Malmsbury Primary School Anti-bullying and Harassment Policy

Rationale:

Malmsbury Primary School values Respect, Responsibility, Honesty and Inclusiveness.

Malmsbury Primary School will provide a safe, inclusive, supportive and orderly learning environment free from bullying, harassment and violence. Bullying, including cyber bullying, harassment and violence, is not acceptable in our school and will be dealt with seriously and expediently.

Malmsbury Primary School implements policies and strategies guided by current research on effective approaches to the prevention of bullying and violence.

Malmsbury Primary School will work with the school community and other services and agencies to support its students in being responsible and productive members of this community.

Definitions:

Bullying is deliberate repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons.

-Examples of direct physical bullying include hitting, tripping, pushing or damaging property.

-Examples of direct verbal bullying include name calling, put downs, insults, homophobic or racist remarks.

-Examples of indirect bullying include lying, spreading rumours, applying nasty jokes to humiliate, mimicking, encouraging others to socially exclude someone, damaging someone's reputation. Indirect bullying can be harder to recognise and is often carried out behind the victim's back.

Cyber-bullying refers to bullying that takes place using electronic technologies.

-Examples include making threats via texting, email, misuse of a camera or video facilities, rumours posted on social media sites.

What is not bullying? Many distressing behaviours are not examples of bullying even though they are unpleasant and often require teacher intervention and management.

-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 others 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. (source: DET)

Harassment is behaviour that targets an individual or group due to their identity, race, culture or ethnic origin; religion; physical characteristics; gender; sexual orientation; marital, parenting or economic status; age; ability or disability and that offends, humiliates, intimidates or creates a hostile environment. Harassment may be an ongoing pattern of behaviour, or it may be a single act.

Sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual conduct which makes a person (male or female, of the same or opposite gender, same-sex attracted, bisexual or transgender) feel offended, humiliated and/or intimidated, where that reaction to the conduct is reasonable in the circumstances. Sexual harassment can be a single incident, repeated or continuous, direct or indirect, and take various forms.

Discrimination occurs when people are treated less favourably than others because of their race, culture or ethnic origin; religion; physical characteristics; gender; sexual orientation; marital, parenting or economic status; age; ability or disability. Discrimination is often ongoing and commonly involves exclusion or rejection.

Aims:
1. To reinforce within the school community what bullying is, and the fact that it is unacceptable.
2. Everyone within the school community to be alert to signs and evidence of bullying and to have a responsibility to report it to staff whether as observer or victim.
3. To ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are followed up appropriately and that support is given to both victims and perpetrators.
4. To seek parental and peer group support and co-operation when deemed appropriate.
5. To ensure that agreed and consistent disciplinary measures are implemented which are consistent with the 'Departmental Guidelines for Developing a Student Engagement Policy'.

Implementation:
1. Parents, teachers, students and the community will be aware of the school's position on bullying.
2. The school will adopt a four-phase approach to bullying-
   A= Primary Prevention. B= Early Intervention. C= Intervention. D= Action.

A= Primary Prevention.
- Professional development for staff relating to bullying, harassment and proven counter measures.
- Community awareness and input relating to bullying, its characteristics and the school's programs and response.
- Information provided to parents to increase their understanding of what bullying behaviour is and the strategies they can use to support their child/ren.
- To provide programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving. E.g. You Can Do It, Solving the Jigsaw, Restorative Practices.
- School values to be actively promoted and integrated into school life.
- The following surveys will be undertaken annually or where appropriate: Parent survey, Attitudes to School survey, Staff survey, yard survey and classroom surveys.
- Teachers to review and clarify the school policy on bullying at the start of each year.
- The curriculum to include anti-bullying messages and strategies.
- Advertise to the community the wellbeing support and programs that are available through the school.
- Anti-bullying policy to be available from the school website.
- Student Wellbeing agenda items are included at all staff meetings.
- Classroom teachers to clarify with students at the start of each year and each term the school rules and consequences, school policy on bullying and harassment, including cyber bullying, and to continuously reinforce these messages throughout the year.

