# Anti-Bullying and Harassment
**POLICY**

## Rationale

This school is committed to providing a positive culture where bullying and harassment in any of its forms will not be tolerated. Students and staff will have the right of respect from others, the right to learn or to teach, and a right to feel safe and secure in their school environment.

## Definitions:

### Bullying
Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening.

Bullying can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time (for example, through sharing of digital records)

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have immediate, medium and long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders. Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.

Bullying has three main features:
   a) It involves a misuse of power in a relationship
   b) It is ongoing and repeated, and
   c) It involves behaviours that can cause harm.
Bullying can be:
   a) direct physical bullying – e.g. hitting, tripping, and pushing or damaging property.
   b) direct verbal bullying – e.g. name calling, insults, homophobic or racist remarks, verbal abuse.
   c) indirect bullying – e.g. spreading rumours, playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate, mimicking, encouraging others to socially exclude a person and/or damaging a person's social reputation or social acceptance.

**Cyber-bullying** is direct or indirect bullying behaviours using digital technology. For example via a mobile device, computers, chat rooms, email, social media, etc. It can be verbal, written and include images, video and/or audio.

**Harassment** is any verbal, physical or sexual conduct (including gestures) which is uninvited, unwelcomed or offensive to a person. Harassment can be seen as one form of bullying.

The Bully, Cyber-bullying and Harassment Policy aims:
   ▪ To reinforce within the school community that no form of bullying is acceptable
   ▪ To ensure that everyone within the school community is alerted to signs and evidence

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of bullying as well as reinforce that everyone has a responsibility to report it to staff whether as observer or victim
- ▪ To ensure that all reported incidents of bullying and harassment are followed up appropriately and that support is given to all affected parties
- ▪ To seek parental and peer-group support and co-operation at all times.

# 1. Guidelines

All members of the school community are expected to play an active role by reporting incidences of bullying, cyber-bulling and harassment. A school-wide approach will be taken to deal with bullying, cyber-bulling and harassment in a consistent and systematic way.

1.1 The school will have clear explicit procedures for dealing with bullying, cyber-bullying and harassment

1.2 All teachers at this school share the responsibility for addressing bullying, cyber-bullying and harassment through class programs and yard duty supervision and by modelling behaviour consistent with school values

1.3 The school community will support the school's whole school strategies to address bullying, cyber-bullying and harassment

1.4 The Bullying, Cyber-bullying and Harassment Policy of the school will be widely promoted to students, staff, parents/guardians/carers and the local community

1.5 Implementation of anti-bullying, anti-cyber-bullying and anti-harassment strategies will be consolidated through related school policies including the school's Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy, and a wide range of other welfare and wellbeing related policies

1.6 Staff programs will occur periodically to keep staff informed of current issues/strategies for dealing with these matters

1.7 Matters related to bullying, cyber-bullying and harassment will be treated with confidentiality.

# 2. Implementation

2.1 **Primary Prevention:**

2.1.1 Provide professional development, resources, and preventative strategies for staff on bullying, cyber-bullying and harassment

2.1.2 Increase community awareness and input relating to bullying, cyber-bullying and harassment, its characteristics and the school's programs and response

2.1.3 Provide access to a range of programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving on site or through external agencies

2.1.4 Monitor yard behaviour and continue evaluation to inform planning and to ensure prompt responses to incidences of unsafe or disrespectful yard behaviour

2.1.5 Explicit teaching of interpersonal skills will be undertaken by classroom teachers

2.1.6 In the first weeks of each school year, the non-acceptance of bullying, cyber-bullying and harassment as well as the consequences are to be discussed in class with students

2.1.7 Teachers are to make students aware of their responsibilities with regard to the Bullying, Cyber-bullying and Harassment Policy

2.1.8 Implement lessons to develop resilience to bullying, cyber-bullying and harassment

2.1.9 Teach relevant Restorative Practice strategies

2.1.10 Promote safe and friendly behaviours through Student Representative Council

2.1.11 Make a range of activities available to students at recess and lunch break

2.1.12 Teachers to be models of caring and tolerant behaviour

2.1.13 New staff, teachers and parents to be made aware of the Bullying, Cyber-bullying and Harassment Policy and procedures at the time of their enrolment/induction

2.1.14 Provide recognition for positive action and appropriate behaviour utilising awards including:

- Student of the Week
- Certificates and/or awards
- Principal's Awards

## 2.2 **Early Intervention:**

2.2.1 Promote the reporting by students and staff of bullying, cyber-bullying and harassment incidents through regular reminders by classroom teachers and leadership

