



Bullying, Discrimination and Harassment Policy

At The Farmhouse Montessori School we believe that students attend school to participate in quality education that will help them to become self-directed, lifelong learners who can create a positive future for themselves and the wider community. Any inappropriate behaviour that hinders teaching and learning at the school and interferes with the wellbeing of students cannot be accepted.

Students, teachers, parents, caregivers and members of the school community have a shared responsibility to create a safe and happy environment, free from all forms of bullying, discrimination and harassment. Our School is committed to creating a workplace with vision and meaningful direction, adhering to our code of conduct and practicing ethical behaviour to ensure a productive and safe work environment free from bully, discrimination, and/or harassment.

Definition

Bullying can be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, either physical or psychological, that occurs often over time by an individual or group of individuals and causes distress, hurt or undue pressure.

Bullying involves the abuse of power in relationships.

Bullying takes many forms.

‘Conflicts and fights between equals or single incidents are not defined as bullying.’ (*DET Bullying: Preventing and Responding to student Bullying in Schools Policy 2011*)

	Direct	Indirect
Physical	Hitting Kicking Spitting Throwing Stones	Getting another person to assault someone
Verbal	Verbal Insults Name calling	Persuading another person to insult someone or do something Spreading malicious rumours
Non-Verbal	Threatening and obscene gestures Use of technology that causes distress, hurt or exerts undue pressure on another party. For example:- mobile phones, computers, videos, cameras or any form of mobile recording device, social media, text messaging or any other forms of e-communication	Removing and hiding belongings. Deliberate exclusion from group or activity Uploading pictures, photos and /or videos without permission

PURPOSE

The Farmhouse Montessori School is committed to providing a safe and equitable workplace for all staff, educators and students. Bullying, discrimination and harassment will not be tolerated under any circumstances. As part of this commitment, we aim to prevent workplace bullying by adhering to the Early Childhood Code of Ethics, Fair Work requirements, and the school philosophy, ensuring a safe workplace and the wellbeing of all staff, Educators employed at the School and all students that attend.

SCOPE

This policy applies to staff, management, educators and students of the Farmhouse Montessori School.

IMPLEMENTATION

Workplace bullying occurs when a person or group of people repeatedly behave unreasonably towards a worker or a group of workers, creating a risk to health and safety. Bullying may involve any of the following types of behaviour:

- Aggressive or intimidating conduct
- Making belittling or humiliating comments
- Spreading malicious rumours
- Teasing, practical jokes or initiation of, or participation in 'initiation ceremonies'
- Exclusion from work-related events
- Unreasonable work expectations
- Displaying offensive material, and/or
- Pressure to behave in an inappropriate manner

Bullying does not include reasonable management action carried out in a reasonable manner.

Discrimination occurs when someone is treated less favourably than others because of a particular characteristic or belong to a particular group of people, such as age, race or gender, or belong to a particular group within the population (due to for example, religion, culture, or sexual orientation).

Harassment involves unwelcome behaviour that intimidates, offends or humiliates a person because of a particular characteristic as listed above.

There are a number of anti-discrimination, equal employment, workplace relations, and human rights laws which make it illegal to discriminate or harass a person in the workplace.

Our School philosophy, code of conduct and early childhood code of ethics will guide educator behaviours and interactions and adhere to best practice by providing a vision, and a purposeful and meaningful direction to ensure a safe working environment for all staff.

Management and Nominated Supervisor will ensure:

- A thorough induction process for new employees is conducted at the commencement of employment
- Compliance with discrimination law
- They have a comprehensive understanding of the Service's code of conduct, complaint and grievance policy and the Early Childhood Code of Ethics
- Educators are informed that inappropriate behaviour, including bullying and harassment will not be tolerated, and will be advised of potential consequences of this behaviour.
- Educators are aware of the bullying and harassment procedure
- Inappropriate behaviour is addressed in a timely manner
- Educators are aware of appropriate interactions through professional development and training
- Staff and Educators are aware of their job roles and responsibilities which will be clarified through job descriptions, team meetings, performance appraisals and clear management expectations.
- Be encouraged to embrace the uniqueness and diversity of their colleagues.
- Constructive feedback is provided to staff and Educators
- Communication practices are reviewed frequently to ensure best practice
- All staff and educators are treated equally and fairly.

