



Student Harassment and Anti-Bullying Policy

Policy:

This policy is based on the Relevant Legislation, Standards and Frameworks:

- Education and Early Childhood Services (Registration and Standards) Act 2011
<http://www.legislation.sa.gov.au>
- Children's Protection Act 1993
<http://www.legislation.sa.gov.au>
- DECD Protective Practices for Staff in their Interactions with Children
<http://www.decs.sa.gov.au/docs/documents>
- National Safe Schools Framework, Safe Schools (Australian Government) website
<http://www.deewr.gov.au/Schooling/NationalSafeSchools/Pages/overview.aspx>

Aims:

The aim of this policy is to ensure that Waikerie Lutheran Primary School (hereinafter referred to as WLPS) is a safe and supportive learning environment, where the risk of harm is minimised and where all members of the school community both feel and are safe from harassment, aggression, violence and bullying, and feel emotionally secure. WLPS aims to develop a safe school community through a whole-school approach. It protects personal and community safety by dealing with destructive behaviours, restoring relationships, encouraging reconciliation, enhancing wellbeing, fostering responsibility and enabling personal growth.

For matters relating to parents and staff harassment and bullying, please see the Grievance policy and procedures for steps to take.

Rationale:

Harassment and bullying are contrary to the Christian ethos of WLPS, which emphasises care and respect of all members of the school (students, staff, parents and friends). Bullying and harassment have immediate damaging effects on the personal wellbeing of the victim as well as on the social and educational fabric of the school. We acknowledge that being safe and supported at school is essential for student wellbeing and effective learning. Review of the National Safe Schools Framework 2010, in collaboration with The National Safe Schools Framework Reference Group, concluded that harassment, violence and bullying are less likely to occur in a caring, respectful and supportive teaching and learning community.

For these reasons WLPS takes harassment and bullying very seriously and commits itself to programs and procedures designed to minimise their occurrence and deal effectively with them when they arise. We acknowledge and develop a shared understanding that all forms of bullying and harassment are unacceptable.

Objectives:

- To create an awareness of what bullying is and ensure all school community members (students, staff, parents and volunteers) are aware of their responsibility in its prevention
- To develop and sustain a safe and supportive learning and teaching community which fulfils WLPS child protection responsibilities (see WLPS Child Protection policy)
- To encourage the active participation of all school community members in developing and maintaining a safe school community, where diversity is valued
- To provide a framework and guidance for parents for dealing with and reporting incidents of harassment and bullying
- To provide a framework and guidance for students to develop understanding and skills to keep themselves and others safe
- To guide staff and identify the responsibilities of school staff in relation to the implementation of the policy and the response and management of associated issues

Definitions:

A safe and supportive school – ‘In a safe and supportive school, the risk from all types of harm is minimised, diversity is valued and all members of the school community feel respected and included and can be confident that they will receive support in the face of any threats to their safety and wellbeing.’
National Safe Schools Framework, updated 2013, Education Services Australia.

Children and students - all learners enrolled in WLPS.

Parent – natural parents, legal guardians and caregivers.

Harassment – is any type of conduct or behaviour towards another person which is offensive, humiliating, demeaning, derogatory or intimidating. Harassment can be verbal, physical, written or visual.

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, leaving them feeling annoyed, uncomfortable, embarrassed or hurt. *National Safe Schools Framework, updated 2013, Education Services Australia.*

Forms of Harassment and/or Bullying:

Harassment can take many forms, including:

- making offensive comments, or jokes, about a person’s religion, physical appearance, dress or private life

- asking intrusive questions of a racial, religious or physical nature, or in relation to a disability
- using technology to post inappropriate comments about a person's religion, physical appearance, dress or private life

Bullying is typically a combination of these forms and by this virtue can go undetected at school until teachers are notified.

There are also many distressing behaviours that are not regarded as bullying, even though they are unpleasant and often require intervention and management. These can include:

- mutual conflict
- social rejection
- single episode acts of nastiness or meanness
- random acts of aggression and intimidation

Harassment and/or bullying can be:

- **Physical** (causing physical harm: e.g., punching, kicking, fighting, damaging property, invading someone's personal space)
- **Verbal** (e.g., name-calling, teasing, spreading rumours, demeaning someone, swearing, using offensive language)
- **Non-verbal** (circulating inappropriate notes, drawings, making offensive gestures, laughing at the victim, engaging others in similar behaviour)

Non-verbal bullying could include power discrepancies.

