



Education &  
Communities

# Anti-bullying Plan

Westlawn 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.

\*Our school's Anti-Bullying Plan and the draft was presented to the whole staff, parents and students for discussion and input.

\*The school community was consulted through the P&C and students through the SRC.

\*The plan was then placed on the school website and in the school Newsletter.

## Statement of purpose

Public schools are inclusive environments, where diversity is affirmed and individual differences are respected. Schools exist in a society where intimidation and harassment occur. At Westlawn Public School we believe bullying must be taken seriously and is not acceptable in any form. Students have the right to expect that they will spend the school day free from the fear of bullying, harassment and intimidation and be able to learn and socialize in a safe and secure environment.

Bullying:

- devalues, isolates and frightens
- affects an individual's ability to achieve
- has long-term effects on those engaging in bullying behaviour, those who are the subjects of bullying behaviour and the onlookers or bystanders.

Teachers, students, parents, caregivers and members of the wider community have a responsibility to work together to address bullying.

## Protection

Bullying can be defined as intentional, repeated behaviour by an individual or group of individuals that causes distress, hurt or undue pressure. Bullying involves the abuse of power in relationships. Bullying can involve all forms of harassment (including sex, race, disability, homosexuality or transgender), humiliation, domination and intimidation of others.

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
- **cyberbullying** eg malicious SMS and email message, inappropriate use of camera phones, excluding someone from an online group such as Facebook ( cyberbullying may occur outside of the school environment but impacts on student learning and wellbeing)
- **medical** eg about conditions such as anaphylaxis, epilepsy, skin rashes

At Westlawn Public School bullying will not be tolerated. We are determined to maintain a positive environment where each individual is treated with respect and dignity and tolerance of others is fostered in a safe and supportive environment. This will be achieved through consistent and positive responses in dealing with bullying behaviour.

As a school community we have a shared responsibility to take positive and consistent actions to deal effectively with bullying.

**Students, teachers, parents, caregivers and members of the wider school community have a responsibility to:**

- promote positive relationships that respect and accept individual differences and diversity within the whole school community
- contribute to the development of the Anti-bullying Plan and support it through words and actions
- actively work together to resolve incidents of bullying behaviour when they occur
- build resilience in students to deal with difficult or challenging situations.

**Students have a responsibility to:**

- behave appropriately, respecting individual differences and diversity
- behave as responsible digital citizens
- behave as responsible bystanders
- report incidents of bullying according to the school's Anti-Bullying Plan
- follow the school's Anti-Bullying Plan.

**Parents and caregivers have a responsibility to:**

- support their children to become responsible and respectful 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
- follow the school Anti-bullying Plan
- work collaboratively with the school to resolve incidents of bullying when they occur.

**Teachers have a responsibility to:**

- respect and support students in all aspects of their learning
- model appropriate behaviour
- respond in an appropriate and timely manner to incidents of bullying according to the school Anti-bullying Plan
- implement school programmes which promote positive relationships that incorporate strategies to deal with bullying
- have knowledge of school and departmental policies relating to bullying behaviour
- communicate bullying incidents with parents when needed
- document incidents of bullying
- support students to become responsible and respectful citizens and to develop responsible on line behaviour.

**Strategies to Deal With Bullying**

At Westlawn Public School we will:

- Openly talk about bullying- what it is, how it affects us and what we can do about it
- Teach our students the skills which build their self-esteem and empower them to take responsibility for themselves and give them the opportunity to practise these skills
- Investigate bullying issues or complaints promptly
- Respond to substantiated instances of bullying behaviour in accordance with the school's discipline and welfare policy and all relevant NSW Department of Education and Communities (DEC) policies and procedures

**Prevention**

Strategies and programs at Westlawn Public School for bullying prevention:

- Up to date and well communicated Welfare and Discipline Policy
- Buddies and Peer Support Program (teach our students the skills which build their self-esteem and empower them to take

responsibility for themselves and give them the opportunity to practise these skills)

- Social Skills programs for students nominated by Learning Support Team, staff or parents
- K- 6 Bystander Bullying Day
- Teaching skills and understandings that will lead to reducing and eliminating bullying behaviours through PD/H/PE
- Explicit teaching of the School Rules and associated behaviours
- Active playground supervision
- Teacher Mentoring in the playground
- Model and encourage the use of positive and supportive language with an expectation of student use
- Explicit teaching explaining the appropriate and correct use of information and communication technology systems
- Involve students in establishing classroom rules of behaviour
- Developing positive student leadership roles
- Life Education program
- Child protection program
- Regular daily positive reinforcement in classroom, playground and assemblies. This will, in turn, encourage the child to want to repeat the behaviour being reinforced. Positive behaviours are consistently acknowledged
- Individual student behaviour patterns will be monitored from incidents reported on our communication slips, teacher observations and records on classroom behaviour and student disclosure
- Anti-bullying messages are embedded into relevant curriculum areas for every year level
- Provision of additional support personnel to assist teachers in difficult cases

## Early Intervention

The school will implement strategies for students who are identified as being at risk of developing long term difficulties with social relationships and those bullying or engaged in bullying behaviours.

Such strategies include:

- Parent nomination at the time of enrolment.
- The student's previous school will be contacted prior to enrolment and requested to identify any issues around bullying.
- The Learning Support Team will assist in the identification of students either at risk of being bullied or at risk of engaging in bullying type behaviour and devise plans to address the needs of these students.
- Social skills groups and programs may be accessed
- Kinder Orientation Programs will inform parents of school policy and procedures.
- The school counsellor service will be accessed by staff or parent nomination.

