



Education &  
Communities

# Anti-bullying Plan

Five Dock 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 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. Students, teachers and parents/caregivers participated in the development of the Five Dock Public School Anti-Bullying Plan. Students participated in the collection of data regarding bullying, through class meetings, SRC meetings, surveys and small group forums. Teachers contributed through participating in surveys and professional learning to clarify our beliefs regarding bullying and ensure a consistent approach to its management. Parents/caregivers participated in written surveys and focus groups. Out of school hours care personnel were also included in the gathering of information to ensure they contributed to the plan's development.

## Statement of purpose

The Five Dock Public School Community values respect, the opportunity to participate actively in the life of the school and an individual's right to belong safely to our school community, in order to achieve their best. It is expected that all school members uphold these values.

All members of the Five Dock Public School Community are expected to share responsibility for promoting a school environment in which everyone feels safe, valued, respected and included. It is expected that all members of the Community contribute to the prevention of bullying by modelling and promoting appropriate behaviour and respectful relationships.

At Five Dock Public School we believe that students should be provided with opportunities to learn about acceptance and inclusion. We support the development of skills to be able to self-regulate behavior. We acknowledge that incidents of bullying can have lasting effects on individuals and hinder their social and

emotional development as well as hindering their academic achievement. In recognition of this, bullying will not be tolerated at Five Dock Public School.

## Protection

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

Through consultation with the Five Dock Public School Community, the following behaviours have been identified as constituting bullying when they are **deliberate and repeated**, in order to make someone feel unsafe and unhappy.

**Verbal:** Abuse, swearing, threats, sarcasm, racial slurs, ridicule, put downs, insults, whispering about someone (i.e.: spreading rumours).

**Physical:** Pushing, hitting, kicking, scratching, spitting, screaming in someone's ears, invading personal space, stalking/following, punching, slapping.

**Social:** Isolation or exclusion, spreading rumours, non-verbal gestures (eye staring and/or rolling, pulling faces), inappropriate gestures, intimidation.

**Psychological:** Damaging possessions, inappropriate use of technology of any sort, teasing, bribery, blackmail, prank calls, being a by-stander to bullying, staring.

**Cyber Bullying:** Inappropriate electronic communications could include: SMS, email, Tweets, Facebook posts and email hacking, photo sharing, Instagram, Snap Chat, and any other forms of social media platforms.

*Conflicts or fights that are single incidents are not defined as bullying however are dealt with through the school's Student Wellbeing Policy.*

All community members have the responsibility to report incidents of bullying to the classroom teacher or Principal.

All teachers and the Principal have the responsibility to follow up incidents of bullying and work with the victim and the perpetrator in a restorative manner. Parents/caregivers must respect the teacher/s dealing with bullying incident and request an appointment through the school office or alternatively send an email to the school using the school's email address.

Parents/caregivers have a responsibility to support their child/ren and are obliged to work with the school in a calm and respectful manner to resolve any issues related to bullying dealt with by the school.

Students have a responsibility to report incidents of bullying to teachers and discuss issues in a calm and controlled manner and to accept the consequences in a restorative manner.

Teachers and parents/caregivers have a responsibility to educate their students/children about what bullying is and how to deal with it.

Parents/caregivers have a responsibility to allow the school to interview all students involved. Parents/caregivers are not to approach another student and/or parent/caregiver to gather information or respond to the bullying incident.

## Prevention

### **Strategies to prevent bullying**

Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) is a student welfare and social skills program that has been implemented at Five Dock Public School. PBL is a broad range of systemic and individualised strategies that focus on achieving important social and learning outcomes that aim to prevent problem behaviour.

Acceptable behaviour that should occur in each learning area of the school is explicitly taught. This is reinforced through visual displays. Each fortnight all students from preschool to Year 6 focus on specific social skills that have been developed to reinforce our school rules: *Respect Everyone, Participate Safely, Belong With Pride* and *Achieve Your Best*. These rules were developed following consultation with students, staff and parents/caregivers and are directly linked

to our school values. Our school rules are displayed throughout the school to continually remind students of expectations.

