

Berengarra school

Berengarra takes a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse and is fully committed to ensuring that its strategies, policies, procedures and practices meet all Child Safety Standards as specified in Ministerial Order No. 1359 (2022)

Bullying and Harassment Policy - Students

Purpose

Berengarra School is committed to providing a safe and respectful learning environment where bullying will not be tolerated. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that students learn in a supportive and safe environment which promotes respect and tolerance.

Scope

This policy applies to all students in the School environment, including camps and excursions and in the online environment.

This policy provides a definition of bullying and harassment and provides a process for students to follow should they feel threatened by bullying or harassing behaviour.

Definition of 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 or hidden. 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. However, it can arise out of conduct where any incident alone might appear to be insignificant but put together the incidents create an environment that can cause harm.

Bullying has three main features:

- It involves a misuse of power in a relationship
- It is ongoing and repeated, and
- It involves behaviours that can cause harm.

Bullying can take many forms, including:

- Physical bullying (causing physical harm; e.g., punching, kicking, fighting, damaging property, invading someone's personal space)
- Verbal bullying (e.g., name-calling, teasing, spreading rumours, demeaning someone, swearing, using offensive language)
- Exclusion or social bullying (e.g., leaving a person or group out of social or 'group activities)
- Cyber bullying, when technology (e.g. electronic devices like mobile phones, social networking sites and email) is used to harass, threaten, embarrass, or target another person
- Sexting, when sending sexually explicit messages or photographs via electronic devices may lead to public humiliation
- Victimization (e.g., standover tactics, extortion, picking on others and repeated exclusion)
- Racial bullying (e.g., bullying which targets a person's race or religion)
- Sexual bullying (e.g., touching or brushing up against another person in a sexual manner, using rude names, or commenting inappropriately about someone's sexuality or morals)

Harassment

Harassment is language or actions that are demeaning, offensive or intimidating to a person. It can take many forms, and includes name calling, offensive and threatening language, putting people down to their face or behind their back and includes sexual harassment and disability harassment. Harassment of any kind will not be tolerated at Berengarra School and may have serious consequences for students engaging in this behaviour.

Other distressing and inappropriate behaviours

There are also many distressing and inappropriate behaviours may not constitute bullying even though they are unpleasant, and often require intervention. These can include:

- *Mutual conflict* involves an argument or disagreement between people with no imbalance of power. In incidents of mutual conflict, generally, both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution to the issue. 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. However, single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression are not acceptable behaviours at our school and may have serious consequences for students engaging in this behaviour. Berengarra School will use its Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy to guide a response to single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression.

What to do if you are Bullied or Harassed

Bullying and Harassment are unacceptable at Berengarra School.

A student has the right to seek assistance if he or she feels threatened with bullying or harassing behaviour. Tell the person that their behaviour offends you if you feel safe to do so. They may not realise this.

- Tell the person to stop (if you feel safe to do so)
- Talk to a friend or parent/guardian
- Talk to a teacher or another trusted member of staff or the Head of Campus

The staff member will respond in accordance with the Schools Bullying and Harassment Prevention and Response Procedure.

Berengarra School undertakes to:

- Treat complaints seriously
- Investigate complaints promptly and confidentially
- Investigate complaints impartially

What to do if you Witness or Become Aware of Bullying or Harassment

If you witness or become aware of behaviour you consider to be bullying or harassment (or likely to become bullying or harassment) you should

- check with the person being bullied or harassed to see if the action was unwelcomed
- encourage them to speak to someone about it
- speak to a member of staff about it

It is very important that students who witness bullying or harassment speak out and report these behaviours. Not talking about bullying/harassment often allows it to continue.

Further Information and Resources

- Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Complaints and Grievances Policy
- Duty of Care Policy

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed on a 2-year basis, or earlier as required, following analysis of school data on reported incidents of, and responses to, bullying to ensure that the policy remains up to date, practical, and effective.

Created date	January 2019
Last reviewed	January 2024
Endorsed by	Berengarra School Board
Endorsed on	January 2024
Next review date	February 2026