Power discrepancies include:

- differences in physical size and strength
- strength of numbers
- relative popularity in the peer group
- command of language
- positional authority
- **Exclusion or social** (e.g., leaving a person or group out of social or group activities)
- **Cyber** –that which uses e-technology as a means of victimising others. It is the use of an internet service or mobile technologies – such as e-mail, chat room discussion groups, instant messaging, webpages or SMS (text messaging) – with the intention of harming another person. Examples include communications that seek to intimidate, control, manipulate, put down or humiliate the recipient.

This form of harassment and/or bullying may not necessarily be repeated, but because the message can be sent to multiple users, ensures it has a large targeted audience and its intent is to deliberately intimidate a less powerful person.

- **Sexting** - when sending sexually explicit messages or photographs via electronic devices may lead to public humiliation
- **Victimisation** (e.g., standover tactics, extortion, picking on others and repeated exclusion)
- **Racial** (e.g., bullying which targets a person's race or religion)
- **Sexual** (e.g., touching or brushing up against another person in a sexual manner, using rude names, or commenting inappropriately about someone's sexuality or morals)
- **Continually overloading** a student with work, setting timelines that are very difficult to achieve, setting tasks that are beyond a student's ability
- **Property** (damaging or taking belongings, extortion)

Information and Guidelines for students – dealing with and reporting harassment and bullying:

- In order to stop bullying, a victim must first make his/her feelings known to the perpetrator. For many children and adults this is a difficult task. He or she should, in the first instance, make it known that the comments, attention, contact or behaviour is unwelcome and offensive.
- If the bullying and harassment continues, the student should inform a member of staff of the situation. This person may be someone that the student feels they can trust (i.e. teacher / counsellor / sports coach / student leader etc).
- The role of "bystander" is also important in establishing and maintaining a bullying free school. Students seeing others being bullied are therefore strongly encouraged to report it.
- Inform students that all employees of WLPS have a duty of care to ensure that any harassment or bullying brought to their attention, or personally witnessed, is addressed as soon as possible. The school should treat any report of harassment or bullying seriously and sympathetically. It should follow up any complaint impartially and promptly.
- If the report is verified, the school should view the matter seriously and take appropriate action. Actions that WLPS take will depend on the nature and severity of the harassment or bullying, and the school's approach to the resolution of conflict, and may include:
 - dealing with the situation informally through a 'no blame' or 'shared concern' approach
 - mediation
 - counselling
 - dealing with the situation through restorative practices.
 - taking disciplinary action in accordance with the school's discipline policy, i.e. community service, detention, suspension or expulsion against the harasser or bully

- Inform students that harassment and bullying, and in particular cyber bullying and sexting, may also amount to criminal behaviour/charges in breach of legislation; e.g. assault, unlawful threats of stalking.
- WLPS will continue to review the resolutions and the wellbeing of the complainant and the alleged harasser or bully for a period, to ensure the actions taken have been effective in stopping the harassment or bullying.

Responsibilities of the students:

It is expected that all students at WLPS follow the following behaviour guidelines:

- students must show respect for others and themselves
- students must respect their own property and that of others
- students are to assist and encourage each other to perform to the best of their ability
- students must accept responsibility for their own behaviour; respecting individual differences and diversity
- students are to be aware that their behaviour occurs as a result of choices, conscious or unconscious; all behaviour has consequences, which affects future opportunities
- irresponsible behaviour requires a response, which protects the rights and safety of students who want to learn; which supports the rights and safety of teachers to teach; which offers the student involved a chance to learn how to make a more responsible choice in the future
- if bullying behaviour is witnessed, students have the responsibility to respond according to the role of a bystander (as is taught throughout the school)
- to use the 'five step approach' (ignore, turn back or walk away, ask them to stop, ask them to stop with more determined tone, ask for help from a teacher/adult) to solve conflict with another student, as developed by the student leaders of 2010
- to behave as responsible bystanders to assist in the prevention of bullying amongst peers
- to practice the skills taught in the well-being and social skills program/s – ensuring the right to keep others' safe
- be responsible digital citizens
- follow the school's Student Harassment and Anti-Bullying Policy
- report incidents of bullying according to the WLPS Student Harassment and Anti-Bullying Policy

See flow chart at the end of this policy

Information and Guidelines for parents – dealing with and reporting harassment and bullying:

How can I, as a parent, tell if my child is being harassed and/or bullied?