B= Early Intervention.
- Encourage students, staff and parents to report incidents of bullying.
- Provide a safe environment for all children at all times.
- Publicly recognise and reward positive behaviour and resolution of problems.
- Provide welfare support and programs to the school community.
- Parents are encouraged to contact the school if they become aware of a problem.
- Staff to contact parents if they become aware of a bullying problem involving their child.
- A designated 'chill out' table available to students at recess and lunch times.

C= Intervention.
- Once identified; bullies, victims and witnesses will be spoken with, and all incidents or allegations of bullying will be fully investigated and documented.
- Those identified as bullies will be informed of the allegations.
- Parents of bullies and victims will be contacted.
- Both bullies and victims will be offered support which may include counselling.

- Students and staff accused of cyber bullying will have their access to the school's network and computers revoked as part of consequences.
- If student bullying persists, parents will be contacted and consequences implemented, consistent with the school's Student Engagement Policy.
- If staff bullying persists, the Principal will commence formal disciplinary action consistent with DET guidelines.
- If bullying by other school community members persists, the Principal will commence relevant procedures.

D=Action.
- Parents of victim to be informed that the issue has been followed up with child concerned and their parents.
- Consequences for students will be individually based and may involve:
  - Exclusion from class.
  - Exclusion from yard.
  - Withdrawal of privileges.
  - Ongoing counselling from appropriate agencies for both victim and bully.
  - School suspension.
- Reinforcement of positive behaviours:
  - Restorative Practices- repairing damaged relationships.
  - Jigsaw catch ups.
  - Individual behaviour plans.
  - Support structures.
  - Ongoing monitoring of identified bullies.
  - Rewards and recognition of positive behaviour.
  - Regular communication with parents of both victim and bully.
- Victim supported to rebuild their confidence, self-esteem and to learn new strategies to deal with bullying situations.
- Bullies supported to learn new strategies to help them get along with others.
- Consequences of adults will be individually based and may involve:
  - Counselling.
  - A period of monitoring.
  - A formal support group.
  - Disciplinary action/legal action.

How to recognise a student being bullied.
Students who are being bullied or harassed may not talk about it with their teachers, friends or parents. They may be afraid that it will only make things worse or they may feel that it is wrong to 'tell tales'.

This is why parents and teachers have an important part to play in helping the school and student deal with bullying. A change in behaviour in students may be a signal that they are being bullied or they have some other concern.
Some signs that a student is being bullied may be:
  - Unexplained cuts, bruises or scratches.
  - Damaged or ripped clothing.
  - Vague headaches or stomach aches.
  - Refusal to go to school.
  - Asking for extra pocket money or food.
  - Tearfulness, anxiety or difficulty sleeping.
  - 'Hiding' information on mobile phones, emails or in comments on the social networking pages.
Teachers should also look out for 'gateway' behaviours- laughing, eye rolling or ignoring when a certain student speaks.

Reporting of bullying and harassment incidents and responsibilities.
Reporting of an incident should occur as soon after the incident as possible. This gives the school the best opportunity to follow up the incident and to intervene.

Students	Families/Caregivers	Staff
If I am harassed I will:	What should I do if I think my child is being harassed?	
'Name it' to the person with the support of a friend or use other strategies such as talk to my trust group or fill out a "I want you to know …" form. - Report the harassment to a staff member who will help me. - Show persistence- never give up. - Remember- I have the right to feel safe. - Follow our school procedures.	- Keep calm and reassure your child. - Listen to your child and discuss safe and respectful ways to address the issue. - Report the bullying to the school as soon as possible to give the school the best opportunity to intervene. - Use the school's 'Feedback' procedures. Keep communication respectful. - Make a time to talk to your child's teacher about the problem. - Keep in contact with the school. - Speak only with the staff at school. Do not approach other children or families, or use digital media to express concerns or complaints. - Talk with your child's teacher and school leadership and, if available, the school psychologist. - Follow grievance procedures. - Understand that how incidents are managed by the school will depend on, for example, the nature, severity and extent of the bullying.	- Develop and foster positive relationships with students and their families. - Talk with the child/parent and listen to what is being said. Take notes. Read them back to the child/parent to check they agree with the record you have made. - Complete a bullying/harassment record form. - Speak to all people involved and record their responses. - Work with leadership to decide how to manage and resolve the situation. - Seek a resolution- counselling, negotiation, restorative conversation, behaviour plan or contract. - Communicate with parents of both the victim and bully. - Parents of the victim to be informed when the issue has been followed up with the child concerned and their parents. - If appropriate, make a referral to Student Support Services. - If appropriate, refer parents to outside support agencies.

