

## **Anti-Bullying Policy**

### **Rationale**

The German International School Sydney is committed to providing quality education that will support our students to become self-directed, lifelong learners who can create a positive future for themselves and the wider community.

Any inappropriate behaviour that interferes with the teaching and learning and the wellbeing of our students at our school will not be accepted or tolerated.

All students, teachers, parents and members of our school community have the right to feel safe, supported and valued at all times, free from fear of bullying behaviour, harassment and intimidation.

Every member of our school community shares the collective responsibility:

- to promote positive relationships that respect and accept individual differences and diversity within the whole school community
- to create a supportive climate and to provide a safe, secure learning environment
- to prevent or resolve incidents of bullying behaviour
- to give appropriate support to all targeted students.

The German International School Sydney is committed to raising awareness of issues involved with bullying behaviour, to offer information to students, staff and parents, and to implement procedures to address bullying behaviour.

### **1. Our Definition of Bullying Behaviour:**

“Bullying behaviour is about an imbalance of power where there is a deliberate intent to cause harm or distress. It is not considered to be bullying if people of equal power have a difference of opinion. Bullying behaviour impacts on the person being bullied, those doing the bullying and those looking on. Bullying incidents can be isolated or repeated.”<sup>1</sup>

Bullying behaviour is usually shaped by three main factors:

- the deliberate intent to cause harm or distress
- the exploitation of an imbalance of power
- repetitive patterns of negative behaviour

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<sup>1</sup> Peer Support Foundation (2006)

### **Bullying Behaviour May Be:**

- **verbal**, e.g. name calling, teasing, abuse, putdowns, sarcasm, insults, threats
- **physical**, e.g. hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting
- **social**, e.g. ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating, making inappropriate gestures
- **psychological**, e.g. spreading rumours, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions
- **cyber bullying**, e.g. malicious SMS and email messages, inappropriate use of camera phones whenever it occurs

Bullying can occur in school, in transit between school and home or through cyber bullying outside school.

Bullying behaviour does not only have an impact on the person being bullied, it also has a damaging effect on the person doing the bullying and as well as those looking.

It is not considered to be bullying if people of equal power have a different opinion.

## **2. Steps for Preventing Bullying Behaviour in our School**

We are committed to the prevention of bullying behaviour in our school by creating positive learning and teaching attitudes and behaviour.

Staff, students and parents are continuously working together to prevent incidents of bullying.

### **2.1. We utilise the advantages of our school:**

- the small and easily assessable size of the school and the classes
- the high commitment of parents to cooperate with the school regarding all educational issues
- the high commitment of staff to prevent incidents of bullying behaviour

### **2.2. The Staff:**

- guarantee the development, implementation and maintenance of guidelines for good social behaviour and positive attitudes
- are available as contact people for student concerns; they act with confidence and support students who have concerns
- are aware that they are perceived as role models for the students
- will implement an in-class programme focussing on bullying and anti-bullying strategies at least once a year
- complete an anti-bullying agreement with every individual student; this agreement defines the cooperative, tolerant and supportive behaviour and attitude we promote in our school

- promote and support all desirable attitudes and behaviour by using various positive feedback systems at all schooling levels
- help and support students in their development of social competence and integrity with supportive and cooperative forms of personal interaction
- delegate areas of personal responsibility to the students by giving them tasks within the class or the school community r to challenge and improve the student's experience with responsible social behaviour

develop and improve their own social attitude and competence by participating actively in educational training and by sharing teaching experiences with other teachers by, for example, visiting each other's lessons

- support the development of a positive learning, teaching and inter-personal school culture by participating in school functions
- ensure proactive supervision during breaks to minimize bullying behaviour
- report suspected incidents of bullying behaviour to the class teacher

### **2.3. The Students:**

By having the courage to speak up about bullying behaviour witnessed, a student helps to reduce distress to all involved and contributes to the building of a safe and secure school environment.