As a result of the PBL program, staff and students use an explicit and consistent language of expectations. Positive behaviour is rewarded and inappropriate behaviour has clear and predictable consequences. A matrix of expectations is displayed throughout the school, allowing all community members to be constantly reminded of our expectations.

Explicit teaching and learning activities regarding bullying are integrated with Personal Development, Health and Physical Education, History, Geography, English, Creative and Performing Arts, buddy programs and Peer Support from Kindergarten to Year 6. Preschool children are provided with informal and, as needed, formal, developmentally appropriate activities to develop their understanding of bullying and how to deal with it.

Each year the Police Youth Liaison Officer presents information to Stage Three students on safe behaviour, including cyber bullying.

During Information and Communication Technology lessons (ICT) the eSafety Information program through the Office of the Children's eSafety Commissioner is used to promote safe and responsible use of the internet.

eSafety Information Link:

<https://www.esafety.gov.au/education-resources/classroom-resources>

The Friendly Schools Plus program has been implemented school wide. It is a strengths-based, whole-school program designed to enhance students' social and emotional learning and foster the prevention of bullying behaviours.

Regular communication through the school's fortnightly newsletter, Parents and Citizens meetings and forums ensures the school community is familiar with, and supportive of, the school's Anti-Bullying Plan.

### **Strategies to deal with bullying**

The school's PBL Team collects data and monitors patterns of behaviour. These are followed up with individual students, parents/carers and classroom teachers. If necessary a referral is made to the Learning Support Team for consideration and possible referral to the School Counsellor.

Teachers who recognise that a student is experiencing difficulties in any aspect of school life can complete a referral to the Learning Support Team. Therefore, if a student is experiencing social difficulties they are referred to the Learning Support Team. The Learning Support Team then determines an appropriate course of action.

Parents/carers are able to refer their child to the School Counsellor if they have concerns regarding their child's social development.

All staff members use the PBL program in their classrooms and on the playground to promote positive behaviour (refer to Strategies to prevent bullying).

A matrix has been devised by staff that sets clear guidelines regarding what action to take when they become aware of bullying, who is responsible for dealing with incidents, where details need to be recorded and what consequences need to be put in place.

All strategies are linked to the NSW Department of Education and Communities' Wellbeing and Learning Unit's Anti-bullying Policy whereby a range of options for dealing with bullying, including suspension and expulsion, are listed.

Anti-bullying policy link:

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/wellbeing-and-learning/attendance-behaviour-and-engagement/anti-bullying>

### **Early Intervention**

Any child who may have been a victim of bullying, engaged in bullying or been at risk of developing long-term difficulties with social relationships, may be eligible to access support systems within and external to the school. These are:

**Learning Support Team:** Teachers may refer children to the School's Learning Support Team. The team meets fortnightly to discuss support options and interventions that may be necessary. Options and/or interventions may include: School Counsellor referral; language assessments; inter-agency referral; and, Regional support which may include consultation or referral to a support class.

**Personalised Learning Plans:** Some students may need to have an personalized learning plan, devised in consultation with the Learning Support

Team, classroom teacher and parents/carers and school learning support officers.

**School Learning Support Officers:** School Learning Support Officers work with students on individual programs to assist them to achieve learning goals as determined by the class teacher. School Learning Support Officers provide small group or individual assistance to students. They can also be used to offer additional support on the playground to monitor interactions of at risk students and report these to the teacher on duty;

**Home School Liaison Officers:** Students who are experiencing difficulties with their attendance, are referred to Regional Home School Liaison Officers (HSLO) to work closely with the family and school to develop attendance improvement targets and monitor the achievement of these.

**Risk Management:** A risk management plan is developed for those students who present as being a risk to themselves or others. This is developed in consultation with teachers and parents/carers.

## Response

### **How to recognise and respond to bullying – what to do.**

#### Students

If bullying occurs at school, students are explicitly taught to:

1. Tell the person to 'Stop', using a firm voice and assertive body language.
2. Report the incident to the teacher, either in the classroom or on playground duty. The incident is then recorded in the behaviour book and dealt with at the time. If the incident has occurred on the playground, students are to report it to their classroom teacher as well when classes resume. They are expected to report it on the day it happens.
3. If cyber-bullying has taken place, inform their parents/carers or another trusted adult. The Assistant Principal or Principal is to then be informed.
4. If they see or hear someone being bullied they have a responsibility to inform the class teacher, the teacher on playground duty, the Principal or their parents/carers. Bystander behaviour is unacceptable.
5. Incidents of racism should be reported to the schools Anti-Racism Contact Officer (ARCO).

