



Education &
Communities

Anti-bullying Plan

Figtree Heights 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.

At Figtree Heights Public School we are committed to creating a safe and caring environment in which all students can achieve success, socially as well as academically. Our school's six core values of Care, Integrity, Respect, Fairness, Responsibility and Excellence are supported by our school's Anti-bullying Plan.

This plan was developed in consultation with our school community. The existing Anti-bullying document was revised and adjusted to carefully meet the needs of our school and to comply with the guidelines outlined by the Department of Education and Communities.

Statement of purpose

All students have the right to expect that they will spend the school day free from the fear of bullying, harassment and intimidation. 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. Bullying **must** be taken seriously and is not acceptable in **any** form. Our school community is committed to eliminate all forms of bullying. We work together to create a safe environment for our students, which not only promotes positive self-esteem, but, a place where all students feel they belong.

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Protection

Definition

Bullying can be defined as intentional, repeated behaviour by an individual or group of individuals that causes distress, hurt or undue pressure. Bullying behaviour can be verbal, physical, social and psychological. It “ involves an initial desire to hurt, this desire is expressed in action, someone is hurt, the action is directed by a more powerful person or group, it is without justification, it is typically repeated, and it is done so with evident enjoyment.” Ken Rigby (1998)

As a school community we do not tolerate bullying or harassment. Any bullying incident which comes to the attention of students and staff, should be dealt with according to the policy and procedures outlined below. Managing the incident swiftly and consistently enforces our **zero tolerance** of such behaviour within the school.

Prevention

It is important that the school community address the underlying causes of bullying, in whichever form it takes. The most essential process in addressing the issue of bullying at Figtree Heights Public School is the education of all students, teachers and wider community about the numerous layers of bullying and what roles and responsibilities we all hold in this process.

The community at Figtree Heights Public School, understand that there are both individual and shared roles and responsibilities in the prevention and intervention of bullying.

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

- that students will be safe at school, free from fear of bullying, harassment and intimidation
- 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.

Students have a responsibility to:

- be familiar with, and adhere to the school's Anti-bullying Plan
- be familiar with, follow and respect school rules that underpin their roles, rights and responsibilities as students
- be familiar with, follow and respect our school's six core values
- develop an understanding of what is bullying behaviour and the possible consequences of such action
- refuse to be part of bullying and speak out if they are aware of any bullying
- taking action by following the appropriate steps on how to appropriately handle a bully

Parents and carers have a responsibility to:

- be aware of the school's Anti-bullying Plan and reinforce to their children the damages of bullying
- report incidents of school related bullying behaviour to the school and work with the school to resolve incidents

- watch for signs of distress in their child and encourage their child to follow the steps outlined in the school's Anti-bullying Plan to help deal with incidents of bullying
- support their children in all areas of their learning

Teachers have a responsibility to:

- be role models at all times through words and actions
- encourage cooperative behaviour in all students through cooperative learning techniques
- be proactive and report **all** incidents of bullying to the appropriate parties, after hearing all sides to the story and in a timely manner
- be vigilant and consistent in the classroom and playground
- support students in understanding the school's Anti-bullying Plan and all its elements
- provide opportunities for anti-bullying messages to be embedded in all areas of the curriculum
- establish a safe environment where students feel safe to disclose incidents of bullying

Together the School Community has a responsibility to:

- promote positive relationships that respect and accept individual differences and diversity within the whole school community
- contribute to the development of this Anti-bullying Plan and support all elements of this plan
- actively work together to resolve incidents of bullying behaviour when they occur

Primary Intervention

Intervention is an essential aspect of Figtree Heights Public School's Anti-bullying Plan. Students must have the knowledge and skills to develop a set of strategies which will allow them to identify, cope with and prevent bullying from occurring.

Students, teachers, parents and the community will be aware of the school's position on bullying, which is **zero tolerance**. To assist with this awareness we are able to implement a wide range of programs, activities and scenarios such as:

- maintenance of a positive and consistent school climate that acknowledges that bullying is not tolerated within the school community
- professional development for staff related to bullying and the strategies to counteract it
- provision of programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and communication skills
- Doing Things Together days (DTT) which promote resilience, friendship, collaboration and anti-bullying activities
- Community awareness and input relating to anti-bullying, its characteristics and the school's programs and response
- our focus will be maintained with:
 - classroom posters that identify what bullying is, the different types of bullying and strategies for dealing with bullying when it occurs
 - K-6 lessons that focus on bullying and developing resilience will be conducted throughout each year to reinforce forms of bullying and how to deal with issues that arise

Early Intervention

Early intervention enables students to feel safe and supported in their learning environment. Figtree Heights Public School promotes this environment in the following ways:

- students to be encouraged to report bullying incidents involving themselves or others
- teachers to outline how reporting an incident of bullying is not 'dobbing'
- new students to the school will be interviewed on enrolment regarding issues of bullying at previous schools to ensure they are supported in this new environment
- parents encouraged to contact the school if they become aware of a problem
- students recognised for positive behaviours through a variety of avenues (value award system, HOW2Learn strategy, token system)
- the Learning Support Team will assist the identification of students either at risk of being bullied or at risk of engaging in bullying type behaviours
- teachers use a class and playground management plan if an incident of bullying occurs
- Executive teachers and Principal alerted to any incident of bullying
- All bullying incidents recorded in the student welfare file and reported to the classroom teacher, stage leader, Learning Support Team and Principal

Intervention

To ensure the school's Anti-bullying Plan is effective the following steps will be taken:

- once identified, the bully, victim and witnesses to be spoken with, all incidents or allegations of bullying to be fully investigated and documented
- 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 by the case management team and parents.
- a meeting of relevant persons to be convened following identification of on-going bullying behaviour. This meeting may involve some or all of the following, Principal, Assistant Principal, class teacher, Learning and Support Team leader, School Counsellor, parents and students. All issues relevant to the behaviour of the student(s) to be considered.
- students with a history of bullying type behaviours will be required to attend a formal interview with their teacher, the Principal and their parents. Referral to the School Counsellor will occur. Parents will be advised to also seek external professional support for their child if deemed necessary.

