NSW Department of Education Preventing and Responding to Student Bullying in Schools Policy

This policy sets out the requirements for preventing and responding to student bullying in NSW government schools.

1. Objectives - Policy statement
1.1 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.

2. Audience and applicability
2.1 The policy applies to all NSW government schools and preschools.

2.2 The policy applies to all student bullying behaviour, including cyberbullying, that occurs in NSW government schools and preschools, and off school premises and outside of school hours where there is a clear and close relationship between the school and the conduct of the student.

3. Context
3.1 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. Cyberbullying 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.

3.2 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.

3.3 All members of the school community contribute to the prevention of bullying by modelling and promoting appropriate behaviour and respectful relationships.

3.4 The Complaints Handling Policy establishes the standard approach to resolving complaints, including complaints about the way a reported incident of bullying has been managed. It is required that it be used in all learning and working environments of the Department of Education and Communities.

3.5 For matters involving bullying which affect departmental employees, refer to the Department's Work Health and Safety (WHS) Policy.

4. Responsibilities and delegations

4.1 *Principals*
4.1.1 Principals must ensure that the school implements an Anti-Bullying Plan that:
- is developed collaboratively with students, school staff, parents, caregivers, and the community

- includes strategies for:
    - developing a shared understanding of bullying behaviour that captures all forms of bullying including cyberbullying
    - developing a statement of purpose that outlines individual and shared responsibilities of students, parents, caregivers and teachers for preventing and responding to bullying behaviour

- o maintaining a positive climate of respectful relationships where bullying is less likely to occur
- o developing and implementing programs for bullying prevention
- o embedding anti-bullying messages into each curriculum area and in every year
- o developing and implementing early intervention support for students who are identified by the school as being at risk of developing long-term difficulties with social relationships
- o developing and implementing early intervention support for those students who are identified at or after enrolment as having previously experienced bullying or engaged in bullying behaviour
- o empowering the whole school community to recognise and respond appropriately to bullying, harassment and victimisation and behave as responsible bystanders
- o developing and publicising clear procedures for reporting incidents of bullying to the school
- o responding to incidents of bullying that have been reported to the school quickly and effectively
- o matching a planned combination of interventions to the particular incident of bullying
- o providing support to any student who has been affected by, engaged in or witnessed bullying behaviour
- o providing regular updates, within the bounds of privacy legislation, to parents or caregivers about the management of the incidents
- o identifying patterns of bullying behaviour and responding to such patterns
- o monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the Plan
- o reporting annually to the school community on the effectiveness of the Plan
- o includes procedures consistent with DN10/00225 – Reporting incidents involving assaults, threats, intimidation or harassment and the Incident Reporting Policy (Intranet only)
- o includes procedures for contacting the child wellbeing unit or Community Services where appropriate
- o includes contact information for the police youth liaison officer (YLO) and school liaison police officer (SLP) where appropriate
- o includes contact information for appropriate support services such as Kids Helpline
- o includes information on departmental appeal procedures and the Complaints Handling Policy
- o is promoted and widely available within the school community and published on any school website
- o is reviewed with the school community at least every three years.

4.2 *School staff*
4.2.1 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.

4.3 *Students*
4.3.1 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.

4.4 *Parents and caregivers*
4.4.1 Parents and caregivers have a responsibility to:
- support their children to become responsible citizens and to develop responsible on-line 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.

4.5 *The school community*
4.5.1All members of the school community have the 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.

5. **Monitoring, evaluation and reporting requirements**
5.1 Principals are responsible for:
- implementing the policy within the school
- submitting a copy of the school's Anti-Bullying Plan to the Director, Public Schools whenever it is reviewed
- reporting annually to their school community on the effectiveness of the school's Anti-Bullying Plan

5.2 Directors, Public Schools are responsible for monitoring the local implementation of this policy and reporting to the regional director.

5.3 Executive Directors, Public Schools are responsible for ensuring the regional implementation of the policy.

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Anti-Bullying Plan at Illaroo Road Public School

What is Bullying?
Bullying is a pattern of behaviour by a person or persons, towards another person, which is designed to hurt, injure, intimidate, embarrass, upset or discomfort that person. This behaviour occurs over time. It can be:
- physical aggression
- making them act in a way that they don't want to
- intimidation
- the use of put-down comments or insults, including towards students with complex health needs, such as anaphylaxis
- name calling
- damage to a person's property
- deliberate exclusion from activities
- the setting-up of humiliating experiences
- inappropriate or offensive messages through email or other electronic means (cyber-bullying)

Implementing the Bullying Plan

- Illaroo Road Public School will not tolerate bullying or harassment.
- Bullying is regarded as a 'serious incident'.
- All teachers will put an end to acts of bullying by applying consistent consequences.
- Victims of bullying will be supported. No-one deserves to be bullied even if their behaviour is irritating. There are positive and constructive ways to deal with irritating behaviour.
- All teachers will teach appropriate social skills to enable students to cope more readily with bullying situations.
- Parents of students being bullied will be notified of the incident.

Consequences of Bullying

- After establishing that bullying has occurred, and an interview with the bully and victim has taken place, the student/students involved will have their names recorded in the Bully Register and a letter will be sent to the children's parents/caregivers informing them of the bullying incident.
- If a second incident occurs within a school year, the parents/caregivers of the student responsible for the bullying will be asked to attend an interview with the stage supervisor, the class teacher and the student.
- If a third incident occurs within a school year, the student responsible for the bullying will be suspended from school for one day.
- The student responsible for bullying others must write a letter of apology to the victim after all incidents.
- If a serious act of bullying occurs a student may be suspended from school immediately.