 **Bullying Prevention**

**Purpose**

Le Page Primary School is committed to providing a safe and respectful learning environment where bullying will not be tolerated.

The purpose of this policy is to:

* explain the definition of bullying so that there is shared understanding amongst all members of the Le Page Primary Schools community
* make clear that no form of bullying at Le Page Primary School will be tolerated
* outline the strategies and programs in place at Le Page Primary School to build a positive school culture and prevent bullying behaviour
* ask that everyone in our school community be alert to signs and evidence of bullying behaviour, and accept responsibility to report bullying behaviour to school staff
* ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are appropriately investigated and addressed
* ensure that support is provided to students who may be affected by bullying behaviour (including targets, bystanders and students engaging in bullying behaviour)
* seek parental and peer group support in addressing and preventing bullying behaviour at Le Page Primary School.

When responding to bullying behaviour, Le Page Primary School aims to:

* be proportionate, consistent and responsive
* find a constructive solution for everyone
* stop the bullying from happening again
* restore the relationships between the students involved.

Le Page Primary School acknowledges that school staff owe a duty of care to students to take reasonable steps to reduce the risk of reasonably foreseeable harm, which can include harm that may be caused by bullying behaviour.

**Scope**

This policy addresses how Le Page Primary School aims to prevent, address and respond to student bullying behaviour. Le Page Primary School recognises that there are many other types of inappropriate student behaviours that do not meet the definition of bullying which are also unacceptable at our school. These other inappropriate behaviours will be managed in accordance with *Student Code of Conduct* and *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy* and *Inclusion and Diversity policy*.

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions.

**Policy**

**Definitions**

**Bullying**

In 2018 the Education Council of the Council of Australian Governments endorsed the following definition of bullying for use by all Australian schools:

*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:

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

Bullying can be:

1. *direct* physical bullying ­­– e.g., hitting, tripping, and pushing or damaging property.
2. *direct* verbal bullying – e.g., name calling, insults, homophobic or racist remarks, verbal abuse.
3. *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.

*Cyberbullying* 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.

**Other distressing and inappropriate behaviours**

Many distressing and inappropriate behaviours may not constitute bullying even though they are unpleasant. Students who are involved in or who witness any distressing and inappropriate behaviours should report their concerns to school staff and our school will follow the Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy /Code of Conduct.

*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. Le Page Primary School will use its Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy to guide a response to single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression.

***Harassment*** is language or actions that are demeaning, offensive or intimidating to a person. It can take many forms, including sexual harassment and disability harassment. Harassment of any kind will not be tolerated at Le Page Primary School and may have serious consequences for students engaging in this behaviour. Le Page Primary School will use its Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy to guide a response to students demonstrating harassing behaviour, unless the behaviour also constitutes bullying, in which case the behaviour will be managed in accordance with this Bullying Prevention Policy.

**Bullying Prevention**

Le Page Primary School has a number of programs and strategies in place to build a positive and inclusive school culture. We strive to foster a school culture that prevents bullying behaviour by modelling and encouraging behaviour that demonstrates acceptance, kindness and respect.

Bullying prevention at Le Page Primary School is proactive and is supported by research that indicates that a whole school, multifaceted approach is the most effect way to prevent and address bullying. At our school:

* We have a positive school environment that provides safety, security and support for students and promotes positive relationships and wellbeing.
* We strive to build strong partnerships between the school, families and the broader community that means all members work together to ensure the safety of students.
* Teachers are encouraged to incorporate classroom management strategies that discourage bullying and promote positive behaviour.
* In the classroom, our social and emotional learning curriculum teaches students what constitutes bullying and how to respond to bullying behaviour assertively. This promotes resilience, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving.
* The Peer Support Program and the Peer Mediation program encourage positive relationships between students in different year levels. We seek to empower students to be confident communicators and to resolve conflict in a non-aggressive and constructive way.
* Students are encouraged to look out for each other and to talk to teachers and older peers about any bullying they have experienced or witnessed.
* We participate in the National Day of Action against Bullying and Violence.

For further information about our engagement and wellbeing initiatives, please see our Student Wellbeing and Engagement policy/Student Engagement Policy.

**Incident Response**

**Reporting concerns to Le Page Primary School**

Bullying complaints will be taken seriously and responded to sensitively at our school.

