



## **AXEDALE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**“Excellence Through Endeavour”**

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## **RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS & EXPECTED BEHAVIOUR POLICY**

### **VISION STATEMENT**

At Axedale Primary School, our mission is to provide a safe and effective learning environment in which each and every student can achieve their personal best. We celebrate individual differences and respect and acknowledge the diverse range of interests, skills, and experiences reflected in our school community. We support our students and staff to maximise individual and collective success, both in and out of the classroom.

Axedale Primary School promotes positive relationships amongst all students, staff school and the wider community. We foster the development of self-esteem, cooperation, personal growth and a positive attitude to learning and teaching. Axedale Primary School believes students, staff, parents and the wider community should model respectful relationships.

Our citizenship values are:

- Respect—Look after people and property
- Personal Best—Be the best student and person you can be
- Resilience—Never give up-no matter how hard it seems
- Co-operation—Behave and play well; always include others

Together with the school’s motto, “Excellence Through Endeavour,” we are continually reflecting on ways to enrich and expand the relationships that make our school community so special.

### **AIMS**

The Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships Program will be explicitly taught from Prep to Grade 6 to build the knowledge and understanding of expectations for all students.

The stated School Values will become a part of everyday actions and conversations.

The Values and Behaviour Expectation Matrix will be displayed in every classroom and used daily in conversations or activities to build a culture of respect and care for others.

The belief that everyone has a responsibility to build and maintain respectful relationships will be embedded.

A clear expectation will be created that no form of bullying is acceptable within the school community.

All reported incidents of bullying will be followed up and appropriate support be given.

Parental and peer-group support and co-operation will be expected.

## **ENVIRONMENT**

Our school will actively promote a positive and welcoming personal environment for all members of the school community and provide a range of peaceful play spaces to foster inclusion and connectedness.

Classroom and whole schools displays will promote School Values and positive relationship practices.

Our grounds will be well maintained to build student and community pride.

Our annual school camps for every grade level will provide several days of team-building activities, self-reflective exercises, and rapport building between students and staff as we nurture our school culture.

Students enjoy a range of representative and leadership opportunities involving School and House Captains and Vice Captains, Junior School Council, Peer Mediation, as well as participation in regional sports and other community events, such as planting trees, Clean Up Australia Day and visiting the elderly.

## **GUIDELINES**

Problem-solving strategies will involve students in setting class and school-wide behavioural expectations.

Students are involved in reflection and updating of the Values and Behaviour Expectation Matrix when required.

Axedale Primary School promotes restorative practices that focus on building, maintaining and restoring relationships.

At Axedale Primary School we do not accept any form of social, emotional or physical bullying whatsoever. While we distinguish minor altercations and single episodes of misunderstanding from deliberate attempts to cause distress, we recognise that humiliation, alienation and exclusion are barriers to learning, and are unacceptable in our learning environment.

A school-wide approach will be taken to promote well-being and respond to bullying, cyber bullying and harassment in a consistent and systematic way – using school wide policies and programs as a guide.

All new students, families and staff will be given a copy of the Respectful Relationships and Expected Behaviours Policy and School Values and Behaviour Expectation Matrix.

All complaints will be heard in confidence and taken seriously. Leadership will gather information from all involved in an issue as an avenue for working towards a resolution. There will be a range of disciplinary consequences for those in breach of the Respectful Relationships and Expected Behaviours Policy.

The 'It's My School Too' program will be implemented to empower bystanders. Students will be involved in an activity to sign up to commit to the program and have their photo attached to the 'It's My School Too' board.

The Axedale Primary School E-Smart Policy has been completed and the classroom program components will be implemented across Prep – Grade Six.

At Axedale Primary School, we believe that bullying must be openly discussed to determine what it is, what it means, what it does, and what we can do to prevent it. Guided by the Department of Education and Training (DET), Axedale Primary School recognises that a proactive approach to promoting positive behaviours is the most effective way to create and sustain a thriving learning community. We will utilise a number of departmental programs focussed on conflict prevention in our curriculum, including the

- DET Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships Curriculum
- E-Smart
- Bullystoppers

Other supporting programs include

- Restorative Practices Program
- It's My School Too
- Peer Mediation Program

A link to these resources is provided at the end of this document.