How will complaints be dealt with?
Your concerns will be taken seriously. All complaints will be dealt with confidentially.
School procedures for responding to a student who bullies or harasses others are set out below.

Level 1.
If the bullying or harassment incident is minor or first time occurrence, staff may elect to use one of more anti-bullying practices:
- Restorative conference.
- Restatement of school rules and consequences.
- Time out/community service.
- Apology letter.

Level 2.
If the bullying or harassment continues, or in instances of severe bullying or harassing, the Principal and parents should be informed. The Principal and class teacher may:
- Meet with the student and parents to develop a behaviour plan, or, contract.
- Provide discussion/mentoring of different social and emotional learning competencies including structured learning activities.
- Conduct a restorative conference with the students involved.
- Refer to outside agencies.

Level 3.
For 'at risk' students (many risk factors, few protective factors) whose bullying or harassing behaviour is severe and for other non-at risk students whose bullying or harassing and other aggressive behaviour is resistant to change, an individual behaviour plan including building of positive skills and self-esteem, should be developed in consultation with student, parents/carers, teacher and parent. The plan should help connect the student with positive people, programs and actions in the community, school and home as well as develop the student's inner social and emotional strengths.

Level 4.
Students whose severe bullying or harassing behaviour resists school efforts and represents a significant threat to the safety and wellbeing should be referred to outside agencies for evaluation.

The school may choose, if bullying or harassment persists or if the initial incident is of such magnitude, that parents/carers will be contacted and consequences implemented consistent with the school's behaviour management procedures.

Approved at School Council 27 August 2017.
To be reviewed in 2020.

Appendix 1. "I want you to know…"
This form can be completed by students or parents to notify the school of a bullying or harassment incident.

Reporting bullying or harassment.

Date:_____

Dear _____ ,

I want you to know _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

This has happened ☐ one other time ☐ a few times ☐ lots of times

The problem happens in ☐ my classroom ☐ in the yard ☐ both places

Somewhere else _____

Please help me with this problem.

My name is _____ .

Appendix B. Reporting on incident of Bullying / Harassment Form.

Staff member recording incident: _____

Date: __/__/__

Name of student(s) who appears to have instigated bullying

_____

_____

Year/Class: _____

Name(s) of target(s) _____

_____

Name(s) of witnesses _____

_____

Did you observe the incident?   YES ☐   NO ☐

If 'NO' who reported the incident to you? _____

Brief description of incident (what was allegedly said or done to the student who appears to have been bullied?)

_____

_____

_____

_____

What form(s) of bullying took place?   Verbal ☐   Physical ☐   Indirect ☐   Cyber ☐

Other ☐   Please detail:_____

_____

_____

Was the incident of bullying: Mild ☐   Severe ☐

Have the parents of all students been notified that their child may have been involved in bullying/harassment?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

Describe how you responded.

_____

_____

_____

Describe how student/s responded to your intervention

_____

_____

_____

Where / when / time incident took place:

Location: _____

When: before school ☐   recess ☐   lunch ☐   in class ☐   after school ☐

Time: _____ :   am/pm

Date incident took place: ___/___ / _____

Additional comments:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Future follow up? Who will follow up? When?

_____

_____

_____

Completed form to be lodged with the Principal.