Maffra Primary School
Bullying Policy

Why Have a Bullying Strategy?
Any form of bullying is unacceptable and should not be tolerated. Maffra Primary School endeavours to create a
safe, secure and happy learning environment for all of its students. Each student, teacher and parent is responsible
for ensuring that this occurs.

What Is Bullying?
Bullying is defined as a physical and/or psychological action by an individual or group which is purposely intended
to hurt or stress another. Bullying is seen as deliberate and can occur over a period of time.

It includes:
• threats,
• teasing and name-calling about a range of things; abilities & disabilities, gender, physical characteristics, family,
  ethnic, cultural or religious background,
• sexual and racial harassment,
• demands for money or possessions,
• damaging, removing or hiding belongings,
• leaving someone out of activities on purpose,
• spreading rumours,
• physical violence,
• put-downs, gestures and invasions of personal space,
• intimidation
• other actions which are meant to hurt someone else.

It is everybody’s right and responsibility to report bullying, whether this happens to you or to someone else.
If you stand by and watch bullying, you are encouraging and also guilty of, bullying too.

Goals of this Strategy

• to establish a caring and tolerant atmosphere where each member of the school community considers the welfare
  of others.
• to establish set procedures to deal with both the perpetrator and victim involved in a bullying incident.
• to raise children’s awareness of their right to participate and be happy at school without fear of emotional or
  physical abuse.
• to raise the children’s awareness that it is their responsibility to report incidents of bullying.
• To counter views within the school community that bullying is an inevitable part of school life.

Some Common Reactions and Unhelpful Beliefs.
Bully - "I was just mucking around, can't they take a joke?"
This is the most common response to bullying. To put someone down, ridicule them, make them feel
uncomfortable, push them around, or to take their possessions is not a joke.

Victim - "I'll ignore it and it will go away."
If anything, ignoring it makes it worse. You will give the impression that it is okay with you and that you agree
with what the bully is doing.

Victim - "My parents told me to fight back."
The problem with retaliation to bullying is that it escalates other forms of misbehaviour.

**Victim** - "I don't want to cause trouble."
Most cases of bullying are sorted out very simply, especially if it is reported straight away. You're not causing trouble. You're standing up for yourself.

**Parent** - ‘It’s just a natural part of growing up.”
There is nothing natural about being victimised. Kids have a right to feel safe at school, as well as at home.

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**STUDENTS, TEACHERS, OTHER STAFF AND VISITORS HAVE A RIGHT TO FEEL SAFE IN OUR SCHOOL. BULLYING IS NOT ACCEPTABLE AT MAFFRA PRIMARY AND WILL NOT BE TOLERATED.**

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**What The School Will Do**

- treat bullying the same way as Mandatory Reporting - i.e. all incidents of bullying must be reported to the classroom teacher, Assistant Principal or the Principal
- all reported incidents will be followed up by either the classroom teacher and/or Assistant Principal/Principal
- include material on bullying, tolerance and positive social behaviours in the curriculum. Display appropriate posters around the school, (in corridors, classrooms and around buildings - many of which can be student created.)
- a weekly time-tabled classroom lesson will be allocated to the Social Skills program
- provide a safe environment for students, teachers, other staff and visitors, including providing a safe school environment with staff supervision of school grounds before and after school and during school breaks
- provide a supportive school environment which encourages positive relationships between students, their peers and their teachers
- social skills will be taught as part of the inclusive school curriculum
- maintain a caring playground environment which enables students to develop a feeling of trust and consistency with staff. The school’s student management program provides a consistent approach to settling yard conflict, with emphasis placed on encouraging children who are playing and interacting appropriately
- implement the Assertive Discipline program in classrooms and the Bullying Strategy where appropriate
- provide ongoing support through Professional Development and collegiate support
- respond to all reports of bullying by students as outlined in the consequences statement of this strategy.
- celebrate appropriate behaviour on a consistent basis in small group, whole class or school based forums
- educate the wider community by placing articles in the school’s newsletter

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**THIS DOCUMENT IS INTENDED TO BE USED IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE SCHOOL’S STUDENT MANAGEMENT PROCEDURE AND SOCIAL SKILLS PROGRAM. ALL STUDENTS NEED EXPOSURE TO MEANINGFUL AND PRACTICAL PROGRAMS TO HELP EQUIP THEM WITH STRATEGIES TO ADDRESS BULLYING.**
Consequences for Bullies

1. Students who are reported for a first incident will be interviewed by the Yard Duty teacher / classroom teacher / Assistant Principal and given the opportunity to modify their behaviour. This will be treated as a NO BLAME – NO CONSEQUENCES outcome with the sole intention that the bullying will stop. This incident needs to be recorded in the Bullying Register stored in the Assistant Principal’s office.

2. Students who are reported a second time for bullying behaviour will be interviewed by the Assistant Principal or Principal and parents will be informed. Further consequences will be determined at the time of the interview. This may include behaviour contracts, yard detentions and further counselling and social skills sessions to assist the student in building positive relationships with his/her peer.