Staff professional development will occur regularly to keep staff informed of current strategies and best practice.

All students and classes will be involved in relevant components of the Restorative Practices Program where they align with the Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships Curriculum.

The Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships curriculum has a structure of 8 units covering:

Emotional Literacy	Personal Strengths	Positive Coping
Problem Solving	Stress Management	Help Seeking
Gender and Equity	Positive Gender Relations	

These topics will be covered over a two year cycle. Topics may come up informally at various times of the year and be discussed in the classroom setting.

This policy will be included in the Student Enrolment Package, while new staff will receive extensive documentation as part of the school's induction process.

The school leadership team and teachers will work together to ensure the safety of all school members in situations of bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment. They will thoroughly investigate all complaints while respecting the need for confidentiality, notifying parents/carers and then planning appropriate interventions.

Teachers will fulfil their professional duty to pass on information immediately to the Principal if they feel a student is at risk from bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment. For serious issues, it is important that teachers fully document their interaction with the student/s involved.

School Council will review "Respectful Relationships and Expected Behaviour Policy" annually or as required.

## **SUPPORTING DETAIL**

### **BEHAVIOURS NOT IN KEEPING WITH SCHOOL VALUES**

The following types of behaviours are not in keeping with the core values of Axedale Primary School

- Interfering with another person's property
- Calling people names, teasing, spreading rumours
- Using put-downs, belittling others' abilities and achievements
- Writing or sharing negative notes, texts, emails, or posts
- Making degrading comments about another person's culture, beliefs, identity, family, body, sexuality and religion or anything else held dear
- Exclusion of someone from a group or activity
- Threatening others by word, gestures or actions
- Forcing others to do things against their will
- Ganging up on someone
- Swearing or using offensive language
- Any unwanted physical contact

Axedale Primary School acknowledges that when students experience the above behaviours, the effects might be anger, embarrassment and fear which can cause loss of self-confidence and reduce function and potential.

Bullying will be openly talked about to determine what it is, what effects it has and how it can be responded to by students. Responsibility for combating bullying must be shared between students, staff and parents, with an emphasis upon early intervention and reinforcement of school values and expected behaviour.

### **IDENTIFYING AND RESOLVING CONFLICT**

Students and staff are instructed in how to recognise unacceptable behaviour, and are expected to report it. Reports of such behaviour are heard in confidence, investigated, and documented.

When working to solve issues between students, the following actions may be considered:

- Evidence will be gathered from all involved
- Contact will be made with parents where relevant
- Parents may be engaged to work towards positive outcomes
- Designated yard areas for separation of students, usually as a short term measure, may be used
- Yard buddies will be promoted to allow inclusiveness and peer support
- Senior students will be used as Peer Mediators to promote conflict resolution skills in younger students
- Letters of apology, or face to face apologies may be provided where appropriate
- Restorative 'catch ups' between students to repair relationships will be conducted where applicable and would be followed by regular check-ins by leadership.

If there is an issue involving students at school parents are asked:

- Not to approach other students, inside or outside the school grounds to resolve an issue
- Not to approach other parents inside or outside of the school grounds to resolve an issue
- Not to use social media to reflect the school or students in a negative way before the school has had an opportunity to gather the facts and then respond to resolve an issue

Parents are asked to use the following table as a guide towards resolution:

Issue	Response
Classroom based academic issue	Parents may contact classroom teacher to discuss. Principal may be involved for further discussions if required
Classroom based behaviour issue	Parents may contact teacher to discuss. Principal may be involved for further discussions, if requested by the parent or teacher
Yard based behaviour issue	Parents to contact the Principal to discuss
Bullying issue	Parents to contact the Principal to discuss
Cyber Safety issue	Students to report it to their parents or teacher Parents to contact the Principal to discuss
Parents could email to <a href="mailto:axedale.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au">axedale.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au</a> to inform the school of an issue.	
If parents feel the actions put in place by the school are not resulting in desired outcomes and changes in behaviour over time, they may choose to contact the Regional Office for further support.	
There may be occasions where an independent organisation is employed to mediate issues of a very complex/serious nature.	

