



## CYBER-BULLYING POLICY

### 1 Rationale

Cyber-bullying is the use of technology to bully a person or group. Bullying involves deliberately and repeatedly attempting to hurt, scare or exclude someone. The main purpose is to have power over someone else. Children can cyber-bully each other in a number of ways; for example, sending abusive text messages and emails, posting hurtful images, spreading nasty online gossip and excluding others online.

Cyber-bullying is a mental health concern because it causes distress and can lead to loneliness, anxiety and depression. It can also affect children's concentration and lower their achievement at school. Cyber-bullying is particularly nasty because it is often done in secret, shared with a lot of people and difficult to remove.

### 2 Aim

Moreland Primary School is committed to developing a safe environment where the students act respectfully and positively towards each other in acceptable and non-threatening ways. Our school has a clear Bullying and Harassment policy, which ties in very closely with our cyber-bullying policy.

### 3 Implementation

Parents, teachers, students and the community will be aware of the school's position on the cyber-bullying. Teachers will be regularly reminded of their duty of care regarding protection of students from all forms of bullying.

#### 3.1 Cyber-bullying Strategies

The school will adopt a four-phase approach to bullying.

##### 3.1.1 Primary Prevention:

- Professional development for staff relating to all forms of bullying including cyber-bullying. Harassment and proven counter measures.
- Educate the school community about the seriousness of cyber-bullying, its impact on those being bullied and how this behaviour is unacceptable.
- Community awareness and input relating to bullying (including cyber-bullying), its characteristics and the schools' programs and response.
- Provide programs that promote resilience, life and social skill, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving.
- A students bullying survey and yard duty will be administered and acted upon twice annually.
- Each classroom teacher to clarify with students at the start of each year the school policy on bullying, including cyber-bullying.
- All students to be provided with individual and confidential computer and network log ins and passwords. Processes to be put in place to ensure tracking of student activity on the school's computer equipment and network. Firewalls to be installed to eliminate outside traffic into the school's network and intranet.



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- The use of mobile phones by students will be limited with consequences to implement for any students who use mobile phones inappropriately.
- The curriculum to include anti-bullying messages and strategies e.g.: 'The Friendly Schools' and 'No Blame Approach to Bullying' programs.
- Student Representative Council, peer support delegates, staff and students to promote the philosophy of 'No Put Downs'
- A vigilant and accountable yard duty roster for teachers will be put in place.
- Electives and structured activities available to students at recess and lunch breaks

### 3.1.2 Early Intervention

- Encourage children and staff to report bullying incidents involving themselves or others.
- Classroom teachers and principal on a regular basis reminding students and staff to report incidents of bullying.
- Regular monitoring of student traffic on school's computer networks to identify potential problems.
- Parents encouraged to contact school if they become aware of a problem.
- Specific Room – a designated safe and quiet place for children to access at recess and lunch times.
- Public recognition and reward for positive behaviour and resolution of problems

### 3.1.3 Intervention

- Once identified each bully, victim and witnesses will be spoken with, and all incidents or allegations of bullying will be fully investigated and documented.
- Parents to be contacted.
- Students and staff identified by others as bullied will be informed of allegations
- Both bullies and victims will be offered counselling and support.
- Removal of cyber-bullies from access to the school's network and computers for a period of time. Loss of privilege to bring a mobile phone to school for students who bully via SMS or similar telephone functions.
- If student bullying persists parents will be contacted and consequences implemented consistent with the school's Student Code of Conduct.

### 3.1.4 Post Violation

Consequences for students will be individually based and may involve:

- exclusion from class
- exclusion from yard
- school suspension
- withdrawal of privileges
- ongoing counselling from appropriate agency for both victim and bully
- reinforcement of positive behaviours
- support structures
- ongoing monitoring of identified bullies
- rewards of positive behaviour



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### 3.2 Staff Responsibilities

Staff at Moreland Primary School have the responsibility to ensure that:

- all forms of cyber-bullying are prohibited at Moreland Primary School
- staff are aware of cyber-bullying and are able to identify and look for signs of occurrence among the students
- students are aware of the consequences of cyber-bullying
- a code of conduct is in use for technology, including computers and mobile phones, whilst on the school premises
- the appropriate programs in tutorials are implemented
- all cases of cyber-bullying are reported to the Assistant Principal and responded to promptly
- there is supervision of technology that is effective for monitoring and deterring cyber-bullying
- all students sign and follow the Acceptable User Agreement
- all students have read and understand the “Caring for your MacBook” document

### 3.3 Information for Student

All students in Grades 3 to 6 have the opportunity to be involved in the one-to-one MacBook program. Students will participate in an induction program to ensure they are familiar with their roles and responsibilities regard in the use of the MacBook and Cyber-bullying

#### 3.3.1 Advice

No one has the right to bully another person. No one is expected to put up with it. At its most serious, cyber-bullying is illegal and can be investigated by the police. However, even when it’s teasing or a joke that’s got out of hand, there are steps you can take to stop the bullies and take back control:

- Ignore it – often this is enough to make the bully go away
- Block the bully
- Tell someone – tell your Mum or Dad, or another adult you trust. Or you can call a helpline (like the Kids Helpline on 1800 55 1800)
- Keep the evidence – this can be useful in tracking the bully down

Report it:

- To your school - they have policies in place about bullying and cyber-bullying
- To your ISP/phone provider – there are actions they can take to help
- To the police – if there is a threat to your safety the police will help

#### 3.3.2 Responsibilities

Students at Moreland Primary School have a responsibility to ensure that they:

- do not participate in cyber-bullying
- do not use mobile phones, cameras or other digital devices to record audio and visual material that is not authorised as part of the school curriculum program
- do not breach the privacy of students, staff and members of the school community through any unauthorised recording or filming
- do not disseminate inappropriate information through digital media or other means



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- report incidents of cyber-bullying to a member of staff
- advise students being victimised by cyber-bullying to talk to an adult
- offer to speak to an adult on behalf of the student who is being victimised by cyber-bullying

### 3.3.3 Consequences

Consequences of inappropriate behaviour:

- Confiscation of MacBook for any inappropriate behaviour online, in the classroom or at home which is deemed as cyber-bullying, for a period of time that is considered acceptable to all involved.
- Any other consequences outlined in the Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedures

### 3.4 Information for Parents

All students in Grades 3 to 6 have the opportunity to be involved in the one-to-one MacBook program. All parents must attend an information event and agree in writing to the terms and conditions of the program before MacBooks are taken out of the school.

Supervising your child's use of electronic devices and teaching your child about ways to keep safe online can help to reduce the risk of cyber-bullying.

If your child is being cyber-bullied:

- listen and provide support to your child
- try to understand what has been happening online, including how often and how long
- encourage social skills, like being assertive, telling the bully to stop and seeking help
- support your child to think through different ways they could deal with the problem
- talk with your child's teacher and ask for help
- keep talking with the school until your child feels safe.

If your child is doing the cyber-bullying:

- make sure your child knows the cyber-bullying behaviour is inappropriate and why
- try to understand the reasons why your child has behaved in this way and look for ways to address problems
- encourage your child to think about how their behaviour makes other children feel
- help your child think of alternative paths of action.

## 4 References/Appendices

- Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedures
- Kidsmatter – What to do about Cyber-bullying  
(<https://www.kidsmatter.edu.au/families/enewsletter/what-do-about-cyber-bullying>)

## 5 Evaluation

Amendments to the policy will be made on a needs basis.

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