

# CYBERBULLYING POLICY

**Wodonga West Primary School** believes the teaching of Cybersafety and responsible online behaviour is essential in the lives of students and is best taught in partnership between home and school within the framework of our School-Wide Positive Behaviours Program and our annually signed Acceptable Use Agreement.

21<sup>st</sup> century students spend increasing amounts of time online, learning and collaborating. To be safe online and to gain the greatest benefit from the opportunities provided through an online environment, students need to do the right thing by themselves and others online, particularly when no one is watching.

Safe and responsible behaviour is explicitly taught at our school and parents/carers are requested to reinforce this behaviour at home. Some online activities are illegal and as such will be reported to police.

## CyberBullying Policy:

**What is Cyberbullying?** Harassment and bullying means subjecting another person to behaviour that is hurtful, threatening or frightening. It means treating others with a lack of respect.

There are many forms of harassment or bullying – one increasingly common form is known as “Cyberbullying”.

Cyberbullying takes many forms. It may include:

- **On Line Harassment:** repeatedly sending offensive messages and/or the posting of nasty and hurtful comments using electronic means;
- **Cyberstalking:** online harassment that can include repeated threats of harm/intimidation or continual inappropriate comments;
- **Masquerading:** pretending to be someone else on a site and/or posting material that makes another person look as if they are participating in cyber-bullying;
- **Outing:** sending or posting material that is sensitive or embarrassing including forwarding private messages or images;
- **Exclusion:** deliberately excluding another from an online group, mailing list or text/chat/MSN type conversation.

Cyberbullying can occur using the following applications:

Email, personal websites, chatrooms, social networking sites such as Snapchat/Club Penguin/Twitter/Facebook, video uploading sites such as YouTube, blogs, wikis, SMS, MSN, forums, webcams and mobile phone messaging.

The age limit for Facebook is 13, and since no students at Wodonga West PS fit into this age group, Facebook is blocked by the school network.

Whilst cyberbullying may occur using the School's or an individual's personal equipment, telecommunications provider or Internet Service Provider, its effect can still impinge on the School. The School may determine a response or intervention strategy even if the bullying occurs outside the School's immediate facility; the school may determine a response or intervention strategy if the bullying occurs offsite and out of school hours.

The use of the School's computer network, internet access facilities, computers and other School ICT equipment/devices on or off the School sites is limited to educational purposes appropriate to the educational environment.

The use of any privately owned or leased ICT equipment/devices on the School's sites, or at any School related activity must be appropriate to the School environment.

The use of any privately owned ICT/technological devices outside the School sites should be appropriate and should be mindful of both the moral and legal requirements relating to bullying and harassment. Cyberbullying and online stalking is illegal and can result in criminal charges.

**Evaluation:** This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle:

This policy was last ratified by School Council in....

October 2013