If parents make contact with the school:

- The school will investigate the problem and put in place measures to resolve the conflict and restore relationships
- The Principal will communicate with parents regarding the outcome of the investigation. Communication can be ongoing where required
- Parents may be involved as part of the solution

For some student issues, the following may be put in place for support and to guide students towards making better decisions and following our School Values:

- Regular communication between teacher/parent or principal/parent
- Teachers and parents to develop a Behaviour Plan with set goals and monitoring guidelines
- Communication Booklet is used to record aspects of a student's work or interactions each day for a period of time
- Timetabled support meetings that involve the student, parents, staff and possibly Student Well-Being staff, DET Social Worker, DET Psychologist or specialists that a student is working with out of school

It is expected that parents, teachers, staff and the broader school community will model our positive behaviour expectations.

The school utilises a number of resources to promote this expectation:

- implementation of the School Values & Expected Behaviour Matrix
- promotion of the School Values at Assembly
- information sharing with parents through resources such as weekly newsletters and classroom newsletters
- enrolment packages
- individual communications between the Principal and parents where necessary
- ongoing staff professional development
- ongoing curriculum development at all grade levels
- engagement of a Student Well Being Worker to support students and families
- Information Nights for all classrooms in Term One
- Netbook Information Night for senior students in Term One

Communication with or from the school can be:

- In person
- In writing
- Phone 5439 7232
- Text Principal –Lex Johnstone 0408 138 836
- Email [axedale.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:axedale.ps@edumail.vic.gov.au)
- Via the app Search for **Updat-ed** and from the menu select our school
- Website [www.axedaleps.vic.edu.au](http://www.axedaleps.vic.edu.au)
- Bulk text For special reminders, the school may send out a bulk text to all school families



### **PEER MEDIATION**

On allocated days, senior students act as mediators in the yard during break times. All students are capable of learning the skills of the mediation and of applying them in their daily interactions.

The *Peer Mediation Program* aims to reduce incidences of bullying by providing a school environment that is positive, caring, safe and friendly. Peer Mediation teaches students to resolve low-level conflict using their peers as mediators. Mediation opens up communication channels allowing the disagreeing students to discuss their problems and come to a resolution with the guidance of the mediators.

Students may develop improved skills in:

- Communication
- Problem solving
- Conflict management

### **NEW STUDENTS & FAMILIES / INCLUSIVENESS**

Measures in place to make the transition to a new school as smooth as possible for students and families include:

- New students will be introduced at assembly
- New students and their parents will be introduced via the Newsletter
- New parents will be asked if they would like a 'parent buddy' in the initial stages to have as their 'go to' person to find out information about day to day school organisation. The Principal will put them in contact with a suitable parent
- New students will be provided with a buddy for the first week
- Principal and staff will ensure work books, stationary supplies, uniforms bags etc. are ready and available for their first day
- Staff will organise a Parent Teacher 'catch up' within the first two weeks of the student starting school
- The school will compile a Community Information Page to be placed in the Enrolment Information Pack for new families that covers school and wider community information, contacts, dates and events
- The Student Well-Being Worker and Principal will check in with new students during their first few weeks of school and offer support as needed

## **PROMOTION OF WELL-BEING**

Axedale Primary School engages a Student Well Being Worker to promote well-being and respectful relationships.

The focus of this position includes

- 1:1 work with students with a range of social, personal, behavioural and family issues. Sessions are aimed at
  - increasing student skills in self managing emotions
  - learning skills to deal with the normal range of issues that young children are exposed to
  - ensuring that students themselves are treating everyone with respect
- Conducting the Seasons For Growth Program for students who have experienced significant grief or loss
- Working to support families in the areas of
  - Parenting advice for primary school age children as well as teenagers
  - Assistance with issues involving other adults in their families
  - Guidance on gaining further professional help
  - Relationship support and advice
  - Co-ordinating the 'Brekky Club' Program
- Co-ordinating the Mother's Day and Father's Day events to strengthen family bonds and build connections between parents
- Participating in excursions and school camps where practical
- Facilitating workshops such as 'Connecting with Kids' and 'Bringing up Great Kids'
- Working closely with particular parents and where appropriate referring them to specialists to assist with any difficult personal issues
- Engaging a DET Social Worker and Psychologist where appropriate

