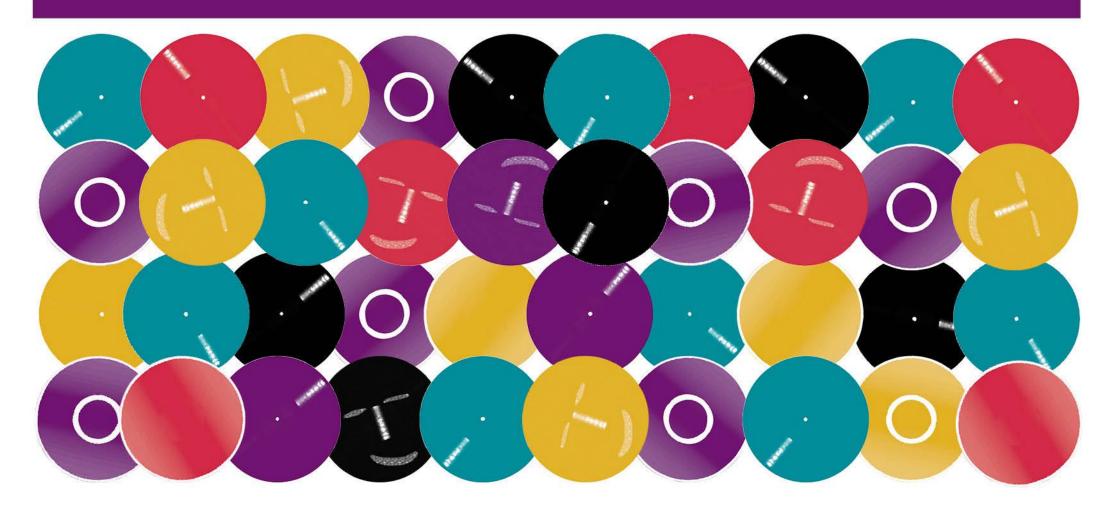# Anti-bullying Plan

Ulmarra 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

Ulmarra Public School has amongst its aims the provision of an environment in which each student is personally involved, in which each can develop as a person of integrity, social conscience and courage.

To this end, we aim to establish a community in which everybody feels valued and safe, and where individual differences are appreciated, understood and accepted. Every student has a right to enjoy his or her time at school.

Protection

Bullying is a form of aggressive behaviour, which is usually hurtful and deliberate; sometimes continuing for weeks, months or even years and it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. Underlying most forms of bullying behaviour is an abuse of power and a desire to intimidate and dominate. (Sharp & Smith, 1994) This also includes cyberbullying and texting bullying.

There are seven key elements of Bullying:

1. An intention to be hurtful.
2. This intention is carried out.
3. The behaviour harms the target.
4. The bully overwhelms the target with his or her power.
5. There is no justification for the action.
6. Action/behaviour is repeated.
7. Bully gets satisfaction/enjoyment from hurting the target. (Rigby, 1996)

Some examples of bullying include:

- Hitting, pushing, kicking, spitting, pushing
- Teasing, mocking and using put-downs
- Using offensive names
- Making offensive comments about others or their families
- Gossip – spreading information (true or untrue)
- Hurtful looks
- Rude gestures
- Leaving someone out of a group to be mean to them
- Messing up someone's game
- Hiding, damaging, stealing someone's belongings
- Making up rumour/stories about someone
- Using threats to stop people going to the toilet or to take their money, food or other belongings
- Writing anything offensive or hurtful about someone or publishing photos or video using any media or social network – letters, notes, email, internet, mobile phone texting, linear or hypertext.

Bullying comes in many forms, including:

- Name-calling, hurtful or racist names
- Verbal threats
- Threatening Text messages or emails
- Threatening Social Network postings
- Sending hurtful notes
- Deliberately ignoring
- Sexual innuendo and harassment
- Writing graffiti about another

Prevention

Students, teachers, parents and the community will be aware of the school's position on bullying which is **zero tolerance**.

The school will also adopt a four-point plan to anti-bullying, which includes:

- Primary Prevention

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

- Early Intervention
- Intervention
- Response

Primary Prevention

- 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)
- Provide programs that promote resilience, life skills and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and communication skills. (e.g. Bullying- A Whole School Approach for P-6, Friendly Kids/Friendly Classrooms, Buddy Programs)
- Provide elective and structured activities at some recess and lunch breaks (e.g. skipping team, chess, sports equipment)
- Staff supervision of set area in playground.
- Ensure students know and understand what behaviour is acceptable in the school. (i.e. consistent classroom/school rules displayed in the school)
- Use the School Parliament and class meetings to help solve problems which arise regarding bully and victim.

Early Intervention

- Students are to be encouraged to report bullying incidents involving themselves or others.
- Teachers to regularly remind students to report incidents. Reporting is not "dobbing".
- Parents are encouraged to contact the school if they become aware of a problem.
- Students are recognised for positive behaviours
- Teachers use a class and playground management plan if an incident of bullying occurs.