2.2.2 Encourage parents to contact the school if they become aware of a problem

2.2.3 Fully investigate and document all incidents or allegations of bullying and harassment with those involved and witnesses

## 2.3 **Intervention:**

2.3.1 Plan strategically and pro-actively for those students identified through the Early Intervention strategies, ensuring longer term management

2.3.2 Fully investigate and document all incidents or allegations of bullying, cyber-bullying and harassment with those involved and witnesses

2.3.3 Offer counselling and support for all affected parties

## 2.4 **Consequences:**

2.4.1 Consequences for students will be individually based and may involve:-

- exclusion from class
- exclusion from the yard
- formal reflection time
- withdrawal of privileges
- ongoing counselling from appropriate agency
- ongoing monitoring
- school suspension or expulsion

## 2.5 **Corporal Punishment is not permitted under any circumstances**

2.6 Support Structures will be available throughout each stage which include:-

- Reinforcement of positive behaviour
- Recognition for positive behaviour
- Communication meetings with parents/carers.

## 3. Resources

This Policy is underpinned by the:

- Child Safe Policy
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Duty of Care Policy
- Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy
- Student Welfare Policy

**Appendix A:** Examples of bullying, cyber-bullying and harassment
**Appendix B:** What bullying is **not:**
- The effects of bullying in all its forms
- Student and community actions in response to bullying in all its forms

**Appendix C:** School actions in response to bullying in all its forms
**Appendix D:** Cyber-bullying – positive steps students and parents can take

## 4. Evaluation

4.1 The Education Sub Committee and Karoo PS staff will review the effectiveness of the school's Bully, Cyber-bulling and Harassment Policy on a cyclical basis in accordance with DET guidelines and priorities.

## Appendix A:

## Examples of bullying and harassment:

|  | Direct | Indirect |
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| **Physical** | ▪ Hitting, slapping, punching<br>▪ Physical contact (e.g. purposely brushing up against another's body<br>▪ Unwelcome patting, touching, embracing<br>▪ Kicking,<br>▪ Pushing, strangling, grabbing<br>▪ Spitting, biting<br>▪ Pinching, scratching<br>▪ Throwing things (e.g. stones)<br>▪ Damaging property | ▪ Getting another person to harm someone. |
| **Non-Physical** | ▪ Mean and hurtful name calling<br>▪ Offensive staring and leering<br>▪ Offensive gestures, jokes, comments, letters, phone calls or emails<br>▪ Unwanted comments about physical appearance<br>▪ Racist or smutty comments/jokes<br>▪ Offensive name calling<br>▪ Hurtful / "friendly" teasing<br>▪ Demanding money or possessions<br>▪ Forcing another to do homework or commit offences such as stealing | • Spreading nasty rumours<br>• Trying to get other students to not like someone. |
| **Non-Verbal** | ▪ Threatening and/or obscene gestures<br>▪ Displays of sexually graphic material | ▪ Deliberate exclusion from a group or activity<br>▪ Removing and hiding and/or damaging other's belongings. |

## Cyber-bullying can involve:

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| **Flaming:** | online fights using electronic messages with angry or vulgar messages |
| **Harassment:** | repeatedly sending nasty, mean and insulting messages |
| **Outing:** | sharing someone's secrets or embarrassing information or images on line |
| **Exclusion:** | intentionally and cruelly excluding someone from an on line group |
| **Cyber-stalking:** | repeated, intense harassment and denigration that includes threats or creates significant fear |
| **Denigration:** | posting or sending gossip or rumours about a person to damage his/her reputation or friendships |

## Appendix B:
## <u>What bullying is not:</u>

Many distressing behaviours are not examples of bullying even though they are unpleasant and often require teacher intervention and management. There are three socially unpleasant situations that are often confused with bullying:

**Mutual conflict**:
Such as an argument or disagreement between students but not an imbalance of power. Both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution to the problem. However, unresolved mutual conflict sometimes develops into a bullying situation with one person becoming targeted repeatedly for 'retaliation' in a one-sided way.

**Social rejection or dislike:**
Unless the social rejection is directed towards someone specific and involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others it is not bullying.

**Single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression**
These are not the same as bullying. If a student is verbally abused or pushed **on one occasion** they are not being bullied. Nastiness or physical aggression that is directed towards many different students is not the same as bullying.