Children affected by harassment and/or bullying may not talk about it with their teachers or school staff. They may be afraid that it will only make things worse, or that it is wrong to tell tales or 'dob in' other students.

When people are harassed or bullied they may feel angry, embarrassed, frightened, humiliated or uncomfortable, scared or unsafe. That is why, as a parent or care-giver, you have an important part to play in helping the school, and your child, deal with harassment and bullying.

Some signs a child or young person is being harassed or bullied may be, but not limited to:

- reduced ability to concentrate and learn
- refusal to attend school, excuses not to go
- unexplained cuts, bruises, or scratches
- stolen or damaged possessions/clothing
- headaches or stomach aches
- asking for extra pocket money for food
- acting out, tearfulness, sadness, lack of interest in usual activities
- unwillingness to discuss or secrecy about their online communications (e.g. mobile phone texts, Facebook comments).

Parents need to make their child aware that if the student is experiencing harassing or bullying behaviour that:

- the student should make it known to the perpetrator that the comments, attention, contact or behaviour is unwelcome or offensive
- if harassment and bullying continues, the student should inform a member of staff of the situation
- the school investigates the harassment and bullying complaints promptly and impartially
- appropriate action is taken as a result of the findings of the investigation into the harassment and bullying complaint

Responsibilities of the parents

Parents and caregivers have a responsibility to:

- support their child/ren to become responsible citizens and to develop responsible on-line behaviour
- be aware of the WLPS Student Harassment and Anti-Bullying Policy and assist their children in understanding bullying and harassing behaviour

- support their children in developing positive responses to incidents of harassment and bullying that is consistent with the school's policy
- report incidents of school related bullying behaviour to the school
- work collaboratively with and through the school to resolve incidents of bullying when they occur
- support your child by using active listening skills
- support your child in developing self-management skills when dealing with conflict
- support the school by sharing concerns and seeking the school's understanding of events to provide a united front
- support good communication by following the school grievance procedure to inform of any ongoing or serious bullying incidents

- Work with the school to develop social skills and resilience with your children
- Follow school protocol when dealing with issues relating to another student
- Responsibly supervise your children when they are on the internet or using digital devices
- Model caring behaviour and tolerance when interacting with students, staff, parents and community members at school

What should I do, as a parent, if I think my child is being harassed or bullied?

If you think your child is being harassed or bullied, you may feel anxious or sad. However, it is important that you try to stay calm and take the following steps:

- listen calmly to your child
- let your child know that telling you about the harassment or bullying was the right thing to do

Find out:

- what happened
- who was involved
- where it happened
- if anyone else saw, read, or heard it

- talk with your child about what should be done
- make a note of what your child tells you to help you when you talk to the school

- talk to the school

Note: These steps are also useful if you think that your child:

- has been involved in harassment or bullying of others
- as a bystander, may be affected by harassment or bullying of others
- as a bystander, has information and is concerned about other students being harassed and/or bullied

Talk to the school

Your child may not want you to talk about the harassment or bullying. However, it is important you let the school know so the problem can be worked out together.

- Make a time to speak firstly to your child's teacher, in line with the school's Grievance Policy
- Be as clear as possible about what happened
- Ask the school what else you can do to help your child and the school to stop the harassment or bullying from happening
- Keep in touch with the school, and let the staff know if problems continue.

It is important to raise this matter with the school and not to contact the student you believe has been the perpetrator or the parent of the student.

Handling harassment and bullying complaints

The following is a suggested process that may be followed in handling and investigating harassment and bullying complaints.

Level 1 Harassment and Bullying (low level)

Periodic thoughtless name calling, teasing, occasional exclusion or theft of belongings.

These incidents can be annoying and hurtful and can escalate and then involve more serious forms of bullying (Level 2 or 3). Teaching staff are responsible for dealing with harassment and bullying at this level.