Educators will:

- Be involved in decision making with a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities, outlined in each individual job description
- Embrace the uniqueness and diversity of their colleagues
- Respect the skills, strengths and opinions of all educators in order to create team cohesion based on professionalism
- Comply with discrimination law
- Be responsible for their own actions in the workplace
- Raise matters of concern to management at an early stage.

- Provide management with specific information regarding the perceived bullying and be prepared to have the complaint made known to the person, to allow for fair management and rectification
- Maintain confidentiality and not discuss or release information relating to bullying allegations

Students have a responsibility to:-

- Behave appropriately, respecting individual differences and diversity
- Inform a teacher if they are being bullied or harassed or if they see someone being bullied i.e. behave as responsible bystanders
- Attempt to learn strategies to deal with bullying incidents.

Parent and Caregivers have a responsibility to:-

- Model and promote positive relationships that respect and accept individual differences and diversity within the school community
- Work collaboratively with the school to resolve incidents of bullying ,discrimination and harassment when they occur
- Encourage their children to show consideration, respect and support for others and to develop responsible on-line behaviour
- Encourage their child to adapt learnt strategies to deal with bullying
- Encourage their child to notify teachers if they are being bullied or harassed or witness any incidents of such
- Inform the school if bullying/harassment is suspected

Managing Bullying/discrimination and harassment

The Farmhouse Montessori School implement the following initiatives to support students as part of our student welfare program.

1. Strategies will include: -

- Orientation Program. This commences before students commence and involves a buddy system in the Primary school program
- Visiting performances on anti-bullying/discrimination and harassment
- Welfare meetings and discussions
- Staff development days and courses to continue to develop staff expertise in this area.

Procedures for Dealing with Bullying/discrimination and harassment Behaviour

- Reporting – students are encouraged to report incidences of bullying to the teachers on playground duty or to their classroom teacher when they return to the classroom.
- ‘Group Time’ is also used to encourage students to discuss incidences of bullying.
- Parents wishing to discuss bullying issues arising with their child/children are encouraged to contact the school and make an appointment with the class teacher
- Dealing with behaviours – teachers deal with incidents as they arise
- Ongoing incidents are reported to parents and discussed at welfare meetings to create staff awareness and provide greater support for students
- Bullies and the victims of bullying are provided with consultation.

Evaluation

Incidents of bullying/ discrimination and harassment are monitored on an ongoing basis.

The school’s Duty of Care Policy-Safe and Supportive Environment Policy, including the Bullying, Discrimination and Harassment Policy will be reviewed every three years in accordance with School and Department guidelines.

Source

- **Anti-Discrimination Act:** See <https://raisingchildren.net.au/disability/disability-rights-the-law/law/anti-discrimination-laws> for Acts for specific Australian states and territories.
- Australasian Legal information institute: www.austlii.edu.au
- Australian Children’s Education & Care Quality Authority. (2014).
- Australian Human Rights Commission. (2019). Reform of discrimination law: <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/>
- Early Childhood Australia Code of Ethics. (2016).
- *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth).
- Fair Work Ombudsman. (2019). Bullying & Harassment: <https://www.fairwork.gov.au/employee-entitlements/bullying-and-harassment>
- Fair Work Ombudsman. (2019). Managing performance & warnings: <https://www.fairwork.gov.au/employee-entitlements/managing-performance-and-warnings>
- Guide to the Education and Care Services National Law and the Education and Care Services National Regulations. (2017).
- Guide to the National Quality Standard. (2017).
- Law Council of Australia. (2019). Bullying and harassment in the workplace: <https://www.lawcouncil.asn.au/policy-agenda/advancing-the-profession/equal-opportunities-in-the-law/bullying-and-harassment-in-the-workplace>
- Revised National Quality Standard. (2018).
- Safe Work Australia. (2019). Bullying: <https://www.safeworkaustralia.gov.au/bullying>
- *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (Cth).
- *Workplace Relations Act 1996* (Cth).

Policy Review Date	Modification	Review
2015, 2017		Jan 2019
Jan 2018	Merged policies anti bullying & Anti-Discrimination into one	Jan2019
March 2018	New Logo added Minor modifications made to comply with Fair Work requirements and Law	2020
March 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sentences reworded/refined. • Additional information added to points. • Sources checked for currency. • Related policies alphabetised. • Unnecessary/unrelated references deleted. • Relevant sources (websites & acts) added. Sources/references alphabetised.	2022