

# Anti-bullying Plan

Albury North Public School (updated 2022)





# 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.

This plan was developed collaboratively with input from the school executive and staff, and has after explicit explanation, discussion and further input, been ratified by the Student Representative Council and Albury North Public School P&C.

### Statement of purpose

Students attend school to participate in quality education that will help them to become self directed, lifelong learners who can create a positive future for themselves and the wider community. Any inappropriate behaviour that gets in the way of teaching and learning at the school and interferes with the wellbeing of students cannot be accepted.

Students, teachers, parents, caregivers and members of the wider school community have a shared responsibility to create a safe and happy environment, free from all forms of bullying.

### Protection

#### What are our shared expectations?

Students, teachers, parents, caregivers and members of the wider school community can expect:

- *That students and staff will be safe at school, free from fear of bullying, harassment, intimidation and victimization*
- *to be involved in the collaborative development of the school Anti-bullying Plan*
- *to know what is expected of them and others in relation to the Anti-bullying Plan*
- *that all students will be provided with appropriate support when bullying occurs.*

#### What is Bullying?

Bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological aggressive behaviour by a person or group directed towards a less powerful person or group that is intended to cause harm, distress or fear.

#### Types of bullying behaviour

There are some specific types of bullying behaviour:

- **Verbal** e.g. name calling, teasing, abuse, put-downs, sarcasm, insults, threats
- **Physical** e.g. hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting
- **Social** e.g. ignoring, excluding, ostracizing, alienating, making inappropriate gestures
- **Psychological** e.g. spreading rumours, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions, name calling, put-downs, repeated teasing and sarcasm
- **Cyber-bullying** can be described as any harassment, insults and humiliation that occurs through electronic mediums such as emails, mobile phones, social networking sites, instant messaging programs, chat rooms, websites and through playing of on-line games. Cyber-bullying specifically may take the form of: of abusive texts or emails, taking and sharing unflattering or private images, excluding individuals from online chats or other communication, stealing passwords, and posting unkind messages or inappropriate images on social networking sites

### What is not bullying?

There are also some behaviours, which, although they might be unpleasant or distressing, are not bullying:

- **mutual conflict** - which involves a disagreement, but not an imbalance of power. Unresolved mutual conflict can develop into bullying if one of the parties targets the other repeatedly in retaliation.
- **single-episode** acts of nastiness or physical aggression, or aggression directed towards many different people, is not bullying
- **social rejection or dislike** is not bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.

### **What will ANPS do to Prevent Bullying?**

The Principal and leadership team have a vital role in shaping the culture of the school and ensuring that effective policies, procedures and strategies are in place for responding to bullying and unacceptable behaviour. Working in partnership with students, parents, carers, and the wider community will help reduce and manage bullying and unacceptable behaviour and enhance the capacity of the whole school community to promote respectful relationships and provide safe environments. Empowering students to help prevent bullying is essential and opportunities are provided to ensure students have both a voice and meaningful involvement in school based activities that address and respond to bullying.

For this to occur, our safe and respectful school:

- has a whole school approach to student safety and wellbeing
- develops and promotes bullying prevention policies and programs
- has a leadership team that understands duty of care requirements
- has staff that model pro-social behaviour and intervene when they see bullying or anti-social behaviour
- value the expertise of student wellbeing staff
- has clearly defined roles for responding to bullying
- ensures all staff have access to regular professional learning
- addresses bullying incidents swiftly and consistently.

#### Prevention Strategy 1: A culture of inclusion

Establish a culture of inclusion and respect that welcomes all students. Reward students when they show thoughtfulness and respect for each other, adults and the school. The school promotes

- Harmony Day
- NAIDOC Week
- Bullying. No Way! - including surveys for students, parents and staff
- Cooperative learning strategies implemented into all classrooms
- PEACE Values
- Child developed Bullying posters made annually
- Cultural awareness
- Social awareness

#### Prevention Strategy 2: Safe student interaction

A safe and supportive school climate can help prevent bullying. The schools behaviour matrix is explicit and linked directly to the departments Core Rules for NSW Public Schools. Expectations are explicit, directive and positively worded. Expectations are directly linked to model appropriate and positive behaviour for learning and engagement.

Students are supported through strong and explicit welfare and discipline policy and programs that deal with, modify and correct inappropriate behaviours. Expectations are shared at Kinder orientation days, in class meetings with parents and students and via the newsletter and assembly.