### School Led Initiatives to Promote Well-Being

- Implementation of yard based activities to promote inclusion eg. Garden Club, Chess Club, Book Club and organised sports games at recess and lunch times
- Promotion of 'Random Acts of Kindness Week' each year
- House Club system for points across all classrooms
- All students will be strongly encouraged to attend all school camps, regardless of family, social or financial barriers. Specific arrangements with some parents may be required to facilitate some level of involvement in school camps
- Promote a range of opportunities for both female and male students to promote gender equity
- Engage speakers from a range of backgrounds and genders to promote positive role models
- The provision of Brekky Club – available to all students
- Promote involvement in out of school, organised sport/drama/hobbies to encourage fun, fitness, team work and well-being

## **E-SMART**

- The Axedale Primary School will facilitate annual E-Smart Information sessions for students, staff and parents by recommended presenters.
- Axedale Primary School has an approved eSmart Policy.
- We recognise that at times, our students are exposed to influences such as social media that can facilitate conflict and bullying. We have recently expanded information resources for parents to learn more about how to negotiate the unprecedented demands, and opportunities, that electronic devices can present.

## **TERMS**

Some behaviours are unpleasant and often require teacher intervention and management. Sometimes, socially unpleasant situations occur that are not acceptable in our respectful environment.

BULLYING is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological aggressive behaviour by a person or group directed towards a less powerful person or group that is intended to cause harm, distress or fear.

CYBER BULLYING consists of covert, psychological bullying, conveyed through the electronic mediums such as mobile phones, web-logs and web-sites or on-line chat rooms.

HARASSMENT is any verbal, physical or sexual conduct (including gestures) which is uninvited, unwelcome or offensive to a person.

### MUTUAL CONFLICT

In mutual conflict situations, there is an argument or disagreement between students. Both parties are upset and usually both parties want a resolution to the problem. However, unresolved mutual conflict sometimes develops into a bullying situation with one person becoming targeted repeatedly for 'retaliation' in a one-sided way.

### SINGLE EPISODES ACTS OR RANDOM ACTS OF AGGRESSION OR INTIMIDATION

Single episodes of social, emotional or physical bullying are not in keeping with the core values of the school.

Note: if the same person uses a consistent form of negative behaviour aimed at different people – this would be judged as bullying.

### SOCIAL REJECTION OR DISLIKE

When social rejection is directed towards someone specific and involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others, it is bullying.

## **CONTACTS & RESOURCES**

**Axedale Primary School**  
Ph. 5439 7232

**Department of Education & Training**  
Regional Office 7 -15 McClaren St. Bendigo Ph. 5440 3111  
[www.education.vic.gov.au](http://www.education.vic.gov.au)

**The Alannah and Madeline Foundation**  
<https://www.amf.org.au/>

**The E-smart Foundation**  
<https://www.esmart.org.au/>

**Respectful Relationships Program**  
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/pages/respectfulrelationships.aspx>

**Restorative Practice**  
<https://www.restorativepractices.org.au/>

**Bully Stoppers**  
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers/Pages/default.aspx>

**School Wide Positive Behaviours**  
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/management/improvement/Pages/swpbs.aspx>

**iParent**  
<https://esafety.gov.au/education-resources/iparent>

**Common Sense Media**  
[www.common Sense Media.org](http://www.common Sense Media.org)

**Links to aid with social media and gaming information**  
<https://esafety.gov.au/esafety-information/games-apps-and-social-networking>

**Office of the E-Safety Commissioner**  
<https://www.esafety.gov.au/>

**esafety.gov.au – linking to the reporting on incidents**  
<https://esafety.gov.au/complaints-and-reporting/cyberbullying-complaints>

**Peer Mediation**  
<https://www.kidsmatter.edu.au/primary/programs/peer-mediation>