Students who may be experiencing bullying behaviour, or students who have witnessed bullying behaviour, are encouraged to report their concerns to school staff as soon as possible.

Our ability to effectively reduce and eliminate bullying behaviour is greatly affected by students and/or parents and carers reporting concerning behaviour as soon as possible, so that the responses implemented by Le Page Primary School are timely and appropriate in the circumstances.

We encourage students to speak to your teacher/Year Level Coordinator. However, students are welcome to discuss their concerns with any trusted member of staff including teachers, wellbeing staff, Administration.

Parents or carers who develop concerns that their child is involved in, or has witnessed bullying behaviour at Le Page Primary School should contact the Principal George Danson – 9583 8342

**Investigations**

When notified of alleged bullying behaviour, school staff are required to:

1. record the details of the allegations in Compass and
2. inform the principal

The principal is responsible for investigating allegations of bullying in a timely and sensitive manner. To appropriately investigate an allegation of bullying, the Principal may:

* speak to the those involved in the allegations, including the target/s, the students allegedly engaging in bullying behaviour/s and any witnesses to the incidents
* speak to the parents of the students involved
* speak to the teachers of the students involved
* take detailed notes of all discussions for future reference
* obtain written statements from all or any of the above.

All communications with the Principal in the course of investigating an allegation of bullying will be managed sensitively. Investigations will be completed as quickly as possible to allow for the behaviours to be addressed in a timely manner.

The objective of completing a thorough investigation into the circumstances of alleged bullying behaviour is to determine the nature of the conduct and the students involved. A thorough understanding of the alleged bullying will inform staff about how to most effectively implement an appropriate response to that behaviour.

Serious bullying, including serious cyberbullying, is a criminal offence and may be referred to Victoria Police. For more information, see: [Brodie’s Law.](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers/Pages/advicesheetbrodieslaw.aspx)

**Responses to bullying behaviours**

When the Principal has sufficient information to understand the circumstances of the alleged bullying and the students involved, a number of strategies may be implemented to address the behaviour and support affected students in consultation with Student Wellbeing Team, teachers, SSS, Principal, Department of Education and Training specialist staff etc.

There are a number of factors that will be considered when determining the most appropriate response to the behaviour. When making a decision about how to respond to bullying behaviour, Le Page Primary School will consider:

* the age and maturity of the students involved
* the severity and frequency of the bullying, and the impact it has had on the target student
* whether the student/s engaging in bullying behaviour have displayed similar behaviour before
* whether the bullying took place in a group or one-to-one context
* whether the students engaging in bullying behaviour demonstrates insight or remorse for their behaviour
* the alleged motive of the behaviour, including any element of provocation.

The principal may implement all, or some of the following responses to bullying behaviours:

* Offer counselling support to the target student or students, including referral to the Student Wellbeing Team, SSS or external provider.
* Offer counselling support to the students engaging in bullying behaviour, including referral to the Student Wellbeing Team, SSS or external provider.
* Offer counselling support to affected students, including witnesses and/or friends of the target student, including referral to the Student Wellbeing Team, SSS or external provider.
* Facilitate a restorative practice meeting with all or some of the students involved. The objective of restorative practice is to repair relationships that have been damaged by bringing about a sense of remorse and restorative action on the part of the person who has bullied someone and forgiveness by the person who has been bullied.
* Facilitate a mediation between some or all of the students involved to help to encourage students to take responsibility for their behaviour and explore underlying reasons for conflict or grievance. Mediation is only suitable if all students are involved voluntarily and demonstrate a willingness to engage in the mediation process.
* Facilitate a process using the Support Group Method, involving the target student(s), the students engaging in bullying behaviour and a group of students who are likely to be supportive of the target(s).
* Implement a Method of Shared Concern process with all students involved in the bullying.
* Facilitate a Student Support Group meeting and/or Behaviour Support Plan for affected students.
* Prepare a Safety Plan or Individual Management Plan restricting contact between target and students engaging in bullying behaviour.
* Provide discussion and/or mentoring for different social and emotional learning competencies of the students involved, including connect affected students with an older Student Mentor, Leader in Me, resilience programs.
* Monitor the behaviour of the students involved for an appropriate time and take follow up action if necessary.
* Implement disciplinary consequences for the students engaging in bullying behaviour, which may include removal of privileges, detention, suspension and/or expulsion consistent with our Student Wellbeing and Engagement policy, the Ministerial Order on Suspensions and Expulsions and any other relevant Department policy.

