1.   BACKGROUND

Williamstown Primary School strives to provide a safe and friendly learning environment for all children at all times. Bullying behaviour has no place at this school.

2.   PURPOSE

- To create a safe and respectful school environment and prevent bullying, cyberbullying and other unacceptable behaviours.
- To ensure Williamstown Primary School complies with DET policy and guidelines and the legislative requirements of the Education Reform Act 2006.
- To further empower children who are key stakeholders within our organisation.
- To ensure the school has in place strategies to enhance compliance with the Child Safe Standards 2, 4 and 7.
- To ensure the school discharges its duty of care towards children.

3.   DEFINITIONS

"Bullying" is when someone, or a group of people, deliberately upsets or hurts another person or damages their property, reputation or social acceptance on more than one occasion. There is an imbalance of power in incidents of bullying with the bully or bullies having more power at the time due to age, size, status or other reasons.

Categories of bullying include direct **physical bullying** (inappropriate touching, hitting, kicking, pinching, pushing, or damaging property), **direct verbal bullying** (name calling, insults, teasing, intimidation, racist remarks or verbal abuse), **indirect verbal bullying** (lying or spreading rumours, playing nasty jokes, mimicking or encouraging others to socially exclude someone), **cyberbullying** (direct verbal or indirect bullying behaviours using digital technologies including harassment using any mobile device, setting up a defamatory website or deliberately excluding someone from social spaces) and **homophobic bullying** on the basis of sexuality towards children who are same-sex attracted or for those who may not behave according to gender stereotypes.

Many distressing behaviours are not examples of bullying even though they are unpleasant and often require teacher intervention and management.

- Mutual conflict involves an argument or disagreement between people but not an imbalance of power. Both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution. 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. If someone is verbally abused or pushed on one occasion they are not being bullied. Nastiness or physical aggression that is directed towards many different people is not the same as bullying. However, this does not mean that single episodes should be ignored or condoned as these are unacceptable behaviours.

"School" means Williamstown Primary School.

4.   PROCEDURES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

- Williamstown Primary School has **zero tolerance of bullying and of harassment in any form.**
- The wellbeing of every child at the school is our highest priority.
- The school encourages all children to speak up when bullying or harassment is encountered
- The school will
  - promote and support a safe and respectful learning environment where bullying is not tolerated
  - provide clear definitions of what is and what is not bullying, including descriptions of the different subtypes of bullying
  - put in place whole-school strategies as outlined in DET's anti-bullying policy such as the "Willy Kids are Friendly Kids" program

- ensure the school's Student Engagement and Behaviour Management Policy includes processes and strategies to prevent and respond to incidents of bullying and other forms of unacceptable behaviour
- involve children, staff and parents/carers in updating the Student Engagement and Behaviour Management Policy
- take a whole-school approach focusing on safety and wellbeing, working in partnership with parents/carers to reduce and manage bullying
- consistently respond to all incidents of bullying that have been reported to the school and ensure that planned interventions are used to respond to these incidents
- address cyberbullying as part of its Internet/Social Media Policy (eSmart policy)
- ensure that support is provided to any child who has been affected by, engaged in or witnessed bullying behaviour
- provide regular updates, within the bounds of privacy legislation, to parents/carers about the management of incidents
- address cyber bullying as part of its *Internet / Social Media Policy*

- The school will ensure the policy is easily accessible within the school community and published on the school's website.
- If circumstances warrant, the school may consider using Bullying No Way! and the National Safe Schools Framework.
- For further information, the school will refer to the DET resources at the website below.
- This policy should be read in conjunction with the:
  Williamstown Primary School Internet/Social Media Policy (eSmart policy)
  Williamstown Primary School Student Engagement and Behaviour Management
  Child Safe Standards

Reference:
www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/bullying.aspx

5.   REVIEW AND POLICY HISTORY

This policy will be reviewed *annually* as part of preparing the Annual Report by School Council and the Principal or if guidelines change (latest DET update February 2016).

Policy History

Version Approval Date	Summary of Changes
April 2015	New Policy
April 2016	Update (Feb 2016)
September 2016	Update – Child Safe Standards