3. Students who are reported for a third bullying incident will automatically be withdrawn from their classes/playground (depending where and when the incidents have occurred) for the remainder of the day. They will be supervised by the administration staff. Parents will be required to attend an interview at which time the consequences for further incidents will be explained (see point 4).

4. Further bullying incidents will result in the student being withdrawn from classes immediately and parents being contacted to arrange for their child to be collected from the school. External suspension will be applied. The student and parents will need to attend an interview to negotiate the student’s return to class.

   *N.B. incidents of serious nature may be responded to by immediately informing the parents/guardians and removal from the classroom or yard or bus.*

5. Present positive feedback (encouragement &/or positive letters home to parents.) after negotiated goals have been achieved.

For persistent and repeated bullying behaviour, a support group will be established to protect the other students, to encourage the development of positive behaviours and to establish a plan for reinstatement of inclusion.

What do we do for the Victims of Bullying?

1. Students who are bullied for a first incident will be referred to their classroom teacher for immediate advice. The Assistant Principal/Principal should be notified but does not necessarily take part in the action. Parents/guardians will be contacted.

2. Students who are bullied a second time will be referred to their classroom teacher again and the Assistant Principal/Principal will notify the parents/guardians of what action is being taken. This may involve specific social skills sessions for the victim to assist them to develop a range of strategies to appropriately deal with any further incidents of bullying.

3. Students who are bullied a third time or victims of ongoing bullying will automatically be nominated for a program developed along the lines of a Support Group. Parents/guardians will be notified and encouraged to participate in this program. Where necessary, Wellington District Student Support staff will be utilised.

4. Constant monitoring and support would be provided to the student.

There may be times when the whole staff needs to be alerted to serious offences or a serial bully. Staff will need to act appropriately if that child is involved in more incidences of bullying and secondly, to be positive to that child if his/her behaviour is showing signs of improvement.
Strategies for students to deal with bullying

⚠ Don’t ignore it! Tell someone. If they don't help you, tell someone else (e.g. teacher, parent, friend) until it is dealt with. Bullying is too important not to report. This includes incidents which involve someone else as the victim, not just you.

⚠ If the problem recurs then tell someone again.

⚠ Don't be fooled by the bully's threats to “get you” if you tell. You have a much better chance of being, protected if you can say, "I've already told Mrs. . . . . and she knows that if I'm hurt she should come looking for you."

⚠ Avoid joining in to encourage bullying. Being part of a group which is bullying someone else is just as bad as bullying yourself.

⚠ Try to remain in sight of adults if you have been bullied.

⚠ Walk tall with your head held high. Don’t show that you are scared, even though you may be.

⚠ Stay near friends, or other children whenever possible.

⚠ If confronted, stay calm and confidently walk away from the bullying situation.

⚠ If you are getting bullied before or after school then vary times and routes for travelling to and from school. Go with a friend if possible.

⚠ Leave expensive possessions and money at home. If you don't have it with you, it can't be taken away.

Strategies for teachers to deal with bullying

• Listen to the complaints and act upon them. Empathy for the victim is vital.

• Avoid labelling students as bullies or victims.

• Focus on what you want when there is no bullying - move behaviour towards tolerance and acceptance. Model this behaviour.

• Encourage students to be active bystanders, to tell about bullying and to support the victim

• Hold open discussion about bullying in the classroom and teach assertive skills.

• Provide feedback to all students involved in bullying incidents so that they are aware that consequences for bullies have been implemented.

Strategies for parents to deal with bullying

• Stay calm and accept that all of us have the capacity to be involved in either the giving or receiving of bullying.

• Listen calmly and note specifically what your child is saying.

• Let the school know what is happening.

• If your child is the victim, offer reassurance that it is not his/her fault.

• Try not to model bullying behaviour at home.
Evaluation:

Bullying audits. Student surveys conducted at least twice a year (end of Term 1 and end of Term 3 - see copy of sample bullying audit attached)

Yard behaviour incident data compiled from the yard duty folders.

This anti bullying policy will be reviewed as part of the Annual Review. This should involve, where practicable, surveying of staff & parents, as well as the bullying audit surveys completed by students.
Maffra Primary School
Bullying Audit Survey

Name (optional) ..........................................................Grade ...........

Maffra Primary School wants to provide a safe and happy school environment for all of its students. Your teacher would have spoken to the class about bullying. You should be aware of what bullying is. The school thinks that it is important to help both the children who are being bullied and those children who are responsible for the bullying. To help us we would like you to answer the following questions. Your teachers will be the only ones to see this form.

1. Have you been bullied this year? YES  NO

2. Have you been bullied this term? NEVER/SOMETIMES/REGULARLY/LOTS

3. If you have been bullied by the same person more than once, write down his or her name(s) and what they did.

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4. Where have you been bullied in our school this year? (Circle your answers)
   In your classroom
   At Assembly
   In the toilets
   In the playground
   On the way to and from school
   Specialist classes

5. If you have been bullied what have you tried to do about it?

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6. Is there anything else you would like to tell your teachers about bullying in our school?

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