## Teachers

When an incident of bullying is reported, it is expected that it will be followed up as soon as practical. The teacher who the incident is reported to is responsible for:

1. Investigating the incident by conducting interviews with the students involved, in a supportive and restorative manner. The PBL consequences matrix is to be followed.
2. If necessary, in addition to playground and classroom records, additional notes are to be taken. These need to be kept confidential with copies only provided to the Assistant Principal and Principal.
3. Follow up with parents/carers with more formalised interviews if necessary. Privacy issues need to be considered at all times. Referral to and/or support from a member of the School Leadership Team may be necessary.
4. If the incident involves Cyberbullying, this needs to be reported to the Principal and appropriate action taken (refer to The Safety and Security Directorate, Crime Prevention Newsletter, Issue 2, 2011 – Managing social networking incidents).
5. Incidents of racism should be reported to the schools Anti-Racism Contact Officer (ARCO).

*Teachers must work within the bounds of the privacy legislation at all times.*

## All Staff members

If bullying is occurring in the workplace between a colleague, student or parent/caregiver, the staff member must arrange a time to speak with the Principal, a member of the School Leadership Team, the School Counsellor or the NSW Teachers Federation Representative.

Department of Education employees can access the Employee Assistance Program for free, confidential professional help. Call 1300 366 789

Staff can access the following site for further information:

<https://education.nsw.gov.au/inside-the-department/health-and-safety/staff-wellbeing/respectful-workplaces/workplace-bullying>

## Parents / Carers

When a parent/carer becomes aware of an incident of bullying, they should:

1. Discuss the issue with their child, asking questions to gain as much information as they can
2. Arrange a time to meet with their child's classroom teacher as soon as possible. This can be done by speaking with the teacher directly or by contacting the office to arrange a suitable time. The teacher will document conversation and make copy/copies as necessary. Phone conversations will be recorded and/or on speaker with a witness present.
3. Work with the school to resolve any issues (refer to How to recognise and respond to bullying – what to do – Teachers).
4. Incidents of racism should be reported to the schools Anti-Racism Contact Officer (ARCO). Each year nominations for this role take place, please contact the school office for the contact officers name.

## Raising Awareness

The school's Anti-Bullying Plan is available on the school's website. Copies are available from the office.

Regular communication in the newsletter will take place to inform the community of specific programs that focus on the prevention of bullying. The newsletter will also have the steps that students, teachers and parents need to take to respond to bullying. Parents / Carers have the responsibility to read the newsletter to keep informed.

All classrooms have visual displays and reminders about what bullying is and the steps that should be taken to respond to bullying. Teachers refer to the 'Bullying. No Way!' program supported by the Australian Government.

Bullying. No Way! Website link: <https://bullyingnoway.gov.au>

## Monitoring and Evaluation

Each classroom has a welfare folder where incidents of inappropriate behaviour are recorded. Parents/carers are notified after two entries in a day or three in a fortnight, informing them of their child's behaviour. Classroom teachers are responsible for monitoring this and informing the Assistant Principal leading their Stage.

Playground behaviour folders are used to enter inappropriate behaviour. Data from these is collated and communicated to all staff. Incidents of bullying are recorded and referred to the Learning Support Team (refer to Early Intervention). Regular feedback is provided to the staff at weekly meetings.

When patterns of unacceptable levels of conflict are identified, intervention in the form of additional social skills and conflict resolution training is implemented.

The Anti-Bullying Plan will be revised every three years.

Each year, feedback regarding student wellbeing, including the effectiveness of the School's Anti-Bullying Plan, will be communicated in the Annual School Report.

## Support

A range of support services are available to help meet the needs of students at Five Dock Public School. Conflict resolution, parent meetings, counsellor support and inter-agency support from non-government and government organisations all assist in supporting students, teachers and parents/caregivers.

Regional support from Home School Liaison Officers, Student Wellbeing and Disability Program Consultants and itinerant support teachers can also be accessed to support students, teachers and parent/carers.

