



The Japanese School of Melbourne

Bullying Prevention Policy

If you need help to understand this policy, please contact school office on 0395281978.

Purpose

The Japanese School of Melbourne (JSM) is committed to providing a safe and respectful learning environment where bullying will not be tolerated.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- explain the definition of bullying so that there is shared understanding amongst all members of the JSM community
- make clear that no form of bullying at JSM will be tolerated
- outline the strategies and programs in place at JSM to build a positive school culture and prevent bullying behaviour
- ask that everyone in our school community be alert to signs and evidence of bullying behaviour, and accept responsibility to report bullying behaviour to school staff
- ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are appropriately investigated and addressed
- ensure that support is provided to students who may be affected by bullying behaviour (including targets, bystanders and students engaging in bullying behaviour)
- seek parental and peer group support in addressing and preventing bullying behaviour at JSM.

When responding to bullying behaviour, JSM aims to:

- be proportionate, consistent and responsive
- find a constructive solution for everyone
- stop the bullying from happening again
- restore the relationships between the students involved.

JSM acknowledges that school staff owe a duty of care to students to take reasonable steps to reduce the risk of reasonably foreseeable harm, which can include harm that may be caused by bullying behaviour.

Scope

This policy applies to all school events and activities, including camps and excursions. JSM recognises that there are many other types of inappropriate student behaviours that do not meet the definition of bullying which are also unacceptable at our school. These other inappropriate behaviours will be managed in accordance with our [Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy](#).

Definitions

Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening.

Bullying can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time (for example, through sharing of digital records).

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have immediate, medium and long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders. Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.

Bullying has three main features:

- It involves a misuse of power in a relationship
- It is ongoing and repeated, and
- It involves behaviours that can cause harm.

Bullying can be:

1. *Direct* physical bullying – e.g. hitting, tripping, and pushing or damaging property.
2. *Direct* verbal bullying – e.g. name calling, insults, homophobic or racist remarks, verbal abuse.
3. *Indirect* bullying – e.g. spreading rumours, playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate, mimicking, encouraging others to socially exclude a person and/or damaging a person's social reputation or social acceptance.

Cyberbullying is direct or indirect bullying behaviours using digital technology. For example via a mobile device, computers, chat rooms, email, social media, etc. It can be verbal, written and include images, video and/or audio.

Examples of cyberbullying include:

- Sending comments, photographs or videos of a hateful or threatening nature
- Using modern technologies to engage in the social exclusion of someone
- Posting rude, explicit or embarrassing messages, photographs or videos on the internet
- Stealing someone's identity, including accessing their user accounts online
- Engaging in cyber-stalking or invasion of your privacy online

Other distressing and inappropriate behaviours

Many distressing and inappropriate behaviours may not constitute bullying even though they are unpleasant. Students who are involved in or who witness any distressing and inappropriate behaviours should report their concerns to school staff. Inappropriate behaviours will be managed in accordance with our [Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy](#).

Mutual conflict involves an argument or disagreement between people with no imbalance of power. In incidents of mutual conflict, generally, both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution to the issue. 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. However, single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression are not acceptable behaviours at our school and may have serious consequences for students engaging in this behaviour. JSM will use its [Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy](#) to guide a response to single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression.

Harassment is language or actions that are demeaning, offensive or intimidating to a person. It can take many forms, including sexual harassment and disability harassment. Harassment of any kind will not be tolerated at JSM and may have serious consequences for students engaging in this behaviour. JSM will use its [Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy](#) to guide a response to students demonstrating harassing behaviour, unless the behaviour also constitutes bullying, in which case the behaviour will be managed in accordance with this *Bullying Prevention Policy*.

Bullying Prevention

JSM has a number of programs and strategies in place to build a positive and inclusive school culture. We strive to foster a school culture that prevents bullying behaviour by modelling and encouraging behaviour that demonstrates acceptance, kindness and respect.

Staff and students participate in a range of activities to prevent bullying and to promote positive behaviours that include these actions that will be taken by the School:

- Regularly review the *Bullying prevention* policy and procedures
- Provide staff with education and training to detect and respond to bullying behaviours
- Adopt a consistent school-wide behaviour management approach
- Ensure students understand the school rules and encourage students to abide by them
- Publish the school's Bullying Prevention policy on the website
- Review the policy on a cyclical basis to ensure it remains relevant and effective
- Encourage staff to be observant and active when on yard supervision so there is a pervasive sense of staff presence when on duty

For further information about our engagement and wellbeing initiatives, please see our [Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy](#).

Incident Response

Reporting Concerns to JSM

Bullying complaints will be taken seriously and responded to sensitively at our school.

Students who may be experiencing bullying behaviour, or students who have witnessed bullying behaviour, are encouraged to report their concerns to school staff as soon as possible.

