Information for parents, teachers and staff – addendum to Bullying, Harassment and Antidiscrimination Policy

What is bullying?

Dr Ken Rigby, an academic at the forefront of research into the issue of bullying, says that:
“Bullying involves a desire to hurt + hurtful action + a power imbalance + (typically) repetition + an unjust use of power + evident enjoyment by the aggressor, and a sense of being oppressed on the part of the victim.”

(Source: http://www.kenrigby.net/)

In addition to the above statements and definition, the school defines bullying as being:
- cruel, oppressive or abusive behaviour towards another person
- picking on or tormenting someone, particularly by trying to turn others against them
- deliberately setting out to embarrass, oppress or threaten someone
- consciously trying to make someone feel uncomfortable without cause or justification
- deliberately and without justification trying to influence other people against someone.

There is a very helpful booklet available to interested parents of young children at Dr Ken Rigby’s website www.kenrigby.net > What parents can do.

The school encourages students to communicate with a trusted adult if they are experiencing bullying or harassment at school.

About bullying – bystanders

The behaviour of bystanders can positively impact on bullying incidents. Research shows that:
- most bullying takes place when bystanders are present
- although most bystanders do not act to discourage it, when any one of them does there is a good chance (around 50%) that the bullying will stop
- teachers generally do not have the opportunity to take any action because they are typically not present and are not told about it
- a large proportion of students would like to see bullying stopped.

What is cyber-bullying?

- Text messages – individual or to a mass audience, that are threatening or intended to embarrass someone
- Picture/video-clips via mobile phone cameras – images sent to others to make the victim feel threatened, embarrassed or humiliated
Mobile or other phone calls – silent calls or abusive messages; or stealing the victim’s phone and using it to harass others, to make them believe the victim is responsible

- Emails – threatening or bullying emails, often sent using a pseudonym or false name

- Chatroom bullying – menacing or upsetting responses to children or young people when they are in web-based chatrooms

- Instant messaging – unpleasant messages sent while conducting real-time conversations online using sites

- Bullying via websites — use of defamatory blogs, personal websites/pages.

**Cyber bullying – student education**

Students should be educated about online or mobile phone safety and etiquette. The following messages may be considered:

- Remember, bullying is not your fault. It can be stopped and it can usually be traced.
- Don’t ignore the bullying. Tell someone you trust, such as a teacher or parent, or call an advice line.
- Try to keep calm. If you are frightened, try to show it as little as possible. Don’t get angry, it will only make the person bullying you more likely to continue.
- Don’t give out your personal details online. If you’re in a chatroom, watch what you say about where you live, the school you go to, your email address etc. All these things can help someone who wants to harm you build up a picture about you.
- Keep and save any bullying emails, text messages or images. Then you can show them to a parent or teacher as evidence.
- If you can, make a note of the time and date bullying messages or images were sent, and note any details about the sender.

Advice is available on how to manage cyber-bullying at [www.wiredsafety.org](http://www.wiredsafety.org).

**What are the effects of bullying and harassment?**

There is a great deal of evidence about the physical and mental harm that continued bullying does to vulnerable children. It is known also that children who continually engage in bullying at school are more likely than others to engage in criminal activities after leaving schools.

(Source: http://www.kenrigby.net/)

The Mt Barker Waldorf School takes all forms of bullying seriously. The Bullying, Harassment and Antidiscrimination Policy details the actions the school will take in a bullying, harassment or discrimination incident.

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