Mentone Primary School
Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedures

THIS POLICY WAS RATIFIED ON:

December 2015

Rationale
Mentone Primary School aims to ensure that children feel safe and can participate in all school activities in an environment that is free from harassment.

Definitions
Bullying is when someone, or a group of people, deliberately upset or hurt another person or damage their property, reputation or social acceptance on more than one occasion. There is an imbalance of power in incidents of bullying with the bully or occasion. There is an imbalance of power in incidents of bullying with the bully or bullies having more power at the time due to age, size, status or other reasons.

This table describes the categories of bullying.

Category	Includes
Direct physical bullying	Hitting, kicking, tripping, pinching and pushing or damaging property.
Direct verbal bullying	Name calling, insults, teasing, intimidation, homophobic or racist remarks, or verbal abuse.
Indirect bullying	Action designed to harm someone's social reputation and/or cause humiliation. Indirect bullying includes: - lying and spreading rumours - playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate - mimicking - encouraging others to socially exclude someone - damaging someone's social reputation or social acceptance
Cyberbullying	Direct verbal or indirect bullying behaviours using digital technologies. This includes harassment via a mobile phone, setting up or making defamatory comments on a personal website or deliberately excluding someone from social networking spaces.

Note: Many distressing behaviours are not examples of bullying even though they are unpleasant and often require teacher intervention and management.

Mentone Primary School
Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedures

Mutual conflict: Involves an argument or disagreement between people but not an imbalance of power. Both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution. 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. If someone is verbally abused or pushed on one occasion they are not being bullied. Nastiness or physical aggression that is directed towards many different people is not the same as bullying. However, this does not mean that single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression should be ignored or condoned as these are unacceptable behaviours.

Procedures
What can we do about bullying?

CHILDREN SHOULD:
- Stand up for themselves. Use a strong voice and look the bully in the eyes.
- Report any problems to a teacher.
- Talk to their parents about the problem after having told a teacher.
- Not retaliate with kicks and punches as they could face consequences.

Bullies have problems of their own; don't make their problems your problems.

PARENTS SHOULD
If their child is a victim of bullying:
- Advise their child to act assertively (not aggressively). Children need to stand up for themselves when the first act of bullying occurs.
- Encourage their child not to retaliate – explain the possible negative consequences of such actions.
- Advise their child to report the incidents themselves. They will gain more self-respect by taking the initiative themselves rather than relying on a parent to take action.
- Stress to their child that taking any part in bullying still makes them responsible for their actions.
- Understand that being bullied is not part of growing up and should not happen.

Mentone Primary School
Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedures

If their child is the bully:
- Let your child know that bullying is totally unacceptable because it affects the rights of others.
- Stress to them that the school should be a safe place for everyone, regardless of the differences between people. No one deserves to be bullied because they speak, look or act differently or in a way 'you don't like'.
- Show your support for the victim, speak to your child about how the victim may feel because of your child's actions.
- Show support for the school's consequences for bullying.

THE SCHOOL HAS:
- Implemented the Restorative Justice Practice Program to minimise bullying and teach strategies to prevent students from developing bullying behaviours and support students who are subjected to bullying behaviours.
- Developed and implemented classroom strategies to build cooperative and assertive skills for students. Relationship circles are used in every classroom each day. The You Can Do It Program which we promote every second year emphasizes confidence, resilience, persistence, organisation and getting along.

For the child who is the victim of bullying:
Clarify the facts
- Discuss the incident with the student(s) concerned.
- Facilitate a Restorative Conversation.
- Ensure that the victim of the bullying situation has been looked after and has been given some strategies to deal with a similar problem in the future.
- Make sure the grade teacher, assistant principal or principal have been informed.
- Involve parents where necessary.
- Offer counselling if required.

For the child who is bullying:
Clarify the facts
- Discuss the incident with the student(s) concerned.
- Facilitate a Restorative Conversation.
- Link actions to consequences.
- Try to negotiate a reconciliation or change of attitude.
- Discuss with the perpetrator(s) other ways to react to incidents.
- Make sure the grade teacher, assistant principal or principal have been informed.

- Involve parents if deemed necessary.
- Offer counselling if required.

Implementation plan

The Student Wellbeing Committee will be responsible for the ongoing review of the Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedures. The committee will:

- Review the policy as necessary in consultation with staff.
- Consult with and inform the school community about the changes to the policy.

Evaluation

Evaluation of the effectiveness of these guidelines and the established school procedures will be conducted through:

- Informal feedback from staff, school council, parents and students (where appropriate).
- Survey's developed by the Student Wellbeing Committee for students, teachers and parents.
- Official DEECD Parent and Staff surveys.