Our ability to effectively reduce and eliminate bullying behaviour is greatly affected by students and/or parents and carers reporting concerning behaviour as soon as possible, so that the responses implemented by JSM are timely and appropriate in the circumstances.

We encourage students to speak to their Homeroom Teacher. However, students are welcome to discuss their concerns with any trusted member of staff including teachers, staff, and the principal.

Parents or carers who develop concerns that their child is involved in, or has witnessed bullying behaviour at JSM should contact the Principal, by phone on 9528 1978 or by email directed to adm@jrm.vic.edu.au.

Investigations

When notified of alleged bullying behaviour, school staff are required to:

1. record the details of the allegations, and
2. inform Principal, Assistant Principal, and Administration Manager

The Homeroom Teacher is responsible for investigating allegations of bullying in a timely and sensitive manner. To appropriately investigate an allegation of bullying, the Homeroom Teacher may:

- speak to the those involved in the allegations, including the target/s, the students allegedly engaging in bullying behaviour/s and any witnesses to the incidents
- speak to the parents of the students involved
- speak to the teachers of the students involved
- take detailed notes of all discussions for future reference
- obtain written statements from all or any of the above.

All communications with the school in the course of investigating an allegation of bullying will be managed sensitively. Investigations will be completed as quickly as possible to allow for the behaviours to be addressed in a timely manner.

The objective of completing a thorough investigation into the circumstances of alleged bullying behaviour is to determine the nature of the conduct and the students involved. A thorough understanding of the alleged bullying will inform staff about how to most effectively implement an appropriate response to that behaviour.

Serious bullying, including serious cyberbullying, is a criminal offence and may be referred to Victoria Police.

Responses to bullying behaviours

When the Homeroom Teacher has sufficient information to understand the circumstances of the alleged bullying and the students involved, a number of strategies may be implemented to address the behaviour and support affected students in consultation with Principal, Assistant Principal, and Administration Manager.

There are a number of factors that will be considered when determining the most appropriate response to the behaviour. When making a decision about how to respond to bullying behaviour, JSM will consider:

- the age and maturity of the students involved
- the severity and frequency of the bullying, and the impact it has had on the target student
- whether the student/s engaging in bullying behaviour have displayed similar behaviour before
- whether the bullying took place in a group or one-to-one context
- whether the student/s engaging in bullying behaviour demonstrates insight or remorse for their behaviour
- the alleged motive of the behaviour, including any element of provocation.

Principal may implement all, or some of the following responses to bullying behaviours:

- Offer counselling support to the target student, including external provider.
- Offer counselling support to the students engaging in bullying behaviour, including external provider.
- Offer counselling support to affected students, including witnesses and/or friends of the target student, including referral to Child Safety Risk Management Team or external

- provider.
- Facilitate a restorative practice meeting with all or some of the students involved. The objective of restorative practice is to repair relationships that have been damaged by bringing about a sense of remorse and restorative action on the part of the person who has bullied someone and forgiveness by the person who has been bullied.
 - Facilitate a mediation between some or all of the students involved to help to encourage students to take responsibility for their behaviour and explore underlying reasons for conflict or grievance. Mediation is only suitable if all students are involved voluntarily and demonstrate a willingness to engage in the mediation process.
 - Prepare an Individual Management Plan restricting contact between target and students engaging in bullying behaviour.
 - Provide discussion and/or mentoring for different social and emotional learning competencies of the students involved, including resilience programs.
 - Monitor the behaviour of the students involved for an appropriate time and take follow up action if necessary.
 - Implement disciplinary consequences for the students engaging in bullying behaviour, which may include removal of privileges, detention, suspension and/or expulsion consistent with our Child Safety and Wellbeing policy, the Ministerial Order on Suspensions and Expulsions and any other relevant Department policy.

JSM understands the importance of monitoring and following up on the progress of students who have been involved in or affected by bullying behaviour. Where appropriate, school staff will also endeavour to provide parents and carers with updates on the management of bullying incidents.

Principal are responsible for maintaining up-to-date records of the investigation of and responses to bullying behaviour.

Further information and resources

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- [Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy](#)
- [Duty of Care Policy](#)

The following websites and resources provide useful information on prevention and responding to bullying, as well as supporting students who have been the target of bullying behaviours:

- [Kids Helpline](#)
- [Lifeline](#)
- [Student Wellbeing Hub](#)
- [Office of the eSafety Commissioner](#)
- [Australian Student Wellbeing Framework](#)

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed on 2 year basis, or earlier as required, following analysis of school data on reported incidents of, and responses to bullying to ensure that the policy remains up to date, practical and effective.

Approval

Created date	November 2024
Consultation	Staff, School board
Endorsed by	School Board
Endorsed on	November 2024
Next review date	November 2026

This policy was drafted in English, and translated into Japanese for reference purposes only. In the case of a difference in interpretation the English version will prevail.