## Response

### Identifying Bullying

By students:

- Understand the definition of bullying as intentional, repeated behaviour by an individual or group of individuals that causes distress, hurt or undue pressure. It is not an isolated incident
- Learn about bullying by participating in learning experiences in class, at assemblies etc.
- Be assertive in saying "Stop it, I don't like it, go away" to anyone who demonstrates behaviours that are hurtful, offensive or insulting

- Become aware of the role of the Bystander Bully through explicit lessons.

#### **By parent and caregivers**

- Be aware of all forms of bullying by reading information in this plan and newsletters
- Assist their children in understanding bullying behaviour.

#### **By teachers**

- Teach students key understandings and skills relating to positive relationships, safety, gender equity, discrimination, bullying and harassment. These experiences will be guided by the Personal Development, Health and Physical Education syllabuses and other Key Learning Areas
- Be aware of all forms of bullying
- Be alert and observant for acts of bullying in class, playground etc.

#### **By the Principal**

- Inform students, teachers, parents and caregivers about strategies to be assertive in preventing bullying, and to identify and report bullying.

### **Reporting**

#### **By students**

- Report acts of bullying (towards themselves or others) to class teacher or duty teacher or Principal.

#### **By parents and caregivers**

- Notify a teacher or the Principal of acts of bullying that were reported or witnessed.

#### **By teachers**

- Notify the Principal of acts of bullying that were reported or witnessed.

### **Intervening**

#### **Students**

- Students who have bullied other students will be dealt with according to the WPS Student Welfare Policy and be referred to the L S T
- Students who have been bullied will be provided with support and reminded of appropriate strategies to protect themselves from bullying. Referral to the School Counsellor will be made if deemed appropriate.

#### **Parents and caregivers**

- Parents of students who have bullied will be informed according to the WPS Student Welfare Policy
- Parents of students who have been bullied will be informed.

#### **By teachers and other school staff**

- Implement the WPS Student Welfare Policy in response to bullying
- Regularly discuss with teachers, at Communication Meetings and Learning Support Team Meetings, any students of concern, and plans to prevent and deal with particular instances of bullying.

### **Accessing help and support**

#### **By students**

- Access support of parents, teachers, Principal or School Counsellor
- Speak up about concerns, as with protective behaviours.

#### **By parents and caregivers**

- Access support by making an appointment to speak with the teacher, Principal or School Counsellor.

## Communicating Departmental appeal procedures

### For students

- See below

### For parents and caregivers

- If a student is suspended, parents are able to appeal the decision as per DET *Suspension and Expulsion of School Students - Procedures* which is provided to parents with their notification of suspension letter.

Parents can report suggestions, complaints and allegations to the Principal. These will be dealt with according to DET Policy: *Responding To Suggestions, Complaints And Allegations* PD/2002/0051/V001

### Professional learning

#### For teachers and other school staff

- Staff will be made aware of current policies and procedures relating to Bullying. Staff Meetings, Communication Meetings and Learning Support Team Meetings will be used for this purpose on a needs basis. New staff will be provided with access to school policies.
- New resources from DET will be made available to staff.

On-going, consistent promotion by all stakeholders across the whole school community is required in securing the identified outcomes of this Anti-Bullying Plan which include:

- Raised awareness about bullying amongst staff, students and parent/carers
- Documented evidence in the reduction of incidents of bullying
- Improved strategies in resolving conflict and respecting differences
- Existence of a growing positive climate where it is okay to talk about bullying, to speak-up and ask for help

- Enhanced school environment where all students, staff and parent/carers feel safe, welcome and valued.

The school is committed to promoting and publicising its Anti-Bullying Plan to the broader school community and beyond by ensuring its inclusion in: at least one newsletter each semester, on-line via the school's web site and the School Prospectus.

Bullying documentation secured by the staff and principal will be reviewed by the School Evaluation Team at the end of each semester to monitor the effectiveness of this plan and make appropriate changes if required. This information will be shared with the broader school community through P&C meetings and the school newsletter. A major review involving all stakeholders in student learning will be undertaken every three years.

### Additional Information

- Incidents that involve assaults, threats, weapons, illegal drugs and criminal activity **must** be reported to the School Safety and Response Unit and local Police
- Seek advice from the Child Wellbeing Unit where there is uncertainty about whether concerns amount to risk of significant harm. If the Department of Community Services needs to be contacted it must be reported to the Principal
- **Kids Helpline - 1800551800**
- **Police Youth Liaison Officer -**
- Department of Community Services – 133627
- Child Well Being Unit – 02 9269 9400
- Coffs/Clarence District Office – 02 6642 0222
- Dept of Education and Communities Regional Office -02 66 520500
- School Safety and Response Unit – 1300 363 778
- **Grafton Police Station – 02 6642 0222**

## Useful Websites

[www.bullyingnoway.com.au](http://www.bullyingnoway.com.au)

[bullyproofclassroom.com/great-anti-bullying-activities](http://bullyproofclassroom.com/great-anti-bullying-activities)

<http://www.mindmatters.edu.au/default.asp>

<http://www.kidsmatter.edu.au/>

<http://www.dbcde.gov.au/easyguide> (cybersafety information)

## Principal's comment

This Anti- bullying Plan has the endorsement of the Principal.

## Members of the school team that developed the Anti- bullying Plan:

Mrs Narelle Twigg - Principal

Mr Jason Casserly - Assistant Principal

Mrs Patricia Ellis - Assistant Principal

Mrs Pamela Acevedo-White - Assistant Principal

Mrs Karmen Ward - Assistant Principal

## Through Consultation with:

Westlawn Public School P&C

Westlawn Public School SRC

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