### Prevention Strategy 3: Responding and Intervention

Responding and intervention methods are clearly understood and consistently applied by all staff and are modified depending on type, severity and extent of the bullying behaviour. The whole school community is aware of these methods. These are shared at a Parent Information Session at the beginning of each school year, via the newsletter and at P&C meetings

### Prevention Strategy 4: Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation of our school policy and approach are conducted on a regular basis, supported by detailed record keeping and information gathering about the effectiveness of our school approaches to address bullying and enable reflective practice and improvement. Information is shared at Leadership meetings, Stage Meetings and at Learning Support Team meetings.

### Prevention Strategy 5: Professional Learning

Professional learning is valued and staff have access to a range of professional learning opportunities including online training, formal courses, mentoring, supervision and access to the leadership team.

## **What strategies are put in place for Early Intervention?**

It is important to recognise bullying behaviours and make it clear they are unacceptable, but it is also important to try not to label students as 'a bully'. Some students are identified as being at risk of bullying or developing long-term difficulties with social relationships. Some students are also identified as using bullying behaviour.

### Early Intervention Strategy 1: Making everyone aware of Bullying Roles

People in a bullying scenario may take on one of the following roles:

- a person who engages in bullying behaviour
- a target who is subjected to the bullying behaviour
- an assistant who assists the bullying behaviour and actively joins in
- a supporter who encourages and gives silent approval to the bullying, by smiling, laughing or making comments
- a silent bystander who sees or knows about someone being bullied but is passive and does nothing, this may be an adult bystander
- a defender who supports the student who is being bullied by intervening, getting teacher support or comforting them.

All adults, including teachers, school staff and parents, should model positive bystander behaviour and intervene if they observe bullying behaviour occurring between students. Standing by and doing nothing, or leaving students to 'sort it out' themselves, sends the message to the whole school community that the bullying behaviour is being condoned. Class meetings, role-plays and our responses to incidents will develop these understandings

### Early Intervention Strategy 2: Changing Bullying Behaviours

When a young person engages in bullying behaviour we can help them to learn more positive ways of relating to people. Support for these students will be provided through:

- Referral to Learning Support Team
- Using social skills programs
- Using Social stories and role play situations
- Develop a plan of action on how to cope with situations
- Find things the students are good at and celebrate the successes
- Promote leadership within the school amongst the students
- Using Peer and Playground Buddies as Peer Mediators
- Positive Playground Passes

### Early Intervention Strategy 3: Understanding what students do when Incidents happen

Students from K-6 will participate in on-line modules that help them to explore and understand the following:

- I'm Being Bullied – What should I do?
- Why Am I Being Bullied
- I've been Called a Bully - What should I do?
- I Know Someone who's being Bullied – What should I do?

### **How will we respond to incidents of bullying?**

Bullying behaviour can be complex. Most students don't want bullying to occur but often don't know what to do about it. It's important that all forms of bullying are taken seriously and that schools, parents and students work together to ensure that everyone understands that bullying is not acceptable - ever.

When responding to incidents of bullying and inappropriate behaviour, the school considers the following to help determine our choice of action. Our whole-school approach to bullying behaviour that depends on –

- Severity and frequency
- Impact
- Illegality of the bullying behaviour
- Persistent or repeated behaviour patterns
- Single or group bullying
- Provocation on part of the 'victim'
- Degree of remorse
- Mediation Willingness
- Target support
- Student age
- Capacity of the targeted student

We use up to six strategies to assist us when we deal with bullying. Each has its unique strengths and limitations regarding its use in specific cases.

### Response Strategy 1: Traditional Approach

The traditional approach of dealing with bullying is to apply sanctions to students who have engaged in such behaviour. Clear standards of behaviour are developed and communicated, including the consequences or punishment of unacceptable behaviour. This may include verbal reprimands, loss of privileges, and involvement in the 'Sorting Out Room', internal/external suspension and referral to the police. This approach is clearly linked to Welfare Policy.

The rationale behind this approach is that applying sanctions or punishment will:

- Deter the student responsible for the bullying behaviour from continuing to behave in an unacceptable manner.
- Send a clear message to the rest of the student body that bullying is not acceptable and to deter them from bullying.
- Demonstrate to children who have bullied someone that they deserve to be punished (a traditional belief).

### Response Strategy 2: Strengthen the Target

The strategy of strengthening the target seeks to improve the capacity of the intended target to cope more effectively with bullying.

