Anti-bullying Plan
Kogarah 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 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

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.

A whole school approach involving students, parents and staff is paramount in establishing support systems to address bullying.

A committed social response is necessary to break the cycle by implementing strategies for both prevention and intervention.

An annual survey of students, staff and parents will assist in developing, implementing, evaluating and reviewing this plan.

Statement of purpose

Students attend school to participate in quality education that will help them to become self-directed, lifelong learners who can create a positive future for themselves and the wider community.

Any inappropriate behaviour that gets in the way of teaching and learning at the school and interferes with the wellbeing of students cannot be accepted.

Students, teachers, parents, caregivers and members of the wider school community have a shared responsibility to create a safe and happy environment, free from all forms of bullying.

Students, teachers, parents, caregivers and members of the wider school community can expect:

- that students will be safe at school, free from fear of bullying, harassment and intimidation;
- to be involved in the collaborative development of the school Anti-bullying Plan;
- to know what is expected of them and others in relation to the Anti-bullying Plan; and
- that all students will be provided with appropriate support when bullying occurs.

Protection

- All children have the right to feel safe and secure in their learning environment and schools contribute enormously to building student well-being and happiness.
- Bullying, in all its forms, will not be tolerated. Bullying includes ongoing, targeted: verbal, physical, social, psychological behaviours and cyberbullying as defined on page 1.
- Teachers will acknowledge that reducing bullying is a shared responsibility within and across the school.
- Teachers will empower students to deal with conflict in constructive ways and to develop a social conscience.
- Teachers will implement prevention and intervention strategies that involve the whole school.
- Parents, students and teachers have a shared responsibility in reporting and dealing with bullying.

Prevention

- It is necessary to build resilience in students to prevent disturbing long-term effects for both the target and the bully.
- Strategies for the prevention of bullying are more powerful than those used during a time of crisis.
- Strategies for prevention and intervention should be inclusive of curriculum, playground supervision, school structure considerations and the manner in which bullying incidents are dealt with.
- Laying blame and punishing bullies is usually a short term and ineffective approach and therefore responses to bullying require collective responsibility.
• Students will engage in responsible reporting and will take safe and sensible action as a bystander.
• Students will demonstrate a repertoire of self management strategies and build resilience so as to free themselves of thinking like a victim.

1 Curriculum
The relationships theme of the Interpersonal Relationships strand of the PD/H/PE syllabus addresses issues associated with bullying. A focus on bullying is part of each stage’s PD/H program and addresses the outcomes and indicators for this strand. Skills include conflict resolution, empathy training, assertiveness training, negotiation and mediation skills and problem solving. Bullying can be integrated wherever possible across all Key Learning Areas. All students will participate in lessons at the beginning of each school year on bullying and appropriate use of online technology and consequences of bullying and cyber-bullying.

The Bounce Back program and the Restorative Practices framework will be implemented across the school to develop resilience in students and to provide a fair and consistent approach to dealing with bullying. Students in Kindergarten and Year 1 participate in a targeted Social Skills program in Term 1 to ensure that all students learn appropriate and acceptable skills in developing positive relationships with peers.

2 Student opportunities to voice concerns
Opportunities are provided for students to voice their concerns and formulate solutions. These may include class meetings, individual approaches to a teacher by students, through the SRC or through survey responses.

3 Community Awareness
At enrolment, parents and new students are provided with a copy of the School Discipline Policy and Anti-bullying Plan. The Anti-bullying Plan will be published on the school’s website and at the beginning of each school year a reminder to read the plan will be published in the newsletter.

At the beginning of each school year, the School Discipline Policy and Anti-bullying Plan will be addressed at the Meet the Teacher meeting.

Parents and caregivers are encouraged to report to the class teacher or the principal any incidents of bullying concerning their child(ren) so that it can be dealt with in an appropriate and effective manner.

Parents and caregivers will be notified by the school if their child(ren) is/are involved in bullying behaviours, consistent with the School Discipline Policy.

4 Staff Awareness
Refresher session and/or review at the beginning of each school year on the School Discipline Policy and the Anti-bullying Plan.

Share at staff meetings, the names of students, who are being targeted, and the strategies being implemented to address issues so they can be monitored on the playground.

5 Playground Supervision
The role of staff in playground supervision is very important in recognising and responding to incidents of bullying. Monitoring playground hot spots, encouraging isolated students to join a group, reminding children about strategies to manage playground conflict, giving appropriate strategies other than “ignoring it and walking away” and following through on reported incidents can all help to reduce bullying. Bullying reports need to be taken seriously and dealt with promptly.

Early Intervention
Students who are identified as being at risk of developing long-term difficulties with social relationships and those students who are identified at or after enrolment as having previously experienced bullying or
engaged in bullying behaviour will be referred in the first instance to the Learning Support Team (LST). Where such a student has transferred from another school, the previous school would be contacted to provide any relevant information regarding the bullying behaviour and strategies that may have been implemented. This may require the development of a Risk Assessment and individual management plan.