Occasionally it may be necessary to refer students to another school setting which has the resources to provide more intensive support. These may include support classes emotional disturbance (ED) or behaviour disorders (BD).

Any referral involves consultation with parents/carers.

**One off bullying (refer to definition on page two) – verbal intimidation, exclusion or physical aggression:** Student to report to teacher (either classroom teacher or teacher on playground duty). Teacher to investigate incident and facilitate restoration. Incident to be recorded in playground folder or classroom welfare folder. If necessary, perpetrator to work with a member of the School's Leadership Team (Reflective Withdrawal). Parents/carers of perpetrator to be informed.

**Repeated incidents of bullying (after management of one off incident):** Student to report to teacher (either classroom teacher or teacher on playground duty). Teacher to investigate incident and refer to member of the School Leadership Team. Playground withdrawal for perpetrator to work with member of the School's Leadership Team (Reflective Withdrawal). Parents/carers of victim and perpetrator to be informed. Referral to School Learning Support Team and, if appropriate School Counsellor and/or Regional Support or outside agencies. If incidents continue, suspension and referral to Regional Support or outside agencies in consultation with parents/carers. Victim to be provided with counselling and support in consultation with parents/carers.

**Cyber Bullying:** Follow procedures for one off incidents and repeated incidents. If incident involves threats or incites violence, contact the School Safety and Response hotline and the local police (refer to The Safety and Security Directorate, Crime Prevention Newsletter, Issue 2, 2011 – Managing social networking incidents).

### **Procedures for assault, intimidation or harassment**

The majority of instances involving bullying can be dealt with using the School's Student Wellbeing policy procedures as outlined in this document. It is recognised however, that from time to time when meeting with parents/carers of victims or perpetrators of bullying, interviews can be difficult given the sensitive issue of bullying and because people are in an emotional, agitated or angry state.

If a person becomes verbally abusive, uses indecent language, is threatening, menacing, or threatens physical violence or actually uses physical violence, the person should be told the behaviour is unacceptable and requested not to behave in such a way. If the behaviour continues, the person conducting the interview should politely terminate the interview. The teacher should then

report the behaviour to the Principal who can then arrange another time to meet with the family to recommence following the school's procedures. Violence, abuse, intimidation or harassment in any form against a teacher will not be tolerated and incidents may be referred to the police.

### **Child Wellbeing Unit and Community Services**

Teachers are mandatory reporters to the Child Wellbeing Unit and Community Services. At times it may be necessary to contact these agencies if significant risk of harm to a child is suspected. Child Wellbeing Units are staffed by child protection professionals who provide advice and support to mandatory reporters on how to respond to concerns relating to the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and young people.

**If you think a child or young person is at risk of harm from abuse or neglect, contact** Child Protection Helpline on 132 111

The Keep Them Safe policy can be accessed at the following link:

<http://www.keepthemsafe.nsw.gov.au/home>

## **Complaints Handling**

Responding to Suggestions, Complaints and Allegations Procedures sets out a framework for a professional response to suggestions, complaints and allegations leading to improvements and creating confidence in the outcome. It applies to complaints about discrimination and racism. It does not apply to appeals against suspension and expulsion.

<https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/index.shtml>

### **Support Services**

**Kids Help Line** Ph: 1800 55 1800

<https://kidshelpline.com.au/>

**Parent Help Line** is available in: NSW on 1300 1300 52

<http://www.parentline.org.au/>

## **Office of the Children's eSafety Commissioner**

<https://www.esafety.gov.au/>

## **Additional Information**

Burwood LAC - Police Youth Liaison Officer (YLO).

### **Websites**

These websites include practical advice about bullying at school for parents and families:

<http://www.bullyingnoway.com.au>

<http://www.racismnoway.com.au>

<https://www.esafety.gov.au/esafety-information>

## **Principal's comment**

This plan has been updated in 2016 following consultation across the Five Dock Public School Community and replaces the previous anti-bullying document. At Five Dock Public School we are committed to providing a safe and happy environment for all members of our community. This plan will be used to work with the community to ensure all members are aware of their responsibilities and can actively contribute to making our school a bullying free environment.

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