



Education &
Communities

June 2016

Anti-bullying Plan

Coledale 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

Much world-wide research has shown the short and long term damaging effects of bullying. Bullying in the school environment can only be dealt with effectively with a whole school approach. A committed social response is necessary to break the cycle by implementing strategies for both prevention and intervention.

At Coledale Public School we believe that:

- 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 will not be tolerated.
- A whole school approach, involving students, parents and staff is paramount in establishing support systems to address bullying.
- 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.

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

Protection

Bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social and psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons. Cyberbullying refers to bullying through information and communication technologies.

Bullying can involve humiliation, domination, intimidation, victimization 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.

All forms of bullying - whether it be verbal, physical, social or psychological are not tolerated at any level at school.

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.

All members of the school community contribute to preventing bullying by modeling and promoting appropriate behaviour and respectful relationships.

Prevention

At Coledale Public School:

- 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 oneself of thinking like a victim.
- 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.

What is Bullying?

The behaviour may be:

- Deliberate.
- A result of thoughtlessness.
- A physical attack on a person or their property.
- A psychological threat or emotional attack on a person.
- Verbal.
- Indirect such as spreading rumours, excluding people from groups or manipulation of others to mistreat someone.
- Cyber Bullying which includes all communications that seem to threaten, humiliate, intimidate, control or put another person or persons down.

What is Bullying?

- Fighting, pushing, shoving
- Name calling, teasing, unacceptable language
- Spreading rumours
- Rude gesturing
- Making threats, asking for money
- Damaging, taking, hiding people's belongings
- Putting people down, sneering, giving the look
- Ignoring or excluding people from groups/activities
- Writing notes, graffiti about people
- Picking on people because of their race, sex, appearance
- Invading someone's personal space
- Making fun of people

Cybering bullying can be carried out by:

Use of fixed and mobile phones by

- Making unwanted phone calls
- Text and picture messaging
- Video clips
- Sending unwanted letters, emails.

Use of Internet services such as:

- Email
- Chat room
- Discussion group or forum
- Instant messaging
- Social networking websites such as Bebo, Facebook, My Space or YouTube.

If I see or hear of any bullying, what should I do:

- Do not delete or forward any phone or internet records
- Refuse to be involved in bullying
- Do not encourage others to be a bully
- Do not be a spectator to bullying
- Speak out or go and get help
- Report the bullying, it is not "dobbing". You are being a responsible person
- Report incidents of Cyber bullying
- Talk to the person being bullied and encourage them to report it.
- Tell someone who can help
 - your teacher
 - another teacher
 - a school leader
 - a friend
 - your parents

Early Intervention

Everyone at Coledale Public School is responsible for eliminating all forms of bullying therefore:

Teachers will:

- act as role models of caring and tolerant behaviour
- listen to reports of bullying
- endeavour to protect the victim from further harm
- act to prevent the behaviour reoccurring
- give strategies to victims to empower them
- mediate between the two parties when appropriate
- record all reported incidents through a Note of Concern.

- maintain a record in their class behaviour book, for both bullies and those being bullied (victims).
- report all bullying to the Principal.
- Explicitly teach bullying awareness

Students who are bullied will be:

- encouraged to speak to a teacher giving full details of the event
- encouraged to develop and speak to a network of teachers and friends

Students who witness bullying will:

- intervene if they can safely stop the bullying
- immediately seek teacher help if they can't stop the bullying
- report all incidents of bullying to a teacher

Parents will

- listen sympathetically to reports of bullying
- contact the school to arrange an appointment
- work with the school to find a solution

The School will:

- keep records and monitor bullying incidents
- inform parents of any child who is involved in persistent and/or serious bullying incidents
- protect and support victims of bullying to eliminate the likelihood of them being bullied again
- work with parents of the victim to give their child strategies to avoid being bullied
- work with the parents of bullying child to establish joint strategies
- to assist the child in making appropriate behavioural choices

- assist the child who is choosing to bully someone to change his/her behaviour
- require the child who is choosing to bully someone to take part in individual counselling with the principal, class teacher or school counsellor should further transgressions occur
- remove any child who continues to bully others from the playground and or school for a required period of time should there be no change in his/her behaviour
- Programs utilized will include: buddy and peer support programs, mentoring, sorting out and conflict resolution programs.

Prevention

Students, teachers, parents and the community will be aware of the school's position on bullying.

- Professional development for staff related to bullying and the strategies to counteract it.
- Community awareness and input relating to anti-bullying, its characteristics and the schools' programs and response (e.g. weekly newsletter, parent forums) Restorative Practice Parent Information Evening.
- Provide programs that promote resilience, life skills and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and communication skills.
- Learning Support Team
- Restorative Practice
- Annual Anti-Bullying Lessons to promote assertive/proactive behaviour by students
- Anti-Bullying Performances
- Peer Support
- Values Education

- Buddies
- SRC
- Staff supervision of set area in playground
- Ensure students know and understand what behaviour is acceptable in the school (ie consistent classroom/school rules displayed in the school)
- Social Skills programs
- White Ribbon - Respectful Relationships
- Peer Mediation

Curriculum

The relationships theme of the Interpersonal Relationships strand of the PD/H/PE syllabus covers issues associated with bullying. A bullying focus should be part of each stage's PD/H program and address the outcomes and indicators for this strand. Skills may 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.