Strategies will be developed in consultation with the parents or caregivers and teachers who work with the student to develop positive social relationships with peers and adults. Where a student has been accessing the services of outside agencies, it may be appropriate to contact those agencies to gain background knowledge and strategies already being implemented.

Strategies could include:

- developing a calm and accepting classroom climate where ‘put downs’ and negative comments are not accepted;
- explicit teaching of specific social skills in the class to develop empathy and provide models of acceptable social interaction towards others. This would include discussion of the definition of bullying so that all students in the class have a common understanding;
- development of an individual student management plan;
- ongoing playground monitoring of the student to support appropriate social interactions;
- providing all staff with current information and strategies to deal with any ongoing issues with the student and their peers; and
- referral to the School Counsellor

Response

Bullying cannot be reduced if incidents are not reported. When a bullying incident has occurred, the following strategies will be employed.

- Restorative Practices questioning process employed
- Logical consequences applied
- Consequences as outlined in school Student Discipline Policy
- Individual student management plan developed

Role of teachers receiving a report of bullying

- Determine whether report is of bullying, poor social skills or rule breaking- this may be a one off situation or an ongoing one. The teacher deals with the incident using the above strategies.
- Record details on playground behaviour slip, noting details of incident, victim and others involved.
- Give slip to classroom teacher for further follow up. Where possible, follow up should begin within 24 hours of the incident.

Role of class teacher and Stage Supervisor in receiving a report of bullying

- All playground slips and records of classroom incidents should be kept in the teacher’s Behaviour Record Book.
- If bullying is determined to be occurring, the role of the teacher is to notify the Stage Supervisor.
- The Stage Supervisor in conjunction with the class teacher will employ a problem solving approach which apportions responsibility.
- Interview the target of the bullying and determine the target’s feelings and who is involved including bullies, bystanders and colluders.
- Hold a meeting with the bullies etc and share with the group the target’s feelings in order to raise feelings of empathy.
- Hand over responsibility to the group to decide on ways to support the target. This emphasises a solution.
- Student(s) develop and implement a plan with the assistance of the teacher and/or Stage Supervisor.
• Meet with target to find out how they are feeling. Hold a follow-up meeting to review the solutions.
• If incidences of bullying continue, further consequences in line with the school Student Discipline Policy may need to be applied.
• Inform parents in line with Student Discipline Policy.
• As new bullying issues arise, staff will be provided with the information and preventative strategies they need to implement to prevent or respond appropriately.

Where an incidence/s of bullying are deemed to be causing a degree of harm or risk of significant harm, the school will contact the Child Wellbeing Unit or Community Services as appropriate.

Where a student has been involved in bullying and has had a disciplinary consequence imposed on him/her in line with the School’s Discipline Policy and the parent or caregiver wishes to appeal the process, the school will follow the DEC Complaints Handling Policy using the Complaints Handling Guidelines. The policy and guidelines are available on the Department’s website and will be explained to the complainant at the time of appeal.

To identify patterns of bullying behaviour, the school will use data from the school’s Behaviour data base, teacher’s Behaviour Record books, individual reports from students, teachers, parents/caregivers and the wider community.

Where patterns of bullying behaviour are identified, specific plans will be used to target the type of bullying behaviour that is occurring as well as the group/s of students involved. Such plans would be implemented to stop the bullying behaviour and support the victim/s and witnesses of the bullying.

Parents and caregivers will be provided with regular updates, within the bounds of privacy legislation, about the management of bullying incidents that have been reported to the school.

Incidents involving threats, assaults, intimidation or harassment may be reported to the police in line with the Student Discipline Policy.

On enrolment at the school, parents and caregivers will be provided with a copy of the Anti-bullying Plan.

The school’s Anti-bullying Plan will be published on the school’s website.

The Anti-bullying Plan will be discussed at the Meet the Teacher meeting in Term 1 each year and at P&C meetings.

Reminders to read the Anti-bullying Plan and to report any incidents of bullying will be published in the school’s newsletter in first few weeks of the school year, or if patterns of bullying arise, this will be repeated.

The school will monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of its Anti-bullying Plan using the following:

• tracking of behavioural issues in the school’s Behaviour data base and incidences recorded in class teacher’s Behaviour Record books; and
• through surveys of students and school community and comparing the results to current school data.

The school will report annually in the Annual School Report as to the effectiveness of the Anti-bullying Plan.

Every three years, or earlier if circumstance requires, the school will review this Anti-bullying Plan with the school community.

Principal’s comment

This Anti-bullying Plan has been developed by members of the Learning Support Team and has been presented to and accepted by the school’s Parents and Citizens Association. A survey of the school community was undertaken prior to the development of the plan. Data from the survey showed that the school has very few cases of bullying and that any reported incidents have been dealt with appropriately following the processes outlined in this document.

Lea Kitchener, Principal
This plan was developed by the following:

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