1. **Definition:**
   1.1. Bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons.
   There are four identified types of bullying:
   1.1.1. **Direct physical bullying:** includes hitting, kicking, tripping, pinching and pushing or damaging property.
   1.1.2. **Direct verbal bullying:** includes name calling, insults, teasing, intimidation, homophobic or racist remarks, or verbal abuse
   1.1.3. **Indirect bullying:** is often harder to recognize and can be carried out behind the bullied person's back. It is designed to harm someone's social reputation and/or cause humiliation. Indirect bullying includes:
      1.1.3.1. lying and spreading rumours
      1.1.3.2. playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate
      1.1.3.3. mimicking
      1.1.3.4. encouraging others to repeatedly socially exclude someone
      1.1.3.5. damaging someone's social reputation or social acceptance

   1.1.4. **Cyberbullying:** is direct verbal or indirect bullying behaviours using digital technologies. This includes harassment via a mobile phone, setting up a defamatory personal website or deliberately or repeatedly excluding someone from social networking spaces.
   (Reference: DET Bully Stoppers, Retrieved 4 August, 2016, from http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers/Pages/what.aspx) Bullying is distinct from unacceptable behaviour, mutual conflict or any anti-social single-episode acts. These refer to a wide range of behaviours that are unacceptable or inappropriate as outlined in McKinnon Primary School's 'Student Engagement and Well Being Policy'. Where this is continual, restorative practices and reparation, plus consequences will be implemented as per our Student Engagement and Well Being Policy. Examples of Restorative Questions include: ***What happened? Who has been hurt? How can we fix it?*** *A set longer set of questions may also be used in some cases depending on students' age and other factors of the incident.*

   1.1.5 Other distressing behaviours:
   1.1.5.1 Many distressing behaviours may not constitute bullying even though they are unpleasant. Students who are involved in or who witness any distressing behaviours should report their concerns to school staff and our school will follow the Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy.

   1.1.5.2 *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.

   1.1.5.3 *Social rejection or dislike* is not bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.

   1.1.5.4 *Single-episode acts* of harassment, nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. If someone is verbally abused or pushed on one occasion, they are not being bullied. Harassment, nastiness or physical aggression that is directed towards many different people is not the same as bullying. However, single episodes of harassment, nastiness or physical aggression are not acceptable behaviours at our school.

2. **Rationale:**
   2.1. Every member of the McKinnon Primary School community has the right to feel safe from bullying at school (this includes digital learning environments). McKinnon Primary School promotes positive behaviours that encourage respect, compassion and cooperation. McKinnon Primary School does not tolerate anti-social behaviour.

3. **Aims:**
   3.1. To provide a clear well-defined definition of bullying, allowing all members of the school community to have a shared understanding and view of unacceptable conduct.
   3.2. To support McKinnon Primary School in building and maintaining a safe and respectful school environment and eliminates all types of bullying.

4. **Implementation:**
   4.1 Prevention:
   4.1.1 McKinnon Primary School 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.
   4.1.2 Bullying prevention at McKinnon Primary School is proactive and is supported by research that indicates that a whole school, multifaceted approach is the most effect way to prevent and address bullying. At our school:

   4.1.2.1 We have a positive school environment that provides safety, security and support for students and promotes positive relationships and wellbeing.
   4.2.1.1 We strive to build strong partnerships between the school, families and the broader community that means all members work together to ensure the safety of students.
   4.2.1.2 Teachers are encouraged to incorporate classroom management strategies that discourage bullying and promote positive behaviour.
   4.2.1.3 A range of year level incursions and programs are planned for each year to raise awareness about bullying and its impacts.
   4.2.1.4 In the classroom, our social and emotional learning curriculum teaches students what constitutes bullying and how to respond to bullying behaviour assertively. This promotes resilience, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving.
   4.2.1.5 We seek to empower students to be confident communicators and to resolve conflict in a non-aggressive and constructive way.
   4.2.1.6 Students are encouraged to look out for each other and to talk to teachers and older peers about any bullying they have experienced or witnessed.
   4.2.1.7 We participate in the Anti Bullying Day.

   4.2   Responding to Incidences
   4.2.1 Responding to bullying can be challenging – for students, teachers, school leaders and also for parents/carers. The best outcomes are likely to occur when all parties work together to identify a situation that is actually of a bullying kind and then to address and manage the situation.
   4.2.2 When a member of the school's community becomes aware of bullying-like behaviours, they have an obligation to bring it to the attention of the school so that what is being reported can be investigated and where necessary an appropriate strategy to address and manage the situation can be enacted.

   4.3 Reporting concerns
   4.3.1 Bullying complaints will be taken seriously and responded to sensitively at our school.
   4.3.2 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.
   4.3.3 In most circumstances, we encourage students to speak to their classroom teacher. However, students are welcome to discuss their concerns with any trusted member of staff including Year level leader, Assistant Principal etc.
   4.3.4 Parents or carers who may develop concerns that their child is involved in, or has witnessed bullying behaviour at McKinnon Primary School should contact either their classroom teacher, Year Level Leader or the Assistant Principal.
   4.3.5 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 McKinnon Primary School are timely and appropriate in the circumstances.

