices including mobile phones and other wireless technology. It is important to both protect and teach children, students and adults to become responsible digital citizens. This includes adults thinking ahead of new risks and children learning how to avoid exposure to inappropriate material and activities, and protecting themselves online. Students need to feel confident about alerting the adults in their lives when they are feeling unsafe, threatened, bullied or exposed to inappropriate content.

Cyber-safety user agreements must be in place for all children and students. Policies are implemented in the form of written agreements, signed by parents and students (or for younger students, parents only).

How can you help?

The majority of cyberbullying incidents takes place outside of school. However, the school will educate and support students to navigate cyber safety and cyber bullying.

As parents you can:

- Set boundaries regarding the time spent online and on devices.
- Don't allow devices in your child's bedroom or isolated spaces.
- Discuss with your child the digital footprint they leave every time they are online and the impact this may have on their future.
- Educate yourself about online safety and how young people engage online. Maggie Dent has a podcast titled "*Cyberbullying – what you need to know before you give your child a smartphone*" that provides useful information.

Steps we take at school

- Teach strategies for personal safety and advise students that they should not reveal personal or identifying information (e.g. passwords, names, images, telephone numbers).
- Teach topics and use resources contained in the Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum
- Encourage students to inform the teacher if they come across inappropriate material or anything on-line that makes them feel uncomfortable.
- Use of a filtered service when accessing the internet at school. All access is through The Department for Education service which is designed to filter out inappropriate material.

Handling of cyber-safety complaints

- Prompt action will be required if a complaint is made.
- The facts of the situation need to be established.
- Appropriate sanctions will align with the school's behaviour guidelines, and in more serious situations, police will be contacted.

Additional Information

If you are unhappy with the outcome of an incident, please refer to the Penola Primary Grievance Procedure.

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Department for Education