Le Page Primary School understands the importance of monitoring and following up on the progress of students who have been involved in or affected by bullying behaviour. Where appropriate, school staff will also endeavour to provide parents and carers with updates on the management of bullying incidents.

The Principal is responsible for maintaining up to date records of the investigation of and responses to bullying behaviour.

**Further information and resources**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

* Statement of Values and School Philosophy
* Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
* Parent Complaints policy
* Duty of Care Policy
* Inclusion and Diversity Policy

The following websites and resources provide useful information on prevention and responding to bullying, as well as supporting students who have been the target of bullying behaviours:

* [Bully Stoppers](https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/PreventingBullying/Planning/Pages/School-policy.aspx)
* [Kids Helpline](https://kidshelpline.com.au/)
* [Lifeline](https://www.lifeline.org.au/)
* [Bullying. No way!](https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/PreventingBullying/Planning/Pages/School-policy.aspx)
* [Student Wellbeing Hub](https://www.studentwellbeinghub.edu.au/)
* [Office of the eSafety Commissioner](https://www.esafety.gov.au/)
* [Australian Student Wellbeing Framework](https://www.studentwellbeinghub.edu.au/resources/detail?id=dd6b5222-d5c5-6d32-997d-ff0000a69c30#/)

**Evaluation**

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years, or earlier as required following an incident or analysis of new research or school data relating to bullying, to ensure that the policy remains up to date, practical and effective.

Data will be collected through:

* discussion and consultation with students and parent/carers
* regular student bullying surveys
* regular staff surveys
* [Bully Stoppers Data Collection](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers/Pages/teachdata.aspx) tool
* assessment of other school-based data, including the number of reported incidents of bullying in each year group and the effectiveness of the responses implemented
* Attitudes to School Survey
* [Parent Opinion Survey](https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/management/improvement/pages/performsurveyparent.aspx)

Proposed amendments to this policy will be discussed with school council.

**Review cycle**

 **Statement of Values & School Philosophy Policy**

**Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to outline the values of our school community and explain the vision, mission and objectives of our school.

**Policy**

Le Page Primary School is committed to providing a safe, supportive and inclusive environment for all students, staff and members of our community. Our school recognises the importance of the partnership between our school and parents and carers to support student learning, engagement and wellbeing. We share a commitment to, and a responsibility for, creating an inclusive and safe school environment for our students.

The programs and teaching at Le Page Primary School support and promote the principles and practice of Australian democracy, including a commitment to:

* elected government
* the rule of law
* equal rights for all before the law
* freedom of religion
* freedom of speech and association
* the values of openness and tolerance.

This policy outlines our school’s vision, mission, objective, values, and expectations of our school community. This policy is available on our school website, our staff induction handbook, enrolment/transition packs.

To celebrate and embed our Statement of Values and Philosophy in our school community, we

* display posters and banners that promote your values in our school
* celebrate our values in our school newsletter
* provide awards and recognition for students who actively demonstrate the values
* discuss our values with students in the classroom, meetings and assemblies.

**Vision**

Le Page Primary School’s vision is –

There is a prosperous path for every child. Each journey is theirs to lead. There is a place, in which every child can shine.

**Mission**

Le Page Primary School’s mission is to –

Identify the talent, develop the confidence, and create the leader.

**ObjectiveS**

Le Page Primary School’s objective is to create a culture that attracts the local community.

Increase enrolments

Achieve 12 months or more in students learning outcomes.

**Values**

Le Page Primary School’s values are to follow the 7 Habits.

Be Proactive (I am in charge)

Begin with the end in mind (I have a plan)

Put first things first (work then play)

Think Win-Win (everyone can win)

Seek first to understand then to be understood (listen before you talk)

Synergise (together is better)

Sharpen the saw (balance feels best)

**Behavioural expectations**

Le Page Primary School acknowledges that the behaviour of staff, parents, carers and students has an impact on our school community and culture. We acknowledge a shared responsibility to create a positive learning environment for the children and young people at our school.