Opportunities to voice concerns

Opportunities need to be provided for students to voice their concerns and formulate solutions. These may be class meetings, or through the SRC. Random bully audits will be conducted during the school year by giving the children the opportunity to report those bullying discreetly.

Staff Awareness

Share at Admin meetings, the names of students who are being targeted so they can be monitored on the playground.

Playground Supervision

The role of staff in playground supervision is very important in recognizing and responding to incidents of bullying. Bullying peaks at lunchtime and is less frequent at recess and during class. 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 will be identified through referrals to the Learning Support Team
- Risk Assessments will be devised and positive behaviour plans put in place to support students.
- Social skills programs will be established for group and individual needs
- Students are encouraged to report bullying incidents involving themselves or others. The role of bystanders is explained.
- Teachers are regularly reminding students to report incidents. Reporting is not dobbing.
- Parents are to contact the school if they become aware of a problem
- Students are recognized for positive behaviours.

Response

Bullying - no Way!

Whole School Community

In managing incidents that have serious impact on individuals and for the school the use of restorative practice principles are applied to resolve issues and restore the sense of well-being for all involved.

Restorative practice methods for addressing social problems include the method of shared concern, the no blame approach, restitution, community conferencing and the formal apology.

The key principles of these methods are:

- Bullying and harassment occur in the context of group behaviour.
- The aim is to develop empathy and concern for others.
- The dynamics that sustain bullying and harassment can be shifted by working with the perpetrators, and often their family and/or peer group.
- A shift in behaviour can be achieved by developing a sense of shared concern for the bullied or harassed persons.
- Punitive measures model and reinforce the abuse of power to meet individual needs, place the target at greater risk of revenge and may send the bullying underground.

Restorative justice approaches require these factors to be in place first:

- The support of the victimised person who needs to have identified that he/she is being bullied and is confident that the approach advocated will work
- Preliminary investigation to clearly understand the issues before the process is implemented.
- Staff guidelines and professional development to build

understanding, skills and confidence in using the strategies

- Support within the school community for the approach
- Agreement that the goal is to solve the problem rather than to interrogate, punish, blame or label individuals.
- Respectful facilitation of the process by trained people
- Follow up monitoring of the agreement.

No blame approach

The no blame approach provides teachers with a way of encouraging empathy and dealing with individual bullying or harassment behaviours.

The teacher acts both as facilitator and intermediary between the parties. Here is the no blame approach sequence:

1. Meet the victimised person to provide support, explain the proposed process and collect material on the impact of the bullying or harassment.
2. Consult with teachers who know the peer group well to establish a balanced group consisting of the main perpetrator and supporters, friends of the victimised person, and two assertive peers who have not attempted to prevent the bullying or harassment.
3. Convene a structured meeting of this group (without the targeted student present) to develop shared responsibility without blaming, to elicit suggestions for solving the problem, to encourage shared action and to establish a subsequent meeting (possibly in a week) to discuss progress. (Note: The victimised person does not attend this group meeting.)
4. Support the victimised person through daily meetings to check progress.

Method of shared concern

This method (developed by Pikas, 1989) enables the trained teacher or counsellor to establish shared concerns and encourage shared solutions to the problem. The method includes initial individual meetings with perpetrators as well as a final meeting of all parties.

This is the method of shared concern sequence:

1. Gather preliminary to understand the problem.
2. Meet each of the perpetrators individually to encourage acknowledgment of the situation and to develop constructive responses and a plan to change the behaviour.
3. Meet the person being bullied or harassed.
4. Meet perpetrators individually to review progress of their agreement.
5. Following positive signs of change, hold a meeting of all perpetrators to reinforce the changes made and prepare for the next meeting.
6. Hold a final combined meeting of all involved as a public demonstration that the behaviours have ceased.

Instead of 'bullying the bullies', both of these strategies establish shared concerns and shared solutions to reconcile differences and encourage more equitable behaviour.

The Sheffield Project in the UK was able to achieve a 75% success rate with the method of shared concern. However it was found that multiple strategies are needed for those students who persistently bully others.

The strategy has also been used effectively in British, other European and Australian schools.

Formal apology

The formal apology is a symbolic social contract that can mend relationships and restore personal wellbeing. As a learned negotiation process, it can help to develop empathy and show that the harmony of the group is more important than an individual's victory. A successfully given and received apology involves:

- learning and acknowledging that an accepted norm has been violated
- working out the appropriate time to make the apology
- naming the specific offence to the offended person
- explaining to the offended person why the offence was committed, that the behaviour isn't characteristic of the offender, and that it won't happen again
- communicating that the behaviour wasn't intended as a personal affront (and therefore the other person can feel safe in future)
- showing genuine regret for the behaviour.

