



Education &
Communities

Anti-bullying Plan





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.

Bullying in Schools Policy of the New South Wales Department of Education and Communities.

Our School community has worked together to recognise, challenge and change inequalities that fuel bullying and harassment within our school – and to build trust and respect between all groups. By doing this, we are better placed to meet the needs of all students and contribute to a socially just environment.

The school team has undertaken ongoing consultation with the school community. This has been done through collection of data, surveys (Tell Them From Me) and parent and student interviews. It has been established that there is a shared commitment amongst the school community to contribute to the effectiveness of bullying protection, prevention, early intervention and response strategies.

Evaluation will be ongoing and include periodic reviews which will be managed by the PMPS Wellbeing Team. This will include revising the current needs of the community and address needs as they arise eg, cyberbullying, bystander behaviour.

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 interferes with teaching and learning and/or is detrimental to the wellbeing of all students is a concern and will be addressed and supported as per the School Quality Behaviour and Wellbeing Operating Procedures and Guidelines.

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.

Our School Anti-bullying Plan

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*

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

- strategies to support students to be safe at school, free from fear of bullying, harassment, intimidation and victimisation;
- 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.

Students can expect to:

- know that their concerns will be responded to by school staff;
- be provided with appropriate support; and participate in learning experiences, (Highway Heroes Program and DEC Anti-bullying Inquiry units), that address key understandings and skills relating to positive relationships, safety, gender equity, discrimination, bullying and harassment.

Protection

Feedback from our “Tell Them From Me” surveys and Parent SEL Workshops indicate that Bullying is a common concern and that there is a general consensus that bullying behaviour occurs in and out of the school environment, including face to face bullying and cyberbullying. There is an ongoing process to promote a common understanding of what defines a bullying situation. There is also a commitment to developing a common language about bullying behaviour, consistent school wide strategies to manage bullying and skills to empower students in readiness for potential situations that they may encounter.

The school community shares a commitment and responsibility to promoting Anti Bullying strategies, the early identification of bullying and the effective management of bullying behaviour.

Our School Plan takes into consideration the important role that students, parents, caregivers and teachers play in preventing and responding to bullying behaviour.

Key Strategies will be implemented to maintain a positive climate of respectful relationships where bullying is less likely to occur:

- We have a comprehensive and procedurally fair **Student Welfare Program** based on ‘Choice Theory’ and ‘Assertive Discipline’. This includes working alongside parents to support our kids.
- **KidsMatter** – KidsMatter Primary is a mental health and wellbeing framework for primary schools and is proven to make a positive difference to the lives of Australian children. KidsMatter Primary provides the proven methods, tools and support to help

schools work with parents and carers, health services and the wider community, to nurture happy, balanced kids. Teachers are actively involved in ongoing training to support the wellbeing of students. Information is made available to parents and carers to support student mental health and wellbeing. ‘Every Face Has A Place’ is promoted widely throughout the school. www.kidsmatter.edu.au

- **Highway Heroes –SEL Program**, which is a universal, health promotion, prevention and early intervention program which aims to build children’s social and emotional skills. It explicitly teaches strategies and TOOLS as an external and proactive response to adversities. <https://bestprograms4kids.com/>
- **DEC Anti-bullying Inquiry Learning Units** - this program looks carefully at defining bullying and giving ‘Student Voice’ to bullying. It looks at prevention on the playground, in the classrooms and online. <https://antibullying.nsw.gov.au/educators/Preventing-and-responding-to-bullying>
- Promotion of positive behaviour through well communicated and promoted expectations
- Explicit teaching of school expectations and ‘The Five Fair Rule’
- Clearly defined and consistent classroom and playground procedures following the School Matrix.
- Detailed monitoring and data collection procedures for both Classrooms and Playgrounds.
- Clear guidelines for responding to bullying.
- Commitment to celebrations of achievement and responsible behaviours through Big Day’s Out, Values Voucher and Highway Heroes weekly prize draws.
- Promotion of individual and school respect through uniform, acceptable standards of behaviour and core values.

Prevention

Highway Heroes - Social and Emotional Learning Program & DEC Anti-bullying Inquiry Learning Units:

This program is implemented across the whole school K-6 Mainstream and Special Education classes. Explicit teaching includes:

- understanding self and others;
- recognising and regulating emotions;
- developing empathy for others;
- making responsible decisions;
- working effectively in teams;

- developing leadership skills;
- managing relationships, life, work and learning effectively;
- understanding, establishing and building positive relationships; and
- handling challenging situations constructively.

(Bully scenarios are frequently used to help role-play strategies children can use from our whole school Highway Heroes Program)

QuEST (Quality Environment for Students and Teachers)

QuEST is an ongoing peer support and leadership program which develops social skills in the students of Port Macquarie Public School. Year Six students are trained in QuEST leadership. Team work, self-reliance and organisational skills are developed. Prior to the training a teacher/ student interview takes place to ensure student readiness. Students then run activities throughout lunchtimes to ensure that all students at PMPS are engaged in fun activities and are encouraged to join in and socialise with their peer group.

The Student Representative Team

This team ensures that staff are aware of issues around the school including difficulties that individual or groups of students may be experiencing. Representatives are selected from each Year 3-6 classroom and meet with the Coordinating teacher regularly.

Ongoing messages of Anti- bullying

Throughout the year, messages and strategies for dealing with bullying situations are promoted at morning and stage assemblies. This will align with the whole-school Highway Heroes Program. Regular information will be posted in the Newsletter for the wider school community as well as Unit summaries being sent home to parents/carers at the end of each Highway Heroes learning sequence. QuEST leaders will deliver regular reminders of our 'Anti-bullying' messages.

