



Bullying in the Workplace Policy

Rationale

Ararat North Primary School is committed to providing safe and equitable working conditions for our staff. It seeks to eliminate bullying, harassment and discrimination from the workplace and ensure that employees are not subjected to treatment that is hostile and unprofessional. Ararat North Primary School considers workplace bullying, harassment and discrimination unacceptable. It will not be tolerated under any circumstances. The Council of Ararat North Primary School takes seriously its obligations to staff, students and the community that use our school.

Implementation

1. At Ararat North Primary School, our Staff and Principal Class Codes of Conduct specifically prohibit bullying behavior. Any reports of workplace bullying will be treated seriously and investigated promptly, confidentially and impartially.
2. Appropriate action will be taken against any staff member, including a member of the Principal Class, who behaves in a bullying manner towards another person, or any person who is found to make malicious, frivolous or vexatious complaints. Appropriate action may include disciplinary action and or dismissal. Normal Department of Education and Training complaints resolution procedures apply, as does the right for an employee to lodge a grievance or request a review of a decision.
3. Workplace bullying can be defined as the repeated less favorable treatment of a person in the workplace, which may be considered unreasonable and inappropriate workplace practice. It includes behavior that intimidates, offends, degrades or humiliates an employee, possibly in front of others and can involve Principal Class personnel, employees, contractors and visitors to the school or students.

4. Bullying, harassment and discrimination includes a wide range of unwelcome and unsolicited behaviours that are largely defined by the offended person.

These behaviours include workplace practices such as:

- belittling opinions or unconstructive criticism
- isolating an employee from normal work interactions, training and development, or career opportunities
- undermining work performance, especially to parents or the public, deliberately withholding work related information or resources
- overwork, unnecessary pressure or impossible deadlines unexplained job changes, meaningless tasks, under work, tasks beyond a person's skills, or failure to give credit where due
- teasing or regularly being made the brunt of pranks, practical jokes and intentional misuse of body language (eg. eye-rolling or vindictive face pulling)
- displaying written or pictorial material or sending emails that degrade or offend
- unreasonable administrative sanctions
- yelling, screaming, abuse, offensive language, insults, inappropriate comments about a person's appearance, life style, slandering an employee or his/her family sexual or other unwanted advances, abuse or violent behaviour directed at a staff member by a parent, student or visitor.

5. Employees subjected to these behaviours may suffer distress, and this may substantially interfere with an individual's work performance and career prospects. These detrimental effects on productivity and morale are seldom limited to one person and are often spread across the workplace. Such behaviours impinge upon staff wellbeing and may undermine the school's image within the community.

6. Teachers in school leadership positions, such as supervisors, mentors and coordinators, are responsible for fostering a work environment that is free from bullying. In addition, they must not perpetrate bullying.

7. Should unacceptable behaviour occur, employees have a right (indeed a responsibility) to complain and are encouraged to do so. Employees who are involved in a bullying

complaint have an entitlement to support throughout the conflict management process, including at meetings and interviews.

8. If a staff member observes a bullying incident they should immediately report the incident to the principal (or Regional Director, as appropriate).

9. Potential complainants and witnesses should also be assured that they are entitled to protection from any victimisation against them as a result of their complaint.

10. Victimisation, reprisal, or inciting others to reprisal by any employees involved in the case will not be tolerated and will result in appropriate action.

11. Ararat North Primary School will ensure that bullying has no place in this workplace. All employees have an important role to play, and are encouraged to contribute to the achievement of a professional and productive workplace culture by carefully considering their own behaviour and its possible effects on others.

References Complaints resolution procedures, Department of Education and Training available at: Victorian Occupational Health and Safety Act 1985

<http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/hrweb/workm/perform/comres.htm> Health, safety and wellbeing policy, Department of Education and Training, 2003 available at:

<http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/hrweb/ohs/other/legisl.htm> Prevention of Bullying and Violence at Work: Guidance Note, WorkSafe Victoria, February 2003 available at:

http://www.workcover.vic.gov.au/vwa/home.nsf/pages/b&v_intro

This policy ratified by School Council Date: September 2016 and Reviewed 2018