1. Interview all involved individually.
2. Inform person bullying about the effects of bullying. The actions are not acceptable to the school.
3. Inform person bullied about ways to deal with bullying.
4. Meet perpetrator and complainant together if appropriate.
5. Impose appropriate consequence.
6. Monitor carefully what happens next and be prepared to intervene.

Level 2 Harassment and Bullying (ongoing, medium level)

Bullying at this level may be systematic and malicious over time. It may include cruel teasing, continual exclusion, minor threats or relatively minor physical abuse such as pushing, tripping or theft of property. It can escalate into more serious bullying (Level 3).

Follow the steps above and undertake the following:

1. Formally document what has happened and what action has been taken.
2. Contact parents/carers.
3. Implement counselling and mediation.
4. Provide opportunity for skills acquisition and support to modify behaviours.
5. Implement appropriate consequences (may include sanctions)

Year Level Coordinators, Counsellors supported by Leadership would generally deal with issues at this level.

Level 3 Bullying and Harassment (ongoing, serious behaviour)

Bullying at this level is considered to be cruel, malicious and intense. It occurs over an extended period of time and is distressing to the person receiving it. It includes serious physical assaults and child protection issues, but is still considered severe if non-physical methods such as name-calling and exclusions are used. A member of the leadership team would be responsible for this action.

Follow the steps above and undertake the following:

1. Undertake a formal investigation and document the process and outcomes.
2. Meet with parents/carers of those involved.
3. Recommend required educational activities (e.g. anger management).
4. If appropriate, enact suspension/exclusion processes.
5. Involve relevant agencies: e.g. police, and report to Child Abuse Report Line if required.

Student Harassment and Anti-bullying strategies

The methods used by WLPS to discourage harassment and bullying may vary from time to time in response to certain circumstances and situations.

The following are some of the strategies that WLPS uses to discourage harassment and bullying behaviours:

- Subject specific curriculum and student wellbeing programs that raise awareness relating to harassment and bullying
- The Student Harassment and Anti-Bullying Policy is widely promoted to students, staff, parents/caregivers and the school community
- A copy of WLPS's Student Harassment and Anti-Bullying Policy is included in student enrolment packages and is on the website
- Constructive strategies to deal with harassment and bullying should be implemented and may include: education in coping strategies; assertiveness training; problem solving and social skills; counselling and behaviour modification

- Implementation of programs that raise student awareness about harassment and bullying (including cyber bullying) be provided to discuss matters and aid development of attitudes
- Professional development for staff relating to harassment and bullying and proven strategies to address these issues in classrooms
- Ensure effective pastoral support for students
- Incorporate anti-bullying guidelines in the student code of conduct and behaviour management policies
- Use Chaplains and School Counsellors who have specialised skills in helping both victims of bullying and identified bullies
- Have a student leadership team who support the WLPS's Student Harassment and Anti-Bullying policy and who students feel free to inform about any bullying
- Employ staff who model tolerance, empathy and acceptance of individual differences
- Encourage staff to take their supervision duties seriously so that they are actively monitoring when on duty
- Review the WLPS Student Harassment and Anti-Bullying policy at regular intervals in order to ensure that it remains effective and relevant

Responsibilities

The WLPS Student Harassment and Anti Bullying Policy clearly identifies the responsibilities of school staff in relation to the implementation of a Student Harassment and Anti-Bullying policy and the management of associated issues.

The Principal

The Principal should ensure that the school implements a Harassment and Anti-Bullying Policy that:

- is developed collaboratively with students, school staff, parents, caregivers and the community
- ensures the adoption of the National Safe Schools Framework
- works in partnership with community organisations and parents to extend support to students and families (Information Sharing Guidelines for Promoting the Safety and Wellbeing of Children, Young People and their Families (ISG))¹
- records all incidents of bullying and action taken
- follows up on all serious forms of bullying, including interviewing the victim and perpetrator, as well as their parents

¹ As this is currently in a period of being reviewed, and until the Privacy Act (1988) and the National Privacy Principles have been reformed consent is required by parents/guardians.

