



Education &
Communities

Anti-bullying Plan Megalong 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

This plan aims to address all forms of bullying that may occur in the school environment and to provide positive strategies for preventing, reporting and managing all forms of interactions that are not acceptable in the school environment.

This plan has been devised in collaboration with school staff and executive, learning and wellbeing advisors, parents and students at Megalong Public School. It has been ratified by the Parents and Citizens Association (P&C) (8 May 2018).

The Megalong school community works in partnership to establish a caring, respectful and supportive teaching and learning community that promotes student safety and wellbeing, and develops empathy and respect. Our Anti-Bullying policy aims to deal effectively with and prevent incidences of bullying through the provision of positive prevention strategies, support for reporting and managing all forms of interactions that are not acceptable in the school environment.

Protection

Megalong Public School rejects all forms of bullying. We value respect and show tolerance of others in a safe and supportive environment. We foster positive relationships through our strong welfare programs and policies. At Megalong Public School, we believe that every person has the right to be treated as an individual and with dignity, every person has the right to feel safe, and that every person has the right to be able to learn, free from anxiety. The school regards bullying of any kind – harassment, teasing, intimidation, cyber-bullying, rejection, intentional harming or hurting of a person or their property – as a serious matter.

Bullying

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 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 and transgender.

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved, including innocent bystanders.

Conflicts or fights between equals, or single incidents, are not defined as bullying.

Different Types of Bullying may include:

Physical:

- Hitting/punching
- Pushing/shoving
- Kicking
- Throwing objects
- Taking other's belongings/stealing from others
- Damaging others belongings
- Spitting at others
- Intimidation-making someone do something they do not want to do

Verbal:

- Threatening
- Name calling/teasing
- Swearing at others
- Ridiculing (making fun of) another person because of their actions, appearance, physical characteristics or cultural backgrounds.

Indirect:

- Spreading rumours
- Excluding others
- Writing notes
- Choosing not to tell if you see another person being bullied

Cyber Bullying:

- Sending of abusive texts or emails
- Taking and sharing unflattering or private images
- Posting unkind messages or inappropriate images on social networking sites
- Excluding individuals from online chats or other communication

- Assuming the identity of the victim online and representing them in a negative manner or manner that may damage their relationship with others
- Repeatedly and for no strategic reasons attacking players in online gaming
- Stealing passwords
- Blogs
- Websites

Individual and shared responsibilities:

Students, teachers, parents, caregivers and members of the 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 Policy and support it through words and actions
- Actively work together to resolve incidents of bullying.

Staff responsibilities:

- Respect and support students
- To model appropriate behaviour at all times
- To have knowledge of school and Departmental policies relating to bullying behaviour
- To monitor and track incidences of bullying and respond in an appropriate and timely manner according to the school's Anti-Bullying Plan
- To communicate any bullying behaviour to their stage supervisor

- Provide curriculum and pedagogy that support students to develop an understanding of bullying and its impact on individuals and the broader community
- To implement school programs which promote positive relationships and positive psychology
- To communicate bullying incidences with parents when needed

Student responsibilities:

- To behave appropriately at all times, respecting individual differences and diversity
- To behave as responsible digital citizens
- To follow the school Anti-bullying Plan
- To behave as responsible bystanders
- To report incident of bullying according to the school Anti-bullying plan – both at school and on the way to and from school
- To attempt to use learnt strategies to deal with bullying incidents as outlined in the Bounce Back Program

Parent and caregivers responsibilities:

- To support their children to become responsible citizens and to develop responsible online behaviour
- To be aware of and support the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and assist their children in understanding bullying behaviour
- To take an active role in their child's school life and watch for signs that their child may be being bullied
- To support their children in developing positive responses to incidents of bullying consistent with the school Anti-bullying Plan
- To 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.

School strategies:

- Leadership commitment:
School leaders work to establish approaches and procedures that promote a positive school climate in which bullying is less likely to occur.
- Supportive and connected school culture:
Bullying is less likely in a culture that actively promotes positive, caring relationships among students and staff and between the school and home.
- Policies and procedures:
Successfully preventing and responding to bullying requires clear and widely communicated anti-bullying strategies and practices.
- Professional learning:
Staff training builds the capacity of school staff by developing knowledge, skills and strategies to prevent and respond to bullying.
- Positive behaviour support:
Effective whole-school approaches provide a framework for schools to support positive behaviour for all students and for groups of students or individual students who require more intensive and individualised support.