Our school is a registered NDA school (National Day of Action against Bullying and Violence). Each class develops an Anti-bullying pledge at the beginning of every school year. These are displayed in our classrooms.

Early Intervention

Promotion of Early Reporting

The school will promote the importance of reporting incidents immediately so that problems can be addressed before escalation in degree of seriousness.

Identification of Students at Risk

Processes are built into Staff and Stage meetings to address student welfare / wellbeing concerns and identify any students experiencing difficulty, showing signs of withdrawal, sadness etc. Any concerns will be investigated in a timely fashion to determine cause and address any potential development of bullying.

Learning Support Team

Individual concerns are reported to the school's Support Learning Team for investigation and recommendations of support.

School Counsellor

The school Counsellor is utilised as an important resource for allowing students an opportunity to disclose any incidents or developing bullying issues that may need to be addressed.

Parent / Carer Contact

Any concerns raised from staff will be communicated with Parents/Carers immediately to assist in investigating the concern and establish whether any additional reports have been made to parents or if concerning behaviours have also been displayed in the home environment.

Enrolment Procedures

The School Enrolment Procedure includes an interview with the parents/carers and students where bullying is discussed to ascertain if there has been any past history involving bullying.

Response

Programs will be put into place to support:

- awareness of the School's Anti-bullying definition and what constitutes bullying;
- the development of a common language in regards to bullying and learning school-wide strategies for promoting positive behaviour;
- the focus when dealing with bullying behaviour will be supporting students to learn responsible replacement behaviour;
- consequences for bullying behaviour will be clear and will support the learning of responsible behaviour;
- professional development for staff to promote common investigation techniques, questioning, recording and communication of issues; and
- promotion of the use of Social and Emotional Learning – Highway Heroes - to empower students in conflict resolution, seeking assistance and self-regulation.

School programs will aim to:

- embed a philosophy of Anti - Bullying and zero tolerance into school life;
- provide students with conflict resolution skills;
- develop bystander skills;
- build productive school citizens who capably deal with a variety of social situations and willingly support their peers;
- encourage positive and supportive intervention;
- promote community education and problem solving skills;
- establish clear consequences for bullying activity;
- implement replacement behaviour plans for students exhibiting ongoing bullying behaviour;
- encourage staff vigilance; and
- regular reminding of Anti-Bullying messages at Assemblies, Newsletters & visual displays around our school.

Reporting Procedures

Action	Response	Timeframe
Report made by either <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student • Parent • Teacher 	Investigation and / or mediation of incident/s using questioning guidelines. This will lead to either <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resolution • Further action required. Notify / consult with Supervisor /Principal <p>For any ongoing or serious bullying incidents, restitution and resolution need to follow all investigations. This will involve working with the bully/s and the victims. This is the responsibility of the Class Teachers, Parents, Stage Supervisor and the Principal. Teachers and Parents need to be kept informed of all actions, programs, counselling etc.</p> <p>All incidents and following actions are to be recorded in the School Student Management System (ebs4)</p>	Monitored through open communication between Students, Parents & School.

Principles for Reporting and Managing Bullying Incidents

- It is vital that the teacher who the student reports to follows up the incident, informs the student that they have investigated and followed up the incident and checks back with the student to monitor and reassure.
- Effective reporting and management must be supported by thorough communication to all parties involved.
- All investigation processes, mediations and communications will be documented.

Response Strategies

Methods and strategies for conducting mediations, student counselling, restitution and resolution meetings will be flexible to adapt to the needs of particular students and situations.

Debriefing and Counselling

Opportunities for debriefing and counselling will be provided for any student who has been involved in, affected by or has been a witness to bullying behaviour. We will endeavour to reduce any anxiety that students experience to bullying incidents. This will be done in consultation with the parents/ carers, the Class Teacher and the Learning Support Team.

Additional School Response Strategies

- Relevant information and updates are communicated to parents to highlight current issues, concerns and new information
- Relevant feedback is provided to parents / carers who have reported incidents or have children involved in bullying situations
- Clear procedures for reporting serious incidents to the Police as well as liaising with Police when students at risk display escalating behaviour. Police Liaison Officers are utilised to assist in managing and preventing bullying behaviour

Staff are trained in the circumstances in which the Child Wellbeing Unit and Community Services should be contacted and the procedures for doing so. Staff should report concerns immediately to the Principal. The Child Wellbeing Guidelines are utilised to assist with assessing whether a student is at risk of significant harm and thus whether a notification to the Child Wellbeing Unit or Community Services should be made.

- If at any time any party is not satisfied with the school handling of any bullying incident or disciplinary action (eg suspension), procedures will be made available in regards to Complaints Handling.

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- Detailed records will be kept and monitored (eg playground data, esb4 data, periodic behaviour reports, to ensure that any emerging patterns of behaviour are identified and dealt with.
- The School Anti-bullying Plan will be publicised through: the School P&C and the School Website
- The School Anti-bullying Plan will be reviewed annually by staff to revise the process in place and to ensure that all staff are familiar with the school procedures for Bullying prevention and management.
- The School's Anti-bullying Strategies and effectiveness will be reported on annually in the School Annual Report.

Additional Information

Key Resources

Police Youth Liaison Officer – Wendy Hudson Port Macquarie Police Station

Kids Helpline – 1800 551 800

Principal's comment

This Anti-bullying Plan has been developed in consultation with all community groups.

We seek to empower students to report bullying incidents as well as providing skills and strategies for students and carers when bullying occurs.

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