ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Policy Statement

The Preschool will provide a safe, inclusive, supportive and ordered learning environment free from bullying, harassment and violence. Bullying, including cyber bullying, harassment and violence, is not acceptable in the Preschool and will be dealt with seriously and expediently.

The Preschool will work with the school community and other services and agencies to support its students in being responsible and productive members of this community.

Definitions:

The following definitions of terms were agreed by the State and Supportive Schools Communities Management Group, which is a national committee supported by the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEEDYA) with representatives from all Australian Education jurisdictions.

Bullying

Bullying is repeated verbal, physical or social behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons. Cyber-bullying refers to bullying through information and communication technologies.

Conflict or fights between equals and single incidents are not regarded as bullying.

Bullying in any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders.

Discrimination

Discrimination occurs when people are treated less favourably than others because of their race, culture or ethnic origin; religion; physical characteristics; gender; sexual orientation; marital, parenting or economic status; age; and/or ability or disability. Discrimination is often ongoing and commonly involves exclusion or rejection.

Harassment

Harassment is behavior that targets an individual or group due to their identity, race, culture or ethnic origin; religion; physical characteristics; gender; sexual orientation; marital, parenting or economic status; age; and/or ability or disability, and that offends, humiliates, intimidates or creates a hostile environment. Harassment may be an ongoing pattern or behavior, or it may be a single act.

Violence

Violence is the intentional use of physical force or power, threatening or actual, against another person/s that results in physiological harm, injury or in some cases death. Violence may involve provoked or unprovoked acts and can be a single incident, a random act or can occur over time.

Examples of bullying:
- Physical: hitting, pushing, touching, grabbing, looks, stares, facial expressions, gestures, spitting, taking or damaging property
- Verbal or written: spoken or written insults, threats, suggestive comments, name-calling, unfair criticism, spreading rumours
- Cyber: using e-mail, voice and text messaging, social networking sites, photographic and video images
- Graffiti: using pictures, tags or words
- Social: forming groups to leave out, ignore and disrespect; influencing, encouraging or organizing someone else to be involved in any type of harassment
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Rationale

As a staff team we believe:

- All children have the right to feel secure and to learn and develop in a psychologically and physically safe environment
- No child should be made to feel harassed, insecure or embarrassed
- Bullying is a form of aggression that can escalate into exclusion or violence
- Children who are being bullied need adults to intervene and provide support
- Children can learn to protect themselves assertively with practice and adult support

The Kindergarten Curriculum

The Keeping Safe child protection curriculum is an age appropriate teaching program for use with children and students from the early years to senior schooling. Its four focus areas are:

- The Right to be Safe
- Relationships
- Recognising and Reporting Abuse
- Protective Strategies

The core focus of the Keeping Safe Child Protection Curriculum is to educate children and students about how to recognise abuse and protect themselves from it. More broadly however, the curriculum has a focus on rights, responsibilities, relationships and ethical behavior as core building blocks for children and students to build the skills that will help them recognise and protect themselves from abuse.

Teaching respectful relationships to children and students makes an important contribution to increasing protective factors and decreasing bullying, harassment and violence in Kindergartens and schools.

Policy Requirements

DECD requires that all Preschool and Schools have a separate Anti-Bullying Policy.

The Anti-Bullying Policy is required to be reviewed annually with parent/caregiver involvement.

Preventative steps are particularly important to ensure the safety of the most vulnerable children in the community. These include children and young people in care, (under guardianship, from an Indigenous background or with a disability). It is a requirement that these children have an Individual Education Plan.

The State Government response to the Cossey Report (Cossey 2011) requires site leader to notify parents of incidents and violence.

All staff members are required to undertake mandatory professional training titled "Responding to Abuse and Neglect: Education and Care (RAN-EC)"

All educators delivering the Child Protection Curriculum are required to undertake mandatory professional training titled "Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum Implementation"

Additional Site Policies related to Child Safety include the

- Behavioural Guidance Code
- Social Medial Policy Statement and User Agreement

Preschool staff members will decrease the likelihood of bullying and violence in the preschool if they:

- Develop and foster positive relationships with students and families
- Communicate and interact effectively with students and engage in cooperative problem-solving relationships to address issues of bullying
- Participate in developing, implementing and reviewing the school's anti-bullying policy, curriculum and in-service, and the procedures for managing incidents of bullying
- Critically reflect on practices and develop the knowledge and skills needed to manage incidents of bullying successfully
- Establish, maintain, make explicit and model the school's expectations relating to anti-bullying
- Participate in training and development related to decreasing bullying in Preschools
- Support students to know what to do if they see bullying happening to someone else

Parents will support the Preschool in maintaining a safe and supportive environment if they:
- Keep the school informed of concerns about behaviour, their children's health issues or other matters of relevance
- Communicate in a respectful manner with staff about issues of concern soon after these concerns arise
- Follow up on these concerns and, if necessary, contact the Felixstow Office 8366 8800 if their concerns are not resolved following intervention by the Director.

Children will support a safe and supportive Kindergarten if they:
- Are respectful towards other students, staff and members of the school community
- Participate in sessions regarding the Preschool's Anti-Bullying Policy, the Keeping Safe Child Protection Curriculum and learning about bullying and anti-bullying strategies.
- Communicate with an appropriate adult if bullied or harassed or if they are aware that someone else is being bullied or harassed
- Learn to effectively discourage bullying and harassment

References
The Department for Education and Child Development's website provides a comprehensive list of information and links regarding bullying and harassment at
http://www.decs.sa.gov.au/speced2/pages/bullying/bullyingharassment/

In regard to cyber safety information and links, go to
http://www.decs.sa.gov.au/peced2/pages/cybersafety/36219/
http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/speced2/pages/bullying/saferschools/

National Quality Standards
http://www.decd.sa.gov.au/policy/OSPP/policy_index
http://www.dbcde.gov.au/online_safety_and_security/cybersafetyhelpbutton_download

The "Bullying. No way!" website
http://www.bullyingnoway.com.au

Prospect Kindergarten Site Policy: Bahaviour Guidance Code
http://www.Prospectkgn.sa.edu.au

Endorsed by Staff and Governing Council
Directory Betty Elsworthy
Date 14.3.18
Review March 19
Version 1