- [Engagement, skill development and curriculum:](#)
Student engagement, the school curriculum and teaching cooperative and relational skills which support appropriate social and emotional behaviour are interrelated features of safe and supportive schools.
- [Focus on student wellbeing and student ownership:](#)
Wellbeing contributes significantly to the learning outcomes of students. Encouraging student voice promotes the important role students play in developing a positive school culture.
- [Early intervention and targeted support:](#)
Identifying 'at risk' students and providing support before an issue emerges or escalates helps to build and maintain a safe environment.
- [Partnerships with families and community:](#)
Effective schools have high levels of parental and community involvement. This involvement is strongly related to improved student learning, attendance and behaviour.
- Open door policy and transparent communication that nurture productive and respectful relationships established between all members of the school community.
- Classroom rules, routines and processes negotiated and applied consistently
- Explicit teaching of *T.H.I.N.K Before You Speak* strategy and Marvin Marshall's *Raising Responsibility* framework, PDHPE curriculum
- Adequate supervision of students during breaks on playground and classrooms
- Active intervention when bullying occurs.

Early Intervention

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. These are some ways we will deal with this:

- Referral to Learning Support Team
- Liaise with parent
- 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 Mediation to assist with small problems

Prevention

It is important that the school community address the underlying causes of bullying relating to school organisational issues, learning and teaching issues and relationship issues.

Preventative Strategies:

- Education and promotion of the school's Anti- Bullying Plan.
- Student Welfare programs including SEL, Kids Matter, Friendly Schools

Response

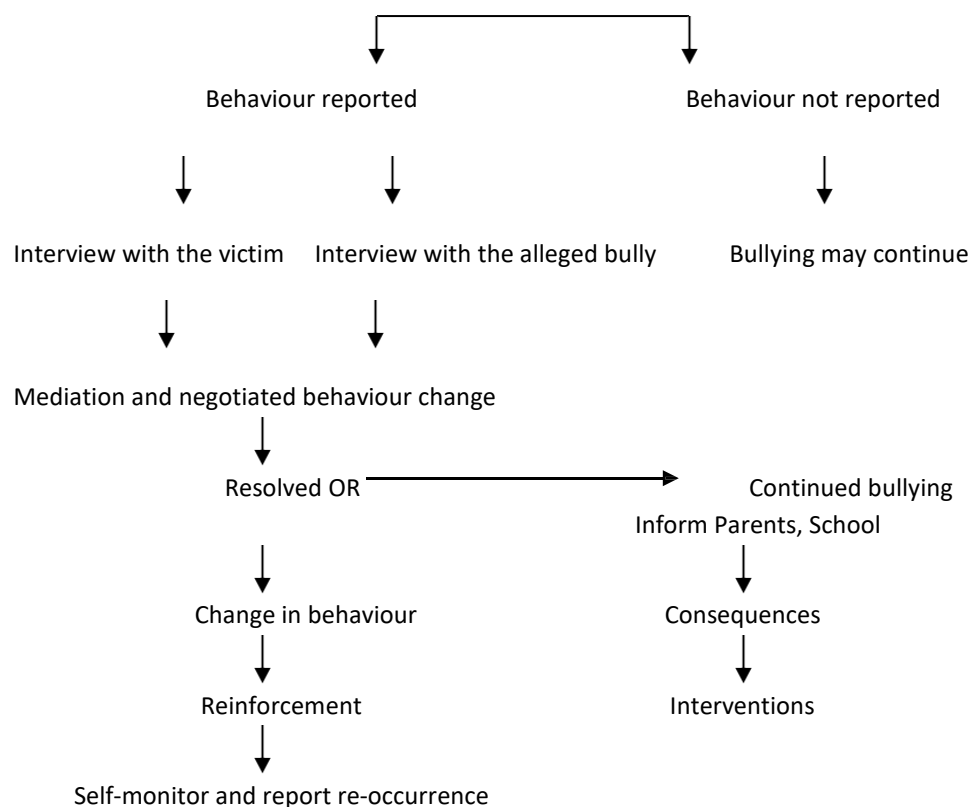
Procedures for Reporting and Managing Bullying:

- Students are to report all incidents of bullying to a teacher immediately
- Parents with concerns about bullying should contact the school directly
- All bullying incidents are to be reported, taken seriously and dealt with by teachers and Principal (depending on the severity). These issues will be dealt with immediately or as soon as practically possible. Key stakeholders will be advised of process as required and appropriate
- Staff will contact the parents of the student being bullied and the student doing the bullying immediately it is discovered. All staff to be informed so they can monitor students in the playground.
- In the case of Cyber-bullying, the police may need to be contacted to make a report
- Students will be supported by the school counsellor if upset by being bullied or experiencing ongoing bullying of a peer
- The Anti- Bullying Policy will be available on the school website and information will be posted in the school's newsletter
- In regard to assaults, threats, intimidation and or harassment, these will be reported to the police by the Principal. The school safety and response unit will also be contacted where necessary. The schools handling critical incidences policy will be implemented in such incidences
- If there is a need to contact support agencies, then the Principal will contact the Child Wellbeing Unit. The school counsellor will also follow up with support
- The Complaints Handling Policy may be used by parents if required.

Procedures for Dealing with Bullying Behaviour:

- All students have the right to be heard and listened to
- Class teacher deals with smaller issues in the classroom in line with school Student Welfare Policy and class rules
- Teacher on playground duty deals with smaller issues in the playground – if more serious in nature the teacher informs the Principal
- Have discussions with the students involved – take appropriate action
- Parents and class teacher work with student to look at underlying problems and seek solutions. Meetings with parents should be organised if serious concerns regarding bullying
- Principal works with parents and individuals to identify bullying behaviours where necessary
- School Counsellor and Learning Support Team and Department of Education and Communities Student Wellbeing Officers involved in individual programs if required
- Serious bullying incidents are recorded and consequences are in line with the School's Discipline Procedures
- Issues are resolved in a calm manner with as much time as necessary given to hearing what each student feels and assisting all students to feel more able to cope
- Principal will deal with major incidents of bullying and may need to refer to the DoE Suspension and Expulsion of Student Procedures.

BULLYING BEHAVIOUR OCCURS



Procedures for Dealing with Cyber bullying:

The school reserves the right to determine whether incidents of cyber bullying relate to the responsibility of the school.

If determined the school has a role to play we will:

- Ensure each student is safe and arrange support, including the involvement of student wellbeing
- Support from staff should be provided on an ongoing basis with the agreement of the student and parent to assist the student to work through the effects of the cyber bullying and to help them develop and implement effective coping strategies
- Student's parents contacted to alert them to the issue, and ongoing concerns regarding the welfare of the student, and discuss the issue and how best to deal with it
- Reassure the student that the school is taking the incident seriously and that the reported bullying will be acted on
- Gather basic facts about the suspected cyber bullying and, if possible, identify the students involved
- Implement appropriate responses to address the bullying using evidence-based responses such as restorative justice approaches to conflict resolution
- Provide the following strategies to the student and parent to assist with managing the issue in the future
 - Don't respond to any further messages/postings from the bully and, if possible, block further correspondence from them (block their mobile number or email address).
 - Report any further correspondence from the bully to the parent and an agreed school contact

- o Keep evidence of any bullying to assist with tracking down the bully and potentially reporting the matter to police (screen captures, bully's screen name, text and images)
- o Report any concerns to the administrator of the service used, including the mobile phone provider (if SMS is involved), website administrator (if social networking or chat services are involved), or internet service provider, as most have measures to assist with tracking and blocking the bully. Some block the bully's access to their services entirely as bullying is often a breach of website terms of use.

If the student is distressed by the bullying, ensure they are provided with options for psychological support including school counselling and the DoE Wellbeing Unit .

The school will follow its established approach to incidents of bullying as outlined in the school Anti- Bullying Policy.

Monitoring and evaluation

The Anti-Bullying Plan and policy will be available through the school website and communicated through the school newsletter. The school will evaluate the Anti-Bullying Plan and policy annually. Reports will be made at P&C meetings. School Community will be surveyed on the effectiveness of our schools' Anti-Bullying Policy. The Principal will report all student welfare incidences at LST meetings.

Additional Information

Police Youth Liaison Officer 4751 0299

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

Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800

www.ncab.org.au (National Centre Against Bullying)

www.bullyingnoway.com.au

www.cybersmart.gov.au

www.kidshelpline.com.au

www.kidsmatter.edu.au

Principal's comment

Our school recognises that bullying is part of society and happens in all places. As a school we will develop resilience in others and give students strategies to deal with bullying. The school will also work closely with any students who use bullying to gain power. The school's core values: cooperation, honesty, kindness, respect and responsibility, clearly support a culture of support and trust and no tolerance of bullying behaviour.

Team Members who developed the plan

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