



BULLYING and HARASSMENT POLICY

This policy is a component of the supportive Preschool Community and is consistent with:

- The National Safe Schools Framework 2004
- State Government, Anti Discrimination legislation
- The essentials learning framework
- Preschool Mission Statement – Values and Principles
- Code of Conduct
- Grievance Procedures

At Laura Preschool Centre we want the students to be in a safe environment, free from bullying and harassment, for all members of the preschool community.

Any form of harassment/ bullying is wrong and should not be allowed to continue!

WHAT IS BULLYING/ HARASSMENT?

At Laura Preschool Centre we believe that

- Bullying is deliberate hurtful gestures, words or actions, which are repeated over time
- Bullying involves behaviour, which is physical, verbal, sexual, indirect, racial/cultural, cyber, bystander, psychological (Emotional), or relational
- Bullying includes a wide range of conduct that causes another person/persons to feel embarrassed, offended, hurt, humiliated, insulted, ridiculed, angry or afraid
- Bullying involves one or more students exerting power or dominance over another or others, including bystanders
- Bullying can have a serious long-term effect on the health and well being on young people
- **Harassment** is a one off incident but bullying is repeated incidents and/or abuse of power

Objectives at Laura Preschool Centre

- To reduce the incidence of bullying/ harassment
- To create a supportive climate
- To provide staff, children and parents with options to respond to bullying/ harassment
- To instil resilience and strategies to counteract bullying/ harassment
- The preschool to use the “Support Group Approach” when dealing/ managing with incidents of bullying. The “**Support Group Approach**” is an approach where there is “No Blame” eg once a child is labelled a “victim” or “perpetrator”, often this will inhibit their ability to change and develop. Use the words “target” instead of “victim” and “offender” instead of “bully” when talking about people involved in bullying or who have been bullied

WHAT CAN I DO?

CHILDREN

If a child feels they are being bullied or has witnessed bullying behaviour they should use one or more of these:

- Tell the person that they are being a bully and to stop the behaviour
- Ask a friend to help them tell a bully to stop their behaviour
- Support the person who is being bullied and request help from a staff member at the time of the incident
- Report behaviour to a staff member of the child’s choice
- Refrain from not copying the bullying of others
- Refrain from being a bystander to bullying

STAFF MEMBERS

If a child reports a bullying incident, or a staff member witnesses incidences of bullying, they should use one or more of these:

- Listen and provide support to the target of the bullying, and the person who has bullied, by acknowledging the nature and seriousness of bullying behaviour
- Find out the background and attempt to resolve the incident
- Fill out an incident report form if appropriate
- Refer the incident to the Preschool Director
- Discuss policy with children in a “child friendly” way
- Role model Anti – Bullying behaviour
- Implement social skills program and bullying awareness with children

LEADERSHIP

- Provide support to targets of bullying
- Record and monitor incidents of bullying behaviour, and apply negotiated consequences as appropriate. Consequences will allow for flexibility depending on the nature, severity and extent of the bullying. Natural Justice principles must apply
- Put in place anti-bullying procedures as appropriate
- Encourage target children to report similar behaviour if repeated
- Keep all centre staff involved and informed
- Contact parent/caregiver of the child who has been bullied or has been bullying others

PRESCHOOL CENTRE

- Send home copies of the Policies and Procedures
- Organise an information night for parents and community members
- Inclusion in curriculum
- Training and Development provided on relevant issues and topics, and included in staff meetings on a regular basis.
- Regular review of Policy, procedures and forms
- Induction of new staff and volunteers

PARENTS and CAREGIVERS

- Encourage children to discuss the effects and consequences of bullying
- Encourage children to report any incidents of bullying
- Contact the preschool (in an appropriate manner) if they are aware that any child is being bullied or suspect that it is happening
- Role model Anti bullying behaviours

Restorative Conferencing/ Discussions

- Recognises that bullying is a violation of people and relationships and aims to identify obligations and promote restoration and healing
- It is a way of responding to conflict which -
 - Support those affected
 - Allows for understanding of the wrong doing
 - Gives ownership of the problems created
 - Gives people the chance to fix things with support
 - Respects people and leaves their dignity in tact

Staff members need to do the background research into the incident/s and the offender needs to accept responsibility for their behaviour before a successful restorative conference can be held.

Staff members and/or the Preschool Director sets up a discussion between the target and the offender

The aim of the discussion is-

1. To allow the target to express their feelings so that the impact of the behaviour is felt and understood by the offender
2. To allow the person accused of bullying to acknowledge the behaviour, accept responsibility and agree to change it
3. To reach a resolution between parties

If an incident of bullying happens at Laura Preschool Centre we use **prevention, intervention** and **post-intervention** strategies

Prevention strategies include:

- Using the curriculum to teach students about respectful relationships, civics and citizenship
- Teaching children about violence prevention "safe hands", conflict resolution, anger management and problem solving and developing policies which promote student safety
- Developing programs to help children to participate and have a say in their learning
- Teaching for and about diversity and resilience
- Providing Professional learning for staff in collaboration with local agencies
- Identification of what bullying is

Intervention strategies include:

- Counselling children who have been bullied
- Talking with parent or caregivers about the situation
- Putting consequences in place for those who bully others
- Teaching children to be proactive bystanders
- Ensuring all staff know how to address bullying effectively and respectfully
- Role play of strategies

Post – Intervention strategies include:

- Monitoring the situation between the children to ensure that their safety and wellbeing are maintained
- Talking with parents or caregivers about strategies
- Reviewing and evaluating Behaviour Codes and Policies