Response

- Ulmarra Public School's Welfare Policy, see extract below, outlines appropriate procedures of the consequences for inappropriate behaviour in the classroom and in the playground.
- Possible consequences may involve:
  - Warning
  - Placement on a level
  - Removal to the class supervisor or principal
  - Parental contact
  - Negotiated contract
  - On-going monitoring
  - Timeout from the class/ playground
  - Mediation sessions with the victim to reconcile differences
  - Referral to external agencies
  - Class/group changes if possible
  - Behaviour guidance programs (e.g. anger management, social skills)
  - Detention
  - Suspension (in extreme cases)

Extract from Student Welfare policy

"The school maintains a fair discipline system that is based on a series of levels. Central to this system is the establishment of preventative strategies and systems in the classroom. When unacceptable behaviour occurs it is recorded in Sentral Welfare System. This database is an important source of documentation for discussion with parents and for obtaining support from outside agencies.

Operation of the School Discipline System

Each classroom teacher is responsible for establishing and maintaining a system for managing student behaviour in the classroom. The establishment of such a system is a priority on the first day of school and must be regularly revisited to ensure ongoing effectiveness, especially in the first days and weeks of the school year and at the beginning of each term.

The most effective systems are based on the documentation of a set of 'class rules'. Ideally these are written as a class, stated in positive

language, documented and clearly displayed for ongoing reference and reinforcement throughout the year.

Pivotal to the class rules is the principle that **students are responsible for their own behaviour**.

Rewarding Good Behaviour

Prevention is better than cure. Classroom teachers need to direct focus onto positive behaviour by rewarding students who are working well. Positive praise and the use of the Merit Award system are two methods that can be adopted.

Managing Unacceptable Behaviour

In managing unacceptable behaviour in the classroom the teacher needs to establish a system for warning students that their behaviour is affecting other students' ability to learn.

A commonly used system is:

- A visual/verbal warning
- Name written on the board
- X next to name for repeated infringements
- XXX = Name placed in the behaviour book and student counselled. In discussing behaviour with students, teachers need to communicate the impact that their behaviour is having on the students own learning and the learning of others. Time-out may also be considered as a means of emphasising the seriousness of their behaviour.

For more serious misbehaviour the student's name should be placed directly into the Sentral Welfare System.

Additional support and advice is available from the Principal, the school counsellor, the Itinerant Support Teacher Behaviour, Learning Support Team.

Classroom teachers need to monitor how many warnings are being given in a session. If the learning session is being continually disrupted with warnings, then other measures need to be implemented. Teachers

should consult with colleagues regarding supplementary measures such as buddy teachers, use of isolation, sending students to the Principal etc.

The Sentral Welfare System

This computerised database tracks both positive and negative student behaviours.

Victims and bullies can be identified, behaviours monitored and intervention applied.

PLAYGROUND

Playground Areas

Playground Rules

- No hat - No play.
- Play in a manner that is safe for both yourself and other students.
- Play in the designated playground areas and not near toilets or out of bounds areas.
- Place litter in the bins provided
- Do not enter the sports shed unless you are a designated sports equipment monitor

Playground Misdemeanours

Teacher Warning
Teacher warning issued for:
- reported swearing on the playground;
- interfering with or annoying others.

Time Out

When time out is required the teacher on playground duty will determine an appropriate place on the stage which can be adequately supervised. The amount of time out will be at the discretion of the teacher, depending on the misdemeanour.

Time Out Offences

- littering (or instigate a clean up)
- interfering with games
- abuse of equipment
- teasing
- climbing trees
- repeated fence loitering
- pushing and shoving
- out of bounds
- toilet loitering/misbehaviour

Behaviours to Record in the Sentral Welfare System

The following behaviours should be dealt with then recorded in the Sentral Welfare System. The student should spend the maximum amount of time in the time out area,

- bullying
- tripping
- kicking
- throwing objects
- disobeying teacher direction
- back chatting a teacher
- stealing
- serious aggressive behaviour
- hitting others with objects
- swearing witnessed by a teacher
- repeated out of bounds
- racism
- physical abuse
- spitting

Immediate Removal From The Playground

Any serious or violent behaviour should be immediately referred to the Principal and the student removed from the playground.
The teacher on duty will investigate the underlying issues and record all information in the Behaviour Book. The teacher will also write up a separate incident report. The Principal will determine the course of action to be taken. This will include counselling, letters being sent home to inform parents of the incident, parent interviews, and in extreme cases suspension or involvement of the police."

The school community is provided with regular updates via newsletters, P&C meetings, assemblies and the school's website.

If a staff member has concern that a child is at risk of significant harm they will inform the principal or delegate who will contact the Child Protection Helpline on 133627, make an eReport all use the suspected risk of significant harm fax form A.

While most complaints should be resolved informally with the relevant employee, there are provisions for the use of formal procedures depending on the nature and seriousness of the complaint. For details access the DEC website at https://detwww.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/general_man/complaints

Our school will promote and publicise this Anti-Bullying Policy via parent interview, newsletter, P&C Meetings, Assemblies and the school's website.

The school will report annually on the effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Plan in the Annual School Report.The school will review the Anti-Bullying Plan with the school community in 2015.

Principal's comment

Student wellbeing encompasses everything the school community does to meet the needs of their students and to enhance their happiness and safety. It is reflected in the way we demonstrate care, ensure safety and provide opportunities for success and recognition of each student. The Student Welfare policy, the Anti-Bullying Policy and programs of this school stress the value of prevention and early intervention.

Self-Evaluation Committee

Sandra Armstrong Principal
Jye Reardon Classroom Teacher
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