

Health, Safety & Wellbeing Policy [Prevention of Workplace Bullying]

Authorisation

This policy was approved by the School Council on 16/11/2004_.

Review date

This policy shall be reviewed in 2007 and updated if required.

AIM

- To maintain a safe workplace for all staff by preventing workplace bullying.
- To deal promptly and effectively with any alleged incidents of workplace bullying.

DEFINITION

Workplace bullying is repeated, unreasonable behaviour directed towards an employee, or group of employees, that creates a risk to health and safety.

GUIDELINES

- Williamstown Primary School shall be a bullying free workplace committed to providing staff with a safe and healthy workplace.
- The principal shall ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibility to prevent workplace bullying and of their requirement to report any instance of alleged bullying.
- If a bullying incident occurs, the person(s) subject to the bullying should, without delay, report the incident to the principal. If the report involves the principal it should be made to the Regional Director at the Regional Office.
- If a staff member observes a bullying incident they should immediately report the incident to the principal (or Regional Director, as appropriate).
- All reports of workplace bullying will be treated seriously and there will be prompt intervention to investigate and resolve the issue.
- All reports will be investigated according to the established Department of Education and Training complaints resolution procedures.
- Once a report is lodged, those directly involved will be informed of the complaint, and are permitted to have a support person present throughout the issue resolution process, including at any interviews or meetings.
- The principles of natural justice shall be followed in any investigation.
- The person who reported the incident shall not be victimised as a result of having made the report.
- The person in charge of the investigation/resolution process must not have been involved in the alleged incident.
- All parties are to maintain strict confidentiality throughout the process.
- A record shall be made of all proceedings and outcomes.
- If a case has been found against an individual, the records will be securely filed (in a sealed envelope marked 'Authorised access only') in the person's official file.
- Recommendations arising from an investigation/resolution process shall be implemented by the principal, as appropriate. This may include disciplinary or dismissal action in line with the Department of Education and Training's unsatisfactory performance procedures.
- It is incumbent upon the principal to review the process, risk factors and harm minimisation strategies at the school.

- Staff will be involved in discussion and problem solving around the issues of risk assessment, process review and refinement, and harm minimisation.
- All staff at this school have a responsibility to comply with this policy and to treat other staff with dignity and respect.

References

- **C**omplaints resolution procedures, Department of Education and Training (available at: <http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/hrweb/workm/perform/comres.htm>)
- **H**ealth, safety and wellbeing policy, Department of Education and Training, 2003 (available at: www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/hrweb/ohs/other/legisl.htm)
- **P**revention of Bullying and Violence at Work: Guidance Note, WorkSafe Victoria, February 2003, (available at: http://www.workcover.vic.gov.au/vwa/home.nsf/pages/b&v_intro)
- Sexual harassment policy and procedures, Department of Education and Training, 2002 (available at: <http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/hrweb/Docs/SexHarPolicy.doc>)

Some useful contacts

Department of Education and Training

Conduct and Ethics Unit, telephone 9637 2594

Diversity and Equity Unit, telephone 9637 2454

Employee Health Branch, telephone 9637 2395 (counselling and mediation), and 9637 2385 (policy and strategy)

Western Metropolitan Region, telephone 9291 6500

Merit Protection Boards, telephone 9651 0290

Victorian Equal Opportunity Commission, telephone 9281 7111