



Education &  
Communities

# Anti-bullying Plan

Mandurama 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

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

At Mandurama Public School we value and show respect for others in a safe and supportive environment. We foster positive relationships through our Student Welfare programs. As part of our school's Student Welfare Policy, our Anti-Bullying policy aims to effectively prevent and deal with incidences of bullying within our school.

## Protection

Bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or groups towards one or more persons.

This could be:

**Verbal:** the child is called names, put down, threatened, humiliated, dominated, intimidated, victimised or harassed based on gender, race, disability etc.

**Physical:** hitting/punching, pushing/shoving, kicking, throwing objects, belongings are stolen or damaged, spitting, intimidation making someone do something against their will;

**Social:** the child is left out, ignored or rumours are spread;

**Psychological:** the child is stalked or given dirty looks;

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

**Cyberbullying:** sending negative messages about a person or persons via email, phone, internet etc.

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.

## Parents' Responsibilities

- To be aware of and support the school's Anti-Bullying Policy.
- To take an active role in their child's school life and watch for signs that their child may be being bullied.
- To encourage their child to adopt learnt strategies to deal with bullying.
- To instruct their child to 'tell' if they are bullied.
- To inform the school if any bullying is suspected.

## Students' Responsibilities

- To behave appropriately at all times.
- To show consideration and respect and to support others.
- To 'tell' if they are being bullied or if they see someone being bullied – both at school and on the way to and from school.
- To attempt to use learnt strategies to deal with bullying incidents.

## Staff Responsibilities

- To model appropriate behaviour at all times.
- To monitor and track incidences of bullying and respond in an appropriate and timely manner according to the Anti-Bullying Policy.
- To communicate any bullying behaviour to their Principal.
- To implement school programs which promote positive relationships that incorporate strategies to deal with bullying.
- To communicate bullying incidences with parents as needed.

## Prevention

It is important that the school community address the underlying causes of bullying relating to school organisational issues, learning and teaching issues and relationship issues.

## Preventative Strategies

- Education and promotion of the school's Anti- Bullying Policy.
- Productive and respectful relationships established between all members of the school community.
- Classroom rules, routines and processes negotiated and applied consistently.
- Adequate supervision of students during breaks on playground and classrooms
- Active intervention when bullying occurs.

## Strategies to Deal with Bullying

Reported cases can be dealt with in several ways. It is recognised, however, that each case is different and may require an individual, case by case approach.

In all cases it is important to ensure:

- That victims are believed and made safe
- That the principles of natural justice and due process are followed in regard to students reported for bullying
- Restorative Practices
- School Counsellor intervention.
- Incidences kept on the school database and monitored regularly
- Parents and school staff work together

## Strategies for Students on How to Deal with Bullying Behaviours

- Stay in sight of peers and adults
- Try to stay calm - walk away without looking back
- Look at the person - try to speak in a strong voice. Say something like: "You might think that, but I don't" or "Why are you doing this?"

- Put your hand up and say, "Stop!" in a loud voice
- Use an I message. Express your feelings in an assertive way e.g. "I want you to stop." or "I don't like it."
- Go to a safe place - with other children, or near the teacher
- Talk to someone who can help you (a teacher or your parent). Tell them what has happened, how you feel and what they can do to help. This is not dobbing!
- Never keep bullying a secret

## Procedures for Dealing with Bullying Behaviour

All students have the right to be heard and listened to.

- Class teacher deals with smaller issues in the classroom in line with the school's Student Welfare Policy and individual class rules
- Teacher on playground duty deals with smaller issues in the playground – if more serious in nature the duty teacher informs the Principal who then deals with the bullying
- Have discussions with the students involved – take appropriate action.
- Parents and class teacher work with student to look at underlying problems and seek solutions
- Principal works with parents and individuals to identify bullying behaviours where necessary
- School Counsellor and Principal involved in individual programs if required
- Serious bullying incidents are recorded and consequences are in line with the School's Discipline Procedures
- Issues are resolved in a calm manner with as much time as necessary given to hearing what each student feels and providing time and assistance to help students cope better
- Students who demonstrate bullying behaviour will need to take responsibility for their behaviour
- Principal to arrange meetings with families of those students involved in bullying incidents
- Principal will manage major bullying issues which may involve following the DEC Suspension and Expulsion procedures

## Procedures for Dealing with Cyberbullying

The school reserves the right to determine whether incidents of cyber bullying relate to the responsibility of the school. If determined the school has a role to play we will ensure each student is safe and arrange necessary support appropriate to each situation.