As principals and school leaders, we will:

* model positive behaviour and effective leadership
* communicate politely and respectfully with all members of the school community
* work collaboratively to create a school environment where respectful and safe behaviour is expected of everyone
* behave in a manner consistent with the standards of our profession and meet core responsibilities to provide safe and inclusive environments
* plan, implement and review our work to ensure the care, safety, security and general wellbeing of all students at school
* identify and support students who are or may be at risk
* do our best to ensure every child achieves their personal and learning potential
* work with parents to understand their child’s needs and, where necessary, adapt the learning environment accordingly
* respond appropriately when safe and inclusive behaviour is not demonstrated and implement appropriate interventions and sanctions when required
* inform parents of the school’s communication and complaints procedures
* ask any person who is acting in an offensive, intimidating or otherwise inappropriate way to leave the school grounds.

As teachers and non-teaching school staff, we will:

* model positive behaviour to students consistent with the standards of our profession
* communicate politely and respectfully with all members of the school community
* proactively engage with parents about student outcomes
* work with parents to understand the needs of each student and, where necessary, adapt the learning environment accordingly
* work collaboratively with parents to improve learning and wellbeing outcomes for students with additional needs
* communicate with the principal and school leaders in the event we anticipate or face any tension or challenging behaviours from parents
* treat all members of the school community with respect.

As parents and carers, we will:

* model positive behaviour to our child
* communicate politely and respectfully with all members of the school community
* ensure our child attends school on time, every day the school is open for instruction
* take an interest in our child’s school and learning
* work with the school to achieve the best outcomes for our child
* communicate constructively with the school and use expected processes and protocols when raising concerns
* support school staff to maintain a safe learning environment for all students
* follow the school’s processes for communication with staff and making complaints
* treat all school leaders, staff, students, and other members of the school community with respect.

As students, we will:

* model positive behaviour to other students
* communicate politely and respectfully with all members of the school community.
* comply with and model school values
* behave in a safe and responsible manner
* respect ourselves, other members of the school community and the school environment.
* actively participate in school
* not disrupt the learning of others and make the most of our educational opportunities.

As community members, we will:

* model positive behaviour to the school community
* treat other members of the school community with respect
* support school staff to maintain a safe and inclusive learning environment for all students
* utilise the school’s processes for communication with staff and submitting complaints.

**Unreasonable behaviours**

Schools are not public places, and the principal has the right to permit or deny entry to school grounds (for more information, see our *Visitors Policy*).

Unreasonable behaviour that is demonstrated by school staff, parents, carers, students or members of our school community will not be tolerated at school, or during school activities.

Unreasonable behaviour includes:

* speaking or behaving in a rude, manipulative, aggressive or threatening way, either in person, via electronic communication or social media, or over the telephone
* the use or threat of violence of any kind, including physically intimidating behaviour such as aggressive hand gestures or invading another person’s personal space
* sending demanding, rude, confronting or threatening letters, emails or text messages
* sexist, racist, homophobic, transphobic or derogatory comments
* the use of social media or public forums to make inappropriate or threatening remarks about the school, staff or students.

Harassment, bullying, violence, aggression, threatening behaviour and unlawful discrimination are unacceptable and will not be tolerated at our school.

Unreasonable behaviour and/or failure to uphold the principles of this *Statement of Values and School Philosophy* may lead to further investigation and the implementation of appropriate consequences by the school Principal.

At the Principal’s discretion, unreasonable behaviour may be managed by:

* requesting that the parties attend a mediation or counselling sessions
* implementing specific communication protocols
* written warnings
* conditions of entry to school grounds or school activities
* exclusion from school grounds or attendance at school activities
* reports to Victoria Police
* legal action

Inappropriate student behaviour will be managed in according with our school’s *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy* and *Bullying Prevention Policy.*

Our *Statement of Values and School Philosophy* ensures that everyone in our school community will be treated with fairness and respect. In turn, we will strive to create a school that is inclusive and safe, where everyone is empowered to participate and learn.

**Further information and resources**

*Student Wellbeing and Engagement, Communication with School Staff, Respect for School Staff*

**Review cycle**

This policy was last updated and endorsed by the Le Page Primary School Council on 03/08/21 and is scheduled for review in August 2025.