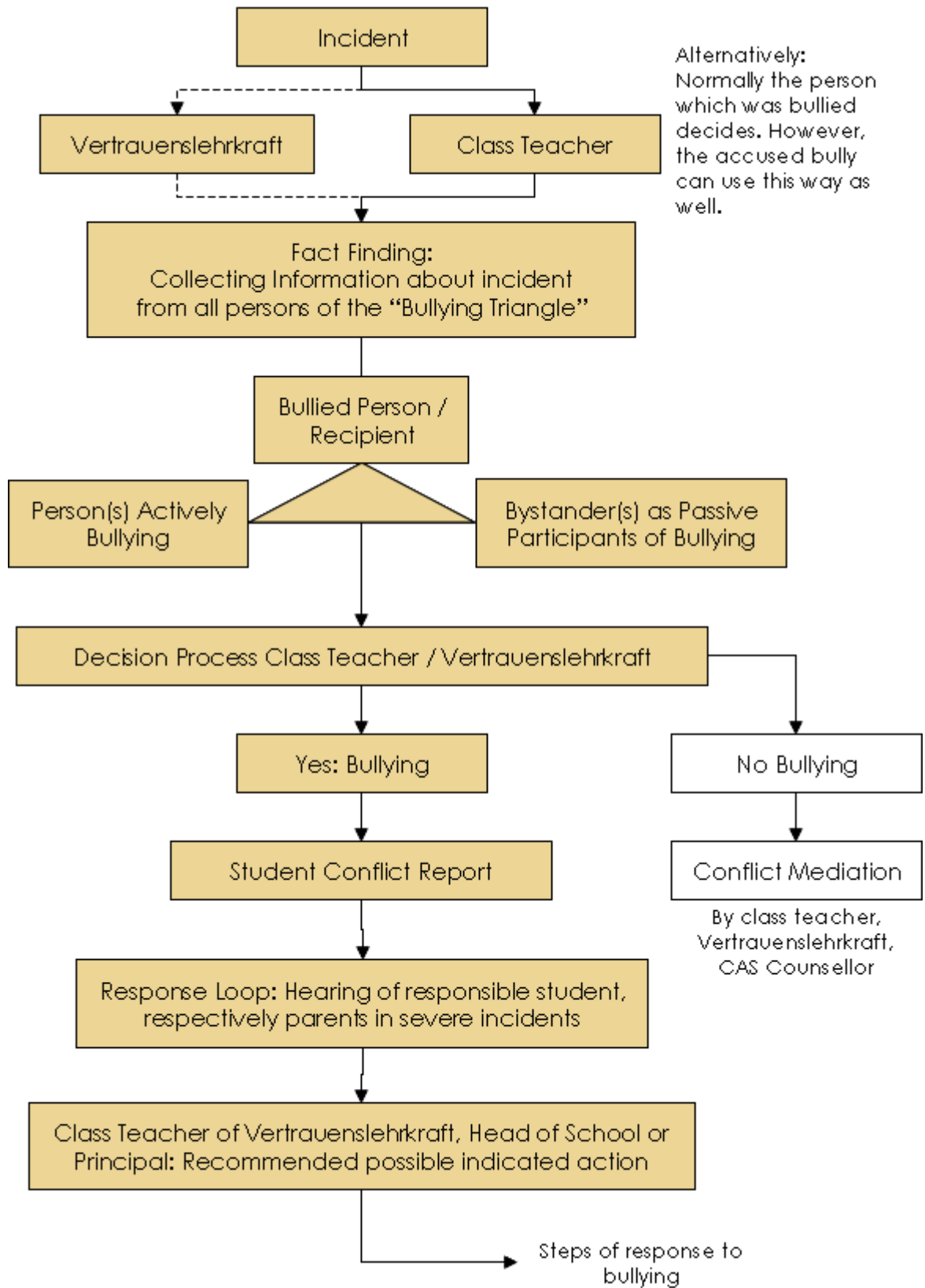
This requires students to:

- create and define class rules for their class guiding behaviour, including the cooperative and supportive interaction with each other inside and outside the classrooms. They are actively involved in the fulfilment of the set rules
- select or appoint together with the class speakers moderators for mediating student behaviour or attitude problems. These mediations could happen within a peer group structure
- discuss within the student's representative group possible sanctions in order to prevent or counteract critical attitudes or inappropriate behaviour
- elect a 'Vertrauenslehrkraft' (liaison teacher), a teacher who represents the interests of the students, who is available to listen to student's school related concerns. This person will be dedicated to mediation as a means of achieving a solution
- develop and implement democratic, caring, supportive, friendly and cooperative patterns of behaviour and attitudes
- make a conscious decision not to be involved in any incidents of bullying
- take some form of preventative action if present when a bullying incident occurs
- report any incidents of bullying (including suspected incidents) to a member of staff

#### **2.4. The Parents:**

- participate actively in the Parents Representative Council, giving them first-hand information about tentative problems
- inform and support each other to establish and develop a friendly and tolerant interaction between students
- support the teachers in their attempts to establish an interactive, cohesive learning and teaching culture
- are aware of their position as educational role models for their children's attitudes and behaviour and reinforce them with positive support
- watch for and report signs of distress in their child to the class teacher (e.g. unwillingness to attend school)
- advise their child to tell a member of staff if bullying has occurred
- encourage their child not to retaliate
- must be willing to work with the school if their child is involved in incidents of bullying, either as the person who is bullying or as the person who has been bullied
- should be willing to inform the school of any cases of suspected bullying even if their child is not directly affected

3. Anti-Bullying Procedure:



Steps of response to bullying