The rationale behind this approach is that by improving the target's coping skills:

- The targeted person can be helped to acquire the capacity to deal effectively with the threat of being bullied by someone, without any external intervention.
- The power imbalance inherent in the bullying situation can be redressed.
- The school may not have to take action against the aggressor.
- The self-esteem of the targeted child improves and he or she is likely to be able to cope better with other potential aggressors.

The situation is carefully monitored.

### Response Strategy 3: Mediation

Mediation requires students to be voluntarily involved in the dispute resolution process.

Students are informed about the mediation service within a school and invited to seek its help if they so wish. Suitably trained mediators (staff members and/or peers) meet with interested students who are seeking help over a dispute that could involve bullying. Mediation may occur on the spot where the conflict is taking place or may be scheduled for a later time. If the issue is more complicated or serious it should be in a private place where there will be no interruptions.

The rationale behind this approach is that by engaging a trained mediator, students can:

- Partake in a successful problem-solving activity to address cases of bullying.
- Take responsibility for their behaviour and explore the underlying reasons for the conflict or grievance.
- Be helped to reach agreement on solutions that are reasonable and fair, even if it has involved compromise on both sides.
- Devise solutions that are better and more sustainable than if they were coerced.
- Participate in a mediation session that is a valuable learning experience that can help one in resolving interpersonal problems later.

### Response Strategy 4: Support Group Method

This method gathers assistance for the victimised student. It does this by sharing knowledge of his or her distress at a meeting with the perpetrators, together with peers who would offer support to the victim.

The rationale behind using the Support Group Method is as follows:

- Victims of school bullying will describe to a practitioner the distress they have experienced by those who have bullied them, especially when they are convinced that the perpetrators will not be punished. They will also disclose the names of the perpetrators.
- Perpetrators will empathise with what has been happening to their victim when they are told about their distress especially if they attend a meeting convened by the practitioner in the company of some other students who are supportive of the victim.
- In these circumstances the perpetrators will accept responsibility for helping to alleviate the victim's distress and act accordingly.

### Response Strategy 5: Restorative Practice

Restorative practice seeks to repair relationships.

Restorative practice is a strategy that seeks to repair relationships that have been damaged, including those damaged through bullying. It does this by bringing about a sense of remorse and restorative action on the part of the offender and forgiveness by the victim.

The rationale behind this approach is that when offenders reflect upon their harm to victims:

- They become remorseful and act restoratively.
- Practitioners can focus on the unacceptable behaviour of offenders rather than their moral character
- This can lead to healthier interpersonal relations among members of the school community and more effective learning.

### Response Strategy 6: Method of Shared Concern

The Method of Shared Concern is a non-punitive multi-stage strategy that addresses group bullying. It facilitates the emergence of a solution to a bully/target problem through the use of a series of interviews and discussions with the parties involved.

The rationale behind using the Method of Shared Concern is as follows:

- Bullying behaviour is commonly (though not always) undertaken by, or with the support of, a peer group.
- Approached in a non-accusatory manner, individual members of such groups will typically acknowledge the distress of the victim and agree to act to reduce that distress.
- A minority of targeted children have in the past acted provocatively and need to recognise their part in the ensuing conflict.
- Once some individual members of the group have begun to act constructively, the group can be brought together to plan how they will finally resolve the matter with the person they have targeted.
- An agreed resolution involving all concerned is likely to be sustainable.



## How will we respond to repeated incidents of bullying?

### Strategy 1: Access the Learning and Support Team

Our Learning Support Team, along with the parent and possible outside experts and support agencies, will consider each child's circumstances and develop the most appropriate strategies and behaviour management plan for them for them. Strategies include:

- Establish a school culture that is clearly pro-learning, and where bullying and violence is neither accepted nor expected.
- Empower students to tell adults when bullying occurs.
- Provide programs to develop students' resilience, communication, social, assertiveness and coping skills.
- Change the physical school environment (e.g. conduct a playground safety audit) and improve teacher supervision in specific areas of the school grounds.
- Increase supervision of students at particular times or places - as identified by student feedback from the data collection tool.
- Make access to support from a guidance officer, school counsellor or relevant allied health professional simple for students and parents.
- Review technology access at school and introduce and review programs (Cyber Smart) to increase the safe, smart and responsible use of technology.
- Consider timetable or class changes to decrease the potential contact students may have with each other.
- Consider mediation or conferencing for students involved with a trained teacher or peer-mediator to resolve issues.
- Consistently apply appropriate disciplinary action against students who bully others.
- Develop behaviour support plans for those students involved in bullying who require intensive support.
- Establish a student support group if necessary.