Consequences

Students are aware that if they bully someone, one or more of the following will occur as mentioned in the school's Fair Discipline Policy:

- they will talk to teachers or the Principal about their behaviour
- **Warning Level** - A reflection room notice will be sent home to intervene at an early stage when inappropriate behaviour may occur. This involves a letter home to parents informing them of

their child's behaviour, and that a short time in the reflection room may have occurred. A return slip is provided for parent feedback.

- **Yellow Level** – A letter to parents is sent home with a return slip included. Two days reflection will occur (second half of lunch). An apology to the bullying victim will be given and the student or students are unable to receive Value awards for one week and will be ineligible for a 'behaviour award' for five weeks.
- **Orange Level** – A letter to parents with return slip provided by Assistant Principal-Wellbeing will be sent home. Three days reflection room (arrangements as per yellow level) will occur with a home/school communication book established if necessary. Student/s will be unable to receive Value awards for two weeks and are ineligible for a behaviour award for a period of five weeks. They will be unable to participate in school organised activities, represent school at PSSA attend special events etc. whilst on this level. Apologies to the victim/s will be given. The student/s will remain on this level for 1 week, then 1 week yellow with appropriate consequences. Communications Book to be maintained during both levels. If behaviour warrants, move back to White Level (general school level) after 2 weeks.
- **Red Level** – A letter to parents written by Principal will be issued and parent/student interviews will be conducted. A Home/School Communication Book will be established with a possible in-school or out of school suspension occurring. Reflection will take place with an executive from another stage and a school counsellor/behaviour support intervention will be conducted (other consequences and monitoring are per Orange level). The suspension guidelines from the Department would be consulted

and appropriate action regarding the possible suspension of the student/s would be sought.

Response

Students will know that they **can** control what happens. They will not retaliate by using bullying and will try not to show fear.

Students will be proactive and need to decide what action to take.

Step 1: IGNORE. Show that it does not upset you and ignore their advances towards you. Be strong and *walk away*.

If it does not stop:

Step 2: STOP. Tell the bully to stop what they are doing and that you do not like the way they are speaking towards or treating you. Reinforce to them that you want them to stop this behaviour.

If it still does not stop:

Step 3: GO. Walk away from the bully and try to again ignore their advances.

If it still does not stop

Step 4: TELL. Talk it over openly with trusted adults (i.e. class teacher or parent). They can help you decide what to do.

If the bullying still does not stop:

Step 5: REPORT. Talk to the Principal. Allow him/her to take the action they see as necessary.

Students who are not being bullied but are aware of others who are, will be encouraged to report it, to protect those that are being bullied and so that the bully can be helped too.

The Anti-bullying Plan is available on the school's website and will be reviewed every three years by the Student Welfare Committee, Executive Team, parent and community representatives and students. The

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

effectiveness of the plan will be reviewed annually through the Annual School Report using school surveys, feedback, record of incidents and observations. This plan is used in conjunction with the school's Fair Discipline Policy to ensure all students, families and teachers are supported in stamping out bullying behaviour in our school.

Additional Information

[Cybersmart School Gateway](#)

[Cyberbullying Stories](#)

[Bullying. No Way!](#)

[National Centre Against Bullying](#)

[Kids Help Line](#)

[Bullying Among Young Children: A guide for parents](#)

Contact Information

Police Youth Liaison Officer –Alison Burke 02 42267899

Police School Liaison Officer – Sian Popp 02 42267899

Department of Community Services – 133627

Child Well Being Unit – 02 9269 9400

Department of Education and Communities Area Office – 02 42222929

School Safety and Response Unit – 1300 363 778

Wollongong Police Station – 02 42267899

School Counsellor – 42286770

Principal's comment

This policy has been developed and revised through consultation with a number of key stakeholders in our school community. Policy review is regularly attended to and all comments are welcome.

Our school adopted elements of PBL (Positive Behaviour for Learning) in 2016 to reinforce and further address positive behaviours and our six core values of respect, responsibility, care, excellence, integrity and fairness.

All members of the Figtree Heights school community contribute to preventing bullying by modeling and promoting appropriate behaviour and respectful relationships.

A major priority for schools is the care and safety of students. Students learn best in environments in which they feel safe. Every student has the right to expect that they will spend the day both in and out of the classroom free from bullying. Conversely, students have the responsibility to behave in a way that does not interfere with this right. The expectation is that students will not participate in violence, discrimination, harassment or intimidation.

We aim to make this plan easily understood and also to provide websites that teachers, parents and children can access to give further clarification. Please do not hesitate to ask for help if you are unsure of how to report or support a child you believe is being bullied.

Early intervention is often the key to a successful resolution.

The success of our outlined Anti-bullying Plan will be gauged through annual surveys of staff, parents and students and as mentioned previously, the content of this policy will be reviewed every three years as part of the school strategic planning.

Mrs Skye Hayward
Principal

The Anti-Bullying Plan – NSW Department of Education and Communities

Anti-bullying Planning Team

Mrs Skye Hayward – Principal
Miss Emily Corcoran – Assistant Principal
Miss Tegan Davies – Relieving Assistant Principal
Mrs Christine Ruscica – LaST
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School contact information

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