- Support from staff will be provided on an ongoing basis with the agreement of the student and parent to assist the student to work through the effects of the cyber bullying and to help them develop and implement effective coping strategies.
- The student's parents will be contacted to alert them to the issue, any ongoing concerns regarding the welfare of the student, and discuss the issue and how best to deal with it.
- Reassure the student that the school is taking the incident seriously and that the reported bullying will be acted on.
- Gather basic facts about the suspected cyberbullying and, if possible, identify the students involved.
- Implement appropriate responses to address the bullying using evidence-based responses such as restorative justice approaches to conflict resolution.
- Provide strategies to the student and their parent to assist with managing the issue like not responding to any further messages/postings from the bully and, if possible, blocking further correspondence from them (block their mobile number or email address).
- Keep evidence of any bullying to assist with tracking down the bully and potentially reporting the matter to police (screen captures, bully's screen name, text and images).
- Request students and families keep school informed of any further cyber bullying attempts.

If the student is distressed by bullying, the school will ensure the student is provided with options for psychological support including school counselling. The school will follow its established approach to incidents of bullying and student welfare.

## 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. Support for these students will be provided through:

- Using social skills programs.
- Using role play situations.
- Jointly develop a plan of action on how to cope with situations.
- Find things the students are good at and celebrate the successes.
- Promote leadership within the school amongst the students.
- Referring to the School Counsellor.

## Response

### Signs that your child may be being bullied:

- Dislike and avoidance of school
- Decline in academic performance and social interaction
- Gets into trouble more often at school
- Wants to be taken to school even though it is close
- Possessions are damaged or missing
- Becoming withdrawn, appearing depressed or anxious, having mood swings, crying for no apparent reason
- Unable to explain bruises or scratches
- Complaints of feeling unwell though parents report no specific illness
- Asks for, or steals, extra money
- Increased social exclusion and peer rejection
- Having less to do with friends
- Has bad dreams
- Sleeps badly
- Wets the bed
- Gets angry with brothers or sisters
- Uses put-down language when speaking about others or self
- Increased negative self-perception

## Signs that your child may be bullying others:

- Aggressive behaviour – both inside and outside the home (teasing, threatening, hurting others)
- Difficult to manage
- Oversensitive – feels that everyone is out to get him/her
- Unhappiness
- Loses temper often
- Quietness or depression
- Decline in academic performance
- Disturbing stories about the child – from other students, their friends or other adults
- Sensing that other parents (whose children have contact with your child) are avoiding you, or hinting at things you don't know

## Procedures for Reporting Bullying

Students are to report all incidents of bullying to a teacher immediately. Parents with concerns about bullying should contact the school immediately.

All bullying incidents are to be reported, taken seriously and dealt with by Principal. These issues will be dealt with immediately or as soon as practically possible. The Principal will contact the parents of the student being bullied and the student doing the bullying immediately it is discovered.

All staff will be informed so they can monitor students in the playground. In the case of cyberbullying, the police may need to be contacted to make a report. Students will be supported by the School Counsellor if upset by being bullied or experiencing ongoing bullying of a peer.

The Anti- Bullying Policy will be available on the school website and regular information will be provided in the school's newsletter. In regards to assaults, threats, intimidation and or harassment, these will be reported to the police by the Principal. The School Safety and Response unit will also be contacted where necessary. The school's critical incidence policy will be implemented in such incidences.

If there is a need to contact support agencies, the principal will contact the Child Wellbeing Unit. The school counsellor will also provide support.

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

In regards to staff the Complaints Handling Policy will be used and staff can be directed to EAPS.

The Anti-Bullying Plan and policy will be available through the school website. This plan is to be revised every 2 years in consultation with all staff and community representatives. The plan will then be tabled at the next P&C meeting and updated on the school website.

Kellie Stone

School Principal

## School contact information

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