As part of any of these restorative processes, individuals are likely to require assistance to develop understanding, skills, confidence and courage in giving genuine apologies.

Community Conference

This is a formal, scripted meeting attended by the offender, those who have been harmed by his or her actions, and other participants including carers and supporters of the main parties. The conference process establishes the gravity of the offence and its impact on others in a way that enables offenders to face up to their actions and make a sincere apology. The ensuing conference agreement, negotiated to the satisfaction of both parties, enables the young person to make amends to 'the offended' and rejoin the school community, while the shared decision making fosters culturally

appropriate practices, support for behavioural change and socially just outcomes for participants. Conferencing is conducted by police and/or other agencies in a number of Australian States and Territories. Training is required to conduct conferences. The reporting of a bullying incident can be made to a student's teacher, the teacher on playground duty or any member of the teaching staff at Coledale Public School. Students may report an incident to their parents. Parents are encouraged to contact the school where their child has reported an incident of bullying so it may be investigated. These procedures are regularly promoted to students at school and in the school newsletter to parents.

Dealing with a bullying incident

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

- a) No Blame or Method of Shared Concern Approach
- b) Logical consequences applied
- c) Consequences stated in Behaviour Management Policy
- d) Individual student management plan

Role of teachers in receiving a report of bullying

- i. Determine whether report is of bullying, poor social skills or rule breaking
- ii. If bullying, record details on a Note of Concern noting level of severity and any necessary comments
- iii. Refer to Principal

Role of Principal in receiving a report of bullying

- i. The role of the principal is to employ a problem solving approach which apportions responsibility rather than blame ie Dikas model of Shared Concern

- ii. Interview the target of the bullying and determine the targets feelings and who is involved including bullies, bystanders and colluders
- iii. Hold a meeting with the bullies etc and share with the share group the targets feeling in order to raise feelings of empathy
- iv. Hand over responsibility to the group to decide on ways to support the target. This emphasizes a solution rather than blame.
- v. Student implement their plan
- vi. Meet with target to find out how they are feeling. Hold a follow-up meeting to review the solutions
- vii. If incidences of bullying continue, further consequences in line with the school Behaviour Management Policy may need to be applied

Key stakeholders involved in the bullying incident will be kept well informed by the teacher or Principal about the ongoing welfare of their child.

Where the bullying behaviour involves assault, threats, intimidation or harassment, the issue may be referred to the Department of Education and Communities' Safety and Security Directorate and the Police. In some cases it may be necessary to inform the Child Wellbeing Unit or Community Services of the incident.

Where parents are not happy with the outcome of handling a bullying incident, an appeal can be made. Please see the Complaints handling policy at <https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/about-us/how-we-operate/how-we-handle-complaints/schools>

Parents may also complete a compliments form (obtained at the above website) where an issue has been handled well.

Advice given to Students who are being Bullied

The student should be encouraged to:

- Tell the bully to stop. State quite clearly that the behaviour is unwelcome and offensive
- Seek help. Talk about the experience to someone who is trustworthy (School Counsellor, teacher, parent, peer).
- Report the bullying to a member of staff and feel confident that any incident can be resolved satisfactorily.
- Use the strategies from the Rock and Water program ie centring, burning eyes, a stop hand signal and big voice STOP!

Outer 'self protective' strategies that might be suggested include:

- Staying away from the bully, or places where bullying occurs.
- Be with friendly, supportive friends.

Advice given to Students who know Someone Else is being Bullied

Students should be made aware that early intervention can defuse conflict situations before bullying sets in or gets out of hand. The role of the bystander is crucial.

Therefore the following suggestions should be made:

- If possible, intervene as the bullying occurs by telling the bully to stop. This is very useful if the onlooking student has influence with the bully.
- Refuse to join in with the bullying.
- Support students who are being bullied - just standing by them can be enough or removing them from the situation.
- Tell an adult about the bullying.
- It is every student's right and responsibility to report bullying whether it happens to oneself or to someone else.

The Coledale Public School Anti-bullying Plan is available on the school's website <http://www.coledale-p.schools.nsw.edu.au>. or from the school office .

The effectiveness of the Anti-bullying Plan will be communicated to the Coledale Public School community on an annual basis via the Annual School Report.

The Coledale Public School Anti-bullying Plan is reviewed every three years. At this time the Principal, a member of the teaching staff and a member of the community (as nominated by the P&C) will form a committee to review the Plan.

Additional Information

Police Youth Liaison Officer (YLO)

Wollongong Police Local Area Command - 42

Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800

Family and Community Services 132 111

Principal's comment

Every student has the right to attend school in a safe and caring environment. The Coledale Public School Anti-bullying Plan provides strategies and support for all students at school.

Tanya Potter Principal

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