- follows through with consequences of bullying behaviour
- includes strategies for:
 - developing a shared understanding of harassing and bullying behaviour that captures all forms of harassment and bullying (including cyber bullying)
 - developing a statement of purpose that outlines individual and shared responsibilities of students, parents, caregivers and teachers for preventing and responding to harassing and bullying behaviour
 - maintaining a positive climate of respectful relationships where harassment and bullying are less likely to occur
 - developing and implementing programs for bullying prevention
 - embedding anti-bullying messages into curriculum
 - developing and implementing early intervention support for students who are identified by the school as being at risk of developing long-term difficulties with social relationships
 - developing and implementing early intervention support for those students who are identified at or after enrolment as having previously experienced bullying or engaged in bullying behaviour
 - empowering the whole school community to recognise and respond appropriately to harassment, bullying and victimisation and behave as responsible bystanders
 - developing and publicising clear procedures for reporting incidents of bullying to the school
 - responding to incidents of harassment and bullying that have been reported to the school quickly and effectively
 - matching a planned combination of interventions to the particular incident of harassment or bullying
 - providing support to any student who has been affected by, engaged in or witnessed bullying behaviour
 - providing regular updates, within the boundaries of privacy legislation, to parents or caregivers about the management of incidents
 - identifying patterns of harassment and bullying and responding to such patterns
 - monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the WLPS Student Harassment and Anti-Bullying Policy

School staff

School staff have a responsibility to:

- respect and support students
- model and promote appropriate behaviour
- have knowledge of the school policies relating to harassment and bullying
- respond in a timely manner to incidents of harassment and bullying in accordance with WLPS Student Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy.

In addition, teachers have a responsibility to provide curriculum and pedagogy that supports students to develop an understanding of bullying and harassment and its impact on individuals and the broader community. Therefore staff are to:

- Comply with the 'Code of Conduct for Staff at WLPS' policy
- Have read and signed to the effect, the WLPS Child Safe Policy
- Implement a school-wide Code of Conduct, specifying what is and is not appropriate behaviour in the classroom and around the school
- Model caring behaviour and tolerance towards students, parents, staff and community members
- Teach social and emotional skills (e.g. listening, negotiation, sharing, responding with empathy) in all areas of the curriculum at all year levels
- Teach skills and understandings to promote cyber safety and for countering harassment, aggression, violence and bullying
- Teach skills and understandings related to personal safety and protective behaviours
- Teach proactive strategies for social inclusion through a Student Social Skills Program (eg. What's the Buzz?)
- To follow up on all incidents of bullying, recording and passing on the information to the principal
- Provide opportunities for student ownership and decision making
- Provide regular opportunities for student forums to discuss possible Bullying 'hotspots' eg. surveys, SRC, assembly etc

The school community

All members of the school community have a responsibility to:

- model and promote positive relationships that respect and accept individual differences and diversity within the school community
- support WLPS Student Harassment and Anti-Bullying Policy through words and actions
- work collaboratively with the school to resolve incidents of bullying when they occur

Strategies Waikerie Lutheran Primary School will use to Prevent Bullying Incidents

- Talk regularly and openly about bullying behaviour
- Teach lessons to promote self-awareness, self-esteem, networking, tolerance, social skills, positive self-talk, resilience and assertiveness by using a variety of appropriate programs
- Emphasise the role of bystanders/onlookers as a powerful anti-bullying group
- Support all people involved in the incidents of bullying and provide an environment to promote change
- Promote anti-bullying through lessons, parent newsletters, displays etc.

Consequences for Breaches of Standards of Behaviour

All forms of Bullying will be taken seriously. Consequences of bullying behaviour will be as outlined in the Behaviour Support Manual. The process of Restorative Practices will be used in managing bullying behaviour, enabling both the perpetrator and victim an opportunity to understand the effect of their behaviour (empathy) and be a part of the restorative process. The Principal will reserve the right to discipline in the manner seeming fit for the offense. Where repeated occurrences of bullying occur, internal/external suspension may result; in extreme cases where no remorse is shown, exclusion/expulsion may result.

