



Workplace Bullying Policy

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Purpose of the Policy

Blackall Range Independent School (B.R.I.S.) is implementing this policy to ensure that staff members feel safe to undertake their day to day duties free from bullying in all its forms by persons in positions of authority and/or other members of the workforce.

Scope

This policy applies to all employers of the school, whether paid or volunteers, and all contractors who provide services to the school and sets out the procedures to be followed in the event of an employee feeling he/she is being bullied in the workplace.

Responsibility Principal and Executive

Point of Contact Principal & Executive members

Definitions

A *bully* is a person who uses strength or power to coerce others by fear; and to bully is to oppress, persecute, physically or morally by (threat of) superior force.

Bullying is physical or psychological behaviour or conduct where strength (including strength of personality) and/or a position of power is misused by a person in a position of authority or by a person who perceives that they are in a position of power or authority. While bullying is normally associated with unequal power relationships, peer to peer bullying is not uncommon and is considered bullying under this policy.

A variety of behaviour and acts may constitute bullying which, over time, create a negative workplace environment. These may include:

- sarcasm and other forms of demeaning language
- threats
- verbal abuse
- shouting
- coercion
- punitive behaviour
- isolation
- blaming
- "ganging up"
- constant unconstructive criticism
- deliberately withholding information that a person needs to exercise her or his role or entitlements within the School
- repeated refusal of requests for leave or training without adequate explanation and suggestion of alternatives.

Policy

The policy of B.R.I.S is to take a proactive approach to workplace bullying by establishing processes to educate and inform staff about bullying and procedures to follow in the event that they are being bullied.

The school bases this policy on the principles for behaviour required in the workplace, namely that:

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- all people should be treated with respect;
- all staff should develop an awareness about the impact of their behaviour on others; and
- there is agreement about what is appropriate behaviour at work.

Procedures

B.R.I.S. considers that bullying in the workplace is inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour, and staff found to have either committed or condoned such behaviour in the workplace may be subject to disciplinary action.

If you believe you are being bullied, you should:

1. attempt to resolve the issue with the person you believe is responsible for the bullying;
2. if the issue is not resolved in this way, you may lodge a formal complaint in accordance with the school's Grievance Policy;
3. Under this policy, the Principal will attempt to resolve the issue (or an Executive Member if the Principal is involved in the bullying), within two weeks of receiving the notification;
4. If any action is taken, the Principal will ensure procedural fairness for all parties involved, including informing any respondents of the allegations made against them and providing them with an opportunity to respond;
5. If the complainant believes the grievance has not been resolved to his/her satisfaction by reference to the Principal, they can refer the matter to the Executive. Please refer to the Grievance Policy for more details of the process;
6. Following resolution of the grievance, the Principal will monitor the situation for a period of time.

School and Staff Responsibilities

Staff members have a responsibility to ensure that their actions do not negatively affect another staff member's career, health or well-being.

Staff members are encouraged to try to resolve issues of workplace bullying at the local level, directly with the person they believe is responsible for bullying.

The Principal and the Executive have a responsibility to provide a safe work environment that enables staff to carry out their work responsibilities free from bullying. This includes investigating complaints of bullying thoroughly and expeditiously and reviewing areas where bullying has been found to have taken place.

The school will make copies of the Workplace Bullying Policy available to all members of staff via the Staff Handbook and in the staff area of the school's intranet, and will provide information about the policy at staff in-service days at least once per year.

Policy Release Details

Date of Policy January 2009

Approved by Executive

Review Date

Biennially, in consultation with the school's Workplace Health and Safety Committee

Related Policies and Documents

Anti-Harassment Policy

Grievance Policy