4.4 Investigations

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

      4.4.1.1. Record the details of the allegations in as a Compass Chronicle and

      4.4.1.2 Inform the relevant staff involved e.g. Classroom teacher, Year Level Leader, Assistant Principal as required etc.

4.4.2   To appropriately investigate an allegation of bullying, the person investigating may:

      4.4.2.1 Speak to the students involved in the allegations, including the victim/s, the alleged perpetrator/s and any witnesses to the incidents

      4.4.2.2 Speak to the parents of the students involved

      4.4.2.3 Speak to the teachers of the students involved

      4.4.2.4 Take detailed notes of all discussions for future reference

      4.4.2.5 Obtain written statements from all or any of the above.

4.4.3   All communications 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.

4.4.4   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.

4.4.5   Serious bullying, including serious cyberbullying, is a criminal offence and may be referred to Victoria Police. For more information, see: Brodie's Law.

4.5   Responding to bullying behaviours

4.5.1   When 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 teachers, SSS, Assistant Principal, Principal etc.

4.5.2   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, McKinnon Primary School will consider:

      4.5.2.1 The age and maturity of the students involved

      4.5.2.2 The severity and frequency of the bullying, and the impact it has had on the victim student

      4.5.2.3 Whether the perpetrator student or students have displayed similar behaviour before

      4.5.2.4 Whether the bullying took place in a group or one-to-one context

      4.5.2.5 Whether the perpetrator demonstrates insight or remorse for their behaviour

      4.5.2.6 The alleged motive of the behaviour, including any element of provocation.

4.5.3   McKinnon Primary School staff may implement all, or some of the following responses to bullying behaviours:

      4.5.3.1 Offer counselling support to the victim student or students, including referral to i.e. the Student Wellbeing Team, SSS, or an external provider.

      4.5.3.2 Offer counselling support to the perpetrator student or students.

      4.5.3.3 Offer counselling support to affected students, including witnesses and/or friends of the victim student.

      4.5.3.4 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.

4.5.3.5 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.

4.5.3.6 Facilitate a process using the Support Group Method, involving the victim student(s), the perpetrator students and a group of students who are likely to be supportive of the victim(s).

4.5.3.7 Implement a Method of Shared Concern process with all students involved in the bullying.

4.5.3.8 Implement disciplinary consequences for the perpetrator students, which may include removal of privileges, detention, suspension and/or expulsion consistent with our Student Wellbeing and Engagement policy, the Ministerial Order on Suspensions and Expulsions and any other relevant Department policy.

4.5.3.9 Facilitate a Student Support Group meeting and/or Behaviour Support Plan for affected students.

4.5.3.10 Prepare a Student Safety Plan restricting contact between victim and perpetrator students.

4.5.3.11 Provide discussion and/or mentoring for different social and emotional learning competencies of the students involved.

4.5.3.12 Monitor the behaviour of the students involved for an appropriate time and take follow up action if necessary.

4.5.3.13 Implement year group targeted strategies to reinforce positive behaviours.

4.5.4 The staff involved are responsible for maintaining up to date records of the investigation of and responses to bullying behaviour.

4.5.5 McKinnon Primary School 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.

4.6 The role of students is to:

4.6.1 Promote and support safe and respectful learning environments where bullying is not tolerated

4.6.2 Respect the rights of others and demonstrate behaviours and attitudes that promotes and supports the wellbeing of all members of the school community

4.6.3 Understand and know that bullying, including cyber-bullying, is unacceptable and inappropriate and when necessary, sanctions, will be put in place.

4.7 The role of staff is to:

4.7.1 Promote and support safe and respectful learning environments where bullying is not tolerated

4.7.2 Explicitly teach and model pro-social behaviours through curriculum content, pedagogical approaches and engagement with students;

4.7.3 Be aware of and responsive to behaviours that constitute bullying; this may include drawing the attention of relevant staff, contacting parents/carers, involving other student members

4.7.4 Work in partnership with parents/carers to reduce and effectively manage incidents of bullying McKinnon Primary School Anti-Bullying Policy

4.7.5 Establish and build a collegiate atmosphere with all staff and share strategies to support each other as well as reflect on one's own behaviour, interactions and approaches in this process.

4.8 The role of parents/carers is to:

4.8.1 Promote and support safe and respectful learning environments where bullying is not tolerated

    4.8.2   Model positive interactions and engage in timely and constructive communication with the school regarding their child's behaviour and/or behaviours toward other students

    4.8.3   Work co-operatively and actively with the school in responses designed to address incidents of bullying to promote more positive behaviours.

5   Resources and Related Polices:

- DET Bully Stoppers, Retrieved 4 August, 2016, from
  http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers/Pages/what.aspx
- DET School Policy & Advisory Guide Retrieved 4 August, 2016, from
  http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers/Pages/prinprevent.aspx
- Please see related policy: **Student Engagement and Well Being Policy.**

6. Evaluation

    6.1. This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's one-two year review cycle.

    Next Review Date: October 2019

This policy was last ratified by School Council in: September 2018