

Anti-bullying Plan

Ben Venue Public School





Bullying:

Preventing and Responding to Student Bullying in Schools Policy (2011)

The NSW Department of Education and Communities rejects all forms of bullying. No student, employee, parent, caregiver or community member should experience bullying within the learning or working environments of the Department.

Bullying

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. Cyber bullying refers to bullying through information and communication technologies.

Bullying can involve humiliation, domination, intimidation, victimisation and all forms of harassment including that based on sex, race, disability, homosexuality or transgender. Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long term effects on those involved including bystanders.

Conflict or fights between equals or single incidents are not defined as bullying.

Bullying behaviour can be:

- **verbal** eg name calling, teasing, abuse, putdowns, sarcasm, insults, threats
- **physical** eg hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting
- **social** eg ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating, making inappropriate gestures
- **psychological** eg spreading rumours, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions, malicious SMS and email messages, inappropriate use of camera phones.

The term “bullying” has a specific meaning. The school’s Anti-bullying Plan sets out **the processes for preventing and responding to student bullying**. The school has a range of policies and practices, including welfare and discipline policies that apply to student behaviour generally.

Schools exist in a society where incidents of bullying behaviour may occur. Preventing and responding to bullying behaviour in learning and working environments is a shared responsibility of all departmental staff, students, parents, caregivers and members of the wider school community.

School staff have a responsibility to:

- respect and support students
- model and promote appropriate behaviour
- have knowledge of school and departmental policies relating to bullying behaviour
- respond in a timely manner to incidents of bullying according to the school’s Anti-bullying Plan.

In addition, teachers have a responsibility to:

- provide curriculum and pedagogy that supports students to develop an understanding of bullying and its impact on individuals and the broader community.

Students have a responsibility to:

- behave appropriately, respecting individual differences and diversity
- behave as responsible digital citizens
- follow the school Anti-bullying Plan
- behave as responsible bystanders
- report incidents of bullying according to their school Anti-bullying Plan.

Parents and caregivers have a responsibility to:

- support their children to become responsible citizens and to develop responsible online behaviour
- be aware of the school Anti-bullying Plan and assist their children in understanding bullying behaviour
- support their children in developing positive responses to incidents of bullying consistent with the school Anti-bullying Plan
- report incidents of school related bullying behaviour to the school
- work collaboratively with the school to resolve incidents of bullying when they occur.

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 the school’s Anti-bullying Plan through words and actions
- work collaboratively with the school to resolve incidents of bullying when they occur.

Our School Anti-Bullying Plan

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This plan outlines the processes for preventing and responding to student bullying in our school and reflects the *Bullying: Preventing and Responding to Student Bullying in Schools Policy* of the New South Wales Department of Education and Communities.

Statement of purpose

Schools should be safe places for everyone – students, staff, families and members of the wider community. Schools and their communities should work together to provide quality learning environments which are friendly, inclusive, safe and supportive. Everyone has the right to be treated fairly and with dignity in an environment free from disruption, intimidation, harassment, victimisation and discrimination.

Protection

Bullying can take many forms, including;

- Physical – including hitting, punching, shoving, pinching, tripping, spitting, scratching, damaging, hiding or stealing belongings or throwing objects at someone.
- Verbal – name calling, making offensive remarks, taunting, teasing and put-downs.
- Indirect social / psychological spreading – rumours, gossiping about or embarrassing someone, making fun of someone, using threatening looks or gestures, excluding or threatening to exclude from groups, ignoring, ostracising or alienating.
- Cyberbullying – verbal and indirect social / psychological bullying through the use of technology such as emails, blogs, online gaming platforms, websites, mobile phones, including;
 - the sending of abusive texts or emails
 - taking or sharing unflattering or private images of others
 - posting unkind messages or inappropriate images on social networking sites
 - excluding individuals from online chats or other communication
 - assuming the identity of the victim online and representing them in a negative manner or manner that may damage their relationship with others

Importantly, bullying is distinct from interpersonal conflicts or 'rough play'. While disagreement, teasing and conflict are part of growing up, bullying is an extreme form of peer conflict or teasing and can be harmful both physically and psychologically (Rigby, 2002).

Prevention

The school will establish a positive climate of respectful relationships and high expectations where bullying is less likely to occur, through;

- explicit teaching and modelling of positive behaviours that reflect school expectations and core rules
- educating students on the role of the bystander
- developing social and emotional strengths of students through implementation of the YCDI program K-6
- transition programs to high school and into Kindergarten, including the use of a designated Kinder area of the playground. Teachers ensure Kinder students have developed positive peer relationships before Kinder students join the K-6 playground.
- structured lunchtime activities including Circus Troupe, team sports training, Chess Club and Construction Club.
- the availability of the library as a space for students to engage in quiet reading and group activities including board games, art and craft.
- YCDI Leaders to initiate social connections within the playground.

Early Intervention

Some students are identified as being at risk of bullying or developing long-term difficulties with social relationships. Some students are also identified as using bullying behaviour. Where it is anticipated that a student may be at risk of becoming either a victim or perpetrator of bullying behaviour, the following measures will be taken:

- Referral to the Learning Support Team
- Development and rehearsal of social stories and strategies for teaching / coaching and practice through role play and scenarios
- Development of action plans of how to cope with difficult situations

The Anti-Bullying Plan – NSW Department of Education and Communities

Response

Reporting Systems

Students are expected to report unacceptable behavior and to behave as responsible bystanders. Behaviour occurring at school and outside of school (including online) where harm has been caused to someone in connection with staff, students or families of the school may be included in this Anti-bullying plan. All reported incidents of bullying are recorded on Sentral.

Incidents of bullying may be reported by students, witnesses, parents/carers or staff members.

In the first instance, all reports of bullying are referred to the class teacher.



Class Teachers look into the allegation and make a judgment based upon substantiated facts. Students may be questioned and asked to provide written statements during this process.



If claim of bullying substantiated, DP takes over, including fortnight and further month follow up



Consequences applied as per Student Wellbeing and Engagement Guidelines. Victims may be offered counseling.



Action/support plan may be developed for the victim and/or the bully.



DP monitors and seeks information in relation to any ongoing issues from stakeholders.

All written incident reports or parent contacts are investigated within five work days where possible. Interventions can include;

- mediation or peer mediation
- counselling
- referral to the Learning Support Team
- support sessions / warning from the Police School Liaison Officer
- disciplinary consequences including entry into the school level system and suspension
- referral to the school Anti-Racism Contact Officer

It is not the policy of the school to disclose information relating to consequences applied in response to breaches of the behavior code.

The school will follow all DoE policies and procedures when dealing with reports of bullying. This includes reporting to the police, Child Wellbeing Unit and the DoE Safety and Security Unit where appropriate.

This plan will be reviewed annually and adjustments made as required.

Additional Information

DoE Behaviour Code for Students

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/associated-documents/behaviourcode.pdf>

DoE School Community and Consumer Complaint Procedure

https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/associated-documents/School-complaint-procedure_AC.pdf

School Anti-bullying Plan – NSW Department of Education and Communities

Suspension and Expulsion of School Students

https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/associated-documents/suspol_07.pdf

Mandatory Reporting Obligations

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/wellbeing-and-learning/child-protection/mandatory-reporting>

Kids Helpline - 1800 55 1800

<https://kidshelpline.com.au/>

Principal's comment

This plan was developed in line with the BVPS Wellbeing & Discipline Policy.

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