**What are the effects of bullying, cyber-bullying and harassment?**
- Poor health – anxiety, depression
- Lower self esteem
- Reduced study performance
- Missed classes, social withdrawal
- Reduced career prospects

**Bullying, cyber-bullying and harassment can often make people feel:**
- Embarrassed or ashamed
- Offended or humiliated
- Intimidated or frightened
- Uncomfortable

## <u>Student and community actions in response to incidents of bullying, cyber-bullying and harassment</u>

**Students who are bullied should:**
- Tell/inform the person you don't like what they are doing and that you want them to stop
- Tell a teacher or the Principal and give full details of the event
- Tell their parents/carers and give them full details of the event.

**Student witnesses to bullying should:**
- Model appropriate behaviour using the school's Values.
- Seek teacher assistance and document the incident if requested.

**Parents should:**
- Listen sympathetically to reports of bullying.
- Speak to relevant school personnel (not the alleged student/s concerned); and
- Cooperatively work with the school in seeking an improved solution.

**Parent witnesses should:**
- Limit their responses to any incident they have witnessed to appropriate verbal intervention.

- Seek teacher assistance and document the incident if requested.

## Appendix C:
## School actions in response to incidents of bullying, cyber-bullying and harassment

**The School will:**
- Promptly attend to and report instances of bullying behaviour
- Inform/involve the Principal Treat all parties with respect and dignity
- Treat information regarding bullying confidentially
- Protect the bullied student from further harm
- Record what happened.
- Assure the student bullied, that the incident will be dealt with
- Implement the principles of Restorative Practices
- Teachers or the Principal/AP to talk individually to bullying students separately.
- Follow up meetings with students who have been bullied. The student who was bullied may receive additional support and there may be additional assertiveness training.
- Where necessary, speak to class without using names in for example circle time, small group meetings, class meeting time etc.
- Where appropriate and using discretion, work with parents of the bullied student to assist their child to avoid being bullied in the future. Keep them informed about progress and the measures taken
- Inform the parents of the child instigating the bullying, cyber-bullying and/ or harassment, and work with them to establish joint strategies for behaviour modification
- Where appropriate/necessary follow the guidelines and procedures contained in the **Behaviour Management Policy** for suspension or expulsion.

**Challenging incidents** – Physical violence or intimidation (e.g. threatening behaviour)
- Move student onlookers away
- Separate students with minimal physical contact
- Seek assistance/support from other staff
- Inform the Principal/AP
- Apply Student Code of Conduct guidelines (See Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy)
- Report of incident to be recorded
- Follow other relevant procedures in the Bullying and Harassment and Behaviour Management Policies

**Challenging Students**
- Arrange collaborative case management of students with persistent aggression or continued victimisation
- Develop a student behaviour management plan
- Problem-solving strategies for dealing with disclosures
- Utilise School Support Officers where appropriate
- Follow other relevant procedures in the Bullying and Harassment and Behaviour Management Policies

**Schoolyard strategies**
- Separate the school play equipment into group areas (junior, middle or senior)
- Promotion of positive social interaction and directed play– lunch time activities and ideas given for games
- Teachers reinforce positives with verbal praise.  Listen to grievances and take appropriate action
- Follow the school's Code of Conduct (See Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy).


## Appendix D:

## Cyber-bulling:

**Positive steps a student can take in response to cyber bullying**
- Tell an adult – teacher, Principal, parent
- Keep a record – include time and date
- Ask parents to contact their phone or internet provider and report what is happening
- If messages are threatening get in touch with the police – cyber-bullying is illegal
- **Do not reply** to bullying messages – it will only get worse if you do. Often if you don't reply the bully will leave you alone
- **Change your contact details –** get a new user name for the internet, a new email account, new mobile phone number and only give them to people you trust (e.g. family and close friends)
- **Keep your username and password secret** – keep all personal information private
- Respect other people online and offline
- Don't spread rumours about people or share their secrets, including their phone numbers and passwords
- If someone insults you online or by phone, stay calm and ignore them
- "Do as you would be done by"- think how you would feel if you were bullied. You're responsible for you own behaviour – make sure you don't distress other people or cause them to be bullied by someone else.


**Positive steps a parent can take to ensure internet and other technology safety for their child:**
- Promote and model appropriate Cyber conduct at home
- Familiarise themselves with information and communication technology and websites used by their child
- Have an appropriate agreement with your child on the acceptable use of technology at home, which includes clearly identified and consistent consequences
- Try to keep computers and other information and communication technology in an open and common area and have filter software installed
- Actively participate in Anti-cyber-bullying activities
- Become familiar with, and be alert for, behaviour that indicates that a child may be involved in cyber-bullying
- If their child is a victim of cyber-bullying assist them to determining the appropriate response using the **Bullying, Cyber-bullying and Harassment Policy** as a guide.