### Strategy 2: Respond According to NSW DEC Policies and Procedures

In situations which involve assaults, threats, intimidation or harassment and require police intervention, the school will follow the Department's protocols when reporting serious incidents. These will be reported to the police by the Principal. The School Safety and Response unit will also be contacted where necessary. This may include imposing the Enclosed Lands Act on parents / adults / community members.

The school Principal, school executive and teaching staff are all mandatory reporters in relation to our duty of care in child protection matters.

Incidents which require contact with the Child Well-being Unit or Department of Community Services will be reported as per our department's reporting protocols.

The Department's appeal procedures against suspension or expulsion are outlined in the information booklet – Suspension and Expulsion Procedures – Information for Parents. A link to this booklet and to the Complaints Handling Policy can be found on our school website and also on the Department's website.

The school community and parent body will be updated when appropriate or on request:

- At designated P&C meetings
- Through the school newsletter
- At parent requested interviews
- Individually as follow up to specific incidents or ongoing situations



### Principal's comment

The care, safety and welfare of each student is our utmost priority at Albury North Public School. As a school community we try and support all students to develop resilience and give them strategies to deal with bullying in all its forms. The school has a zero tolerance of bullying and relies on the core values of; cooperation, honesty, kindness, respect and responsibility to create a school wide culture of support and trust to eliminate all forms of bullying behaviour.

Mr Paul Smith – Principal  
Mr Adrian Fury – Assistant Principal  
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### DEC Policies used to develop this policy.

#### *Student Welfare Policy*

[https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/student\\_serv/student\\_welfare/stude\\_welf/pd02\\_52\\_student\\_welfare.pdf](https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/student_serv/student_welfare/stude_welf/pd02_52_student_welfare.pdf)

#### *Suspension and Expulsion of School Students Procedures*

[https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/student\\_serv/discipline/stu\\_discip\\_gov/implementation\\_2\\_PD20060316.shtml](https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/student_serv/discipline/stu_discip_gov/implementation_2_PD20060316.shtml)

#### *Drugs in Schools Policy*

[https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/student\\_serv/student\\_welfare/drug\\_incid/PD20020040.shtml](https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/student_serv/student_welfare/drug_incid/PD20020040.shtml)

#### *Protection from the Sun: Guidelines to Assist in Implementing the Student Welfare Policy*

[https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/student\\_serv/student\\_health/protec\\_sun/pd02\\_55\\_protect\\_from\\_sun.pdf](https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/student_serv/student_health/protec_sun/pd02_55_protect_from_sun.pdf)

#### *Student Health in NSW Public Schools: A summary and consolidation of policy*

[https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/student\\_serv/student\\_health/student\\_health/PD20040034.shtml](https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/student_serv/student_health/student_health/PD20040034.shtml)

#### *Mentoring Students Policy*

[https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/student\\_serv/student\\_welfare/ment\\_stud/PD20050115.shtml](https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/student_serv/student_welfare/ment_stud/PD20050115.shtml)

#### *School Attendance Policy*

[https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/student\\_admin/attendance/sch\\_polproc/PD20050259.shtml](https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/student_admin/attendance/sch_polproc/PD20050259.shtml)

#### *School Uniform Policy*

[https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/student\\_admin/uniforms/school\\_uniform/PD20040025.shtml](https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/student_admin/uniforms/school_uniform/PD20040025.shtml)

#### *Homophobia in schools*

[https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/student\\_serv/student\\_welfare/homoph\\_sch/PD20050287.shtml](https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/student_serv/student_welfare/homoph_sch/PD20050287.shtml)

#### *Nutrition in Schools Policy*

[https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/student\\_serv/student\\_health/nutrition/PD20110420.shtml](https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/student_serv/student_health/nutrition/PD20110420.shtml)

#### *Protecting and Supporting Children and Young People Policy*

[https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/student\\_serv/child\\_protection/prot\\_children/PD20020067.shtml](https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/student_serv/child_protection/prot_children/PD20020067.shtml)

#### *Student Counselling Files Policy*

[https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/student\\_serv/student\\_welfare/couns\\_files/PD20050206.shtml](https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/student_serv/student_welfare/couns_files/PD20050206.shtml)

#### *Student Discipline in Government Schools Policy Student Welfare Policy*