



Education &
Communities

Anti-bullying Plan

School Name: JERRABOMBERRA 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.

In formulating and updating this policy, input from the school community was sought from the P&C Association as a representative group for the parents. Opportunities are also made available annually through the school surveys to comment on such issues.

Statement of purpose

The aim of this policy is to further enhance school tone and harmony by addressing teasing and bullying behaviours and ensuring that children feel safe and happy in the school environment. The aim is also to provide strategies for children to use if bullying should occur and to promote the school as a “Bully Free Zone”.

Rationale:

If we allow bullying and teasing at Jerrabomberra Public School to go unchecked, we give the students a clear message that the teachers don't care and that bullying is acceptable.

Our school could become unhappy and stressful, not just for the students who suffer at the hands of a bully, but also for the students who witness bullying and feel threatened and helpless and sometimes join in for fear of being the next victim. Teachers too, are burdened by the pressures of dealing with the problems of teasing and bullying.

We will never condone bullying and are actively involved in confronting and preventing such behaviours. We also believe that students need to understand the role that bystanders play in the bullying process. We seek the support of students and the school community to create a safer climate for all and to reduce bullying in our school.

With this aim in mind, we have adopted the following two themes which will maintain our common focus:

- ***“Everyone has the right to feel safe all the time.”***
- ***“It's O.K. to tell on someone if you are being teased and bullied.”***
- ***D.O.B. – Don't Obey Bullies!***

Protection

DEFINITION: WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is a ***pattern of behaviour*** by one or more persons towards another which is designed to hurt, injure, embarrass, upset or cause discomfort to that person.

There are seven key elements of Bullying:

- An intention to be hurtful.
- This intention is carried out.
- The behaviour harms the target.
- The bully overwhelms the target with his or her power.
- There is no justification for the action.
- Action/behaviour is repeated.
- Bully gets satisfaction/enjoyment from hurting the target.

Some examples of bullying include:

- Physical aggression - hitting, pushing, kicking, spitting, pushing
- Teasing, mocking and using put-downs
- Using offensive names
- Setting up humiliating experiences
- Making offensive comments about others or their families
- Gossip – spreading information (true or untrue)
- Hurtful looks
- Rude gestures
- Leaving someone out of a group to be mean to them
- Messing up someone's game
- Hiding, damaging, stealing someone's belongings
- Making up rumour/stories about someone
- Using threats to stop people going to the toilet or to take their money, food or other belongings
- Writing offensive notes about someone
- Deliberately ignoring and excluding
- Sexual innuendo and harassment
- Writing graffiti about another
- Cyber-bullying through social network sites, emails, text messages, etc

Prevention & Early Intervention

1. Each year, the program “Standing Up For Yourself – Responding to Provocation” will be run in the school through stage assemblies and followed up in the classroom. This ensures that all students receive the same message that the school is a “**Bully Free Zone**”. It will be run in Term 1.
2. Promote “**D.O.B.**” – **Don't Obey Bullies** – as a valid way to deal with any students who do not do the right thing. Students must understand that to allow us to do something about bullying, we must know about it. Students should always report incidents to a teacher or the Executive

3. Making children aware of the procedures for dealing with teasing and bullying as shown in the poster, “Is Someone Hassling You?” and other poster resources. A Bystanders Code will also be discussed.
4. Incidents of teasing and bullying are to be recorded in the playground duty book so that patterns can be tracked. Reported incidents will be dealt with swiftly by the Principal or Deputy Principals. A ‘same-day’/immediate response practice will be implemented as it is believed that isolated incidents - if addressed with speed - will ensure that it does not happen again.
5. If a regular pattern occurs, refer to procedures in the Good Discipline Code. Contact the parents.
6. Our school's Positive Behaviours for Success (PBS) values are promoted as a positive way to fight bullying – “**BE RESPONSIBLE – RESPECT – SAFETY – HONESTY**”. Signage about the school actively reminds all students to follow these values.
7. Pro-active care is taken to ensure that students with special needs and disabilities are not bullied or targeted in any way.
8. The school's *Mobile Phone Policy* supports the prevention of cyber bullying within the school. Phones are expected to be handed in at the office daily and are not to be taken into the playground.
9. Our *Computer Policy* also places severe penalties including loss of computer usage should misuse occur of the school's email and computer network. Disciplinary action may also be taken for misuse of technology outside the school should it be proven to be impacting of the school's practices and student wellbeing.

Response and Expected Outcomes

1. Staff, students and parents recognise teasing and bullying when it occurs.
2. All teachers are firmly committed to putting an end to acts of bullying.
3. Victims of bullying are supported. No one deserves to be bullied even if their behaviour is irritating and annoying. There are other positive and constructive ways of dealing with such behaviour.
4. Students receive support from teachers and peers are encouraged to recognise their right to feel safe and happy in the school environment.
5. Students' problem solving skills are developed by recognising and dealing with teasing and bullying.
6. A reduction in the incidents of teasing and bullying.
7. School staff has a clear mandate to act on teasing and bullying with clear consequences for these behaviours.
8. A 'whole-school preventative approach' to teasing and bullying exists and is reinforced by the Discipline Code and enhanced through curriculum and social education practices.
9. Parents accept and support the school's policy and procedures as it is seen as the school and community's responsibility to actively promote a "**Bully Free Zone**".

At the beginning of each year, students will be reminded of the processes to be followed should bullying occur. This will be undertaken in assemblies as well as in classrooms by the class teacher. The importance of bystander behaviour and a *Bystanders Code of Behaviour* will also be discussed. (See in following Appendix.)

Students will be encouraged at all times to tell the teacher on duty as well as their class teacher. If a serious violation, it will be reported to the executive in the Office. The executive on duty will investigate the report at the earliest convenience on the same day. Preferably, they will go immediately and seek the students involved and obtain an immediate resolution. This is the best way to stamp out any suggestion of bullying by dealing with it in the first instance. Such immediacy most often provides the best results and ensures it goes no further. We encourage children to try and solve the problem **at school** on the very first day as it is more difficult if there is a time lapse and we explain that parents cannot solve the problem from home.

Post Intervention

Jerrabomberra's Good Discipline Policy outlines appropriate procedures of the consequences for inappropriate behaviour in the classroom and in the playground.

Possible consequences may involve:

- Warning
- Removal from the class to the supervisor, deputy or principal
- Parental contact
- Negotiated contract
- On-going monitoring
- Timeout from the class/ playground
- Mediation sessions with the victim to reconcile differences
- Involvement of the School Counsellor (only with permission)
- Referral to external agencies
- Behaviour guidance programs (e.g. anger management, social skills)
- Suspension (in extreme cases)

ADVICE TO BE GIVEN TO STUDENTS WHO ARE BEING BULLIED

The student should be encouraged to:

- Tell the bully to stop. State quite clearly that the behaviour is unwelcome and offensive.
- Seek help. Talk about the experience to someone who is trustworthy (teacher on duty, executive, peer).
- Report the bullying to a member of staff and feel confident that any incident can be resolved satisfactorily

Other 'self-protective' strategies that might be suggested include:

- Staying away from the bully, or places where bullying occurs.
- Be with friendly, supportive friends.

ADVICE TO BE GIVEN TO STUDENTS WHO KNOW SOMEONE ELSE IS BEING BULLIED

Students should be made aware that early intervention can defuse conflict situations before bullying sets in or gets out of hand.

Therefore, the following suggestions should be made:

- If possible, intervene as the bullying occurs by telling the bully to stop. This is very useful if the on-looker student has influence with the bully.
- Refuse to join in with the bullying.
- Support students who are being bullied – just standing by them can be enough.
- Tell an adult if you are concerned about the bullying.
- It is every student's right and responsibility to report bullying whether it happens to oneself or to someone else.

THE ROLE OF PARENTS

The following suggestions are made to parents:

Take an active interest

- in your child's social life
- in what is happening at school

Encourage your child

- to bring friends home
- to accept and tolerate differences in others

Build your child's self-confidence

- by recognising and affirming his/her positive qualities
- by valuing him/her for who he/she is.