Procedure for Reporting Incidents of Bullying Behaviour

- Students need to approach their classroom teacher to discuss any concerns they may have regarding another student so that the teacher can deal with it on a pastoral care level
- Students complete a harassment incident report stating what happened, when it happened and who was there
- Students may make a report as a bystander, with the understanding they are reporting, not dobbing, with a concern for others' welfare, not to promote their own standing

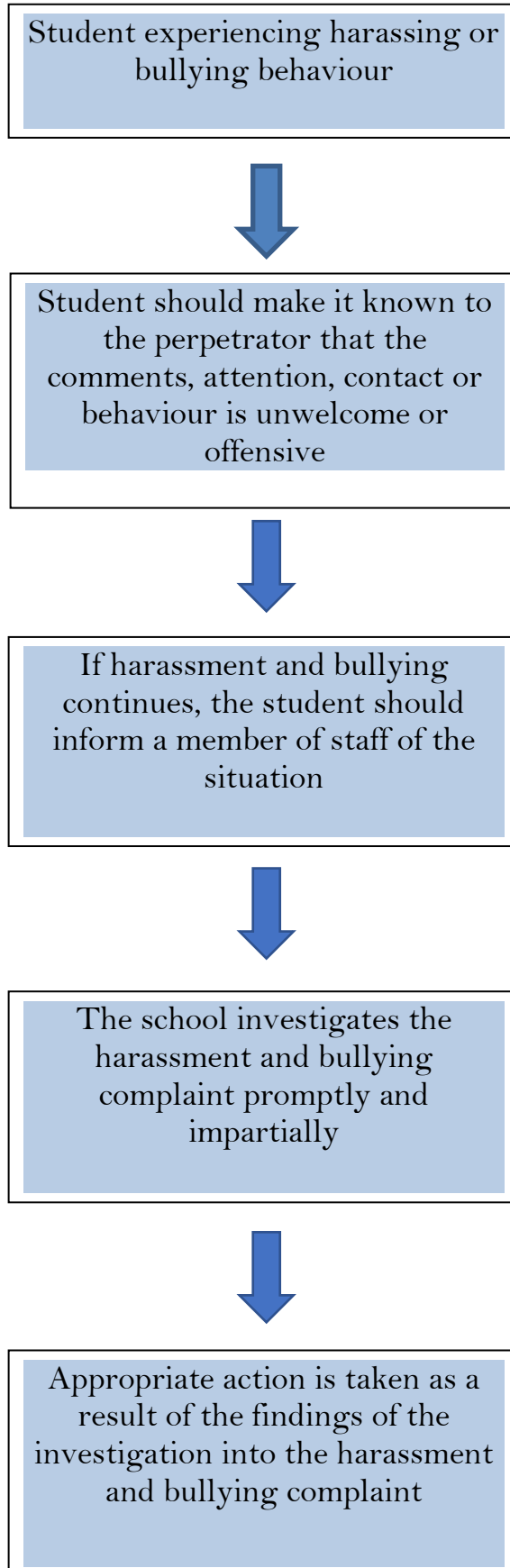
- Serious cases of bullying behaviour witnessed by a staff member will be referred to the Principal via an incident report
- All serious claims of bullying will be directly followed up by the Principal, contacting the parents/guardians of all involved
- In the case of a complaint made against a staff member, a formal investigation will be conducted
- In line with the current Child Safe Policy, incidents will be treated in accordance with policy and logical consequences will be implemented
- All reports of bullying will be recorded and filed with the Principal for future reference
- All reports made will be treated with confidence, respecting the needs of the complainant
- If parents are not satisfied with the resolution of the complaint, they should follow the *Guideline for Problem Solving Protocol – School Adults* in line with the Grievance Policy.

Evaluation:

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

This policy was last ratified on the 16.8.2017

Steps for Students to Take When Dealing with Incidents of Harassment and Bullying



Harassment/Bullying Incident Report

Filled out by _____ Year level _____ Date: ____/____/____

When did this happen? On the bus Before school After school
 Recess Lunch Class time
 Specialist lesson Outside school Other

Nature of harassment

verbal racial physical cyber

Name of offender/s?

What happened?

PTO

Where did it happen?

- play equipment oval quadrangle classroom: Year _____
 tennis court hall corridor other _____

Who was there?**Who did you tell?****What do you suggest could be done about it?**

Please hand to your classroom teacher or the teacher on duty

For the teacher

Who dealt with this?

Investigation and action taken

Writer's parents notified by	diary contact	letter	email	phone	meeting	no
Offender's parents notified by	diary contact	letter	email	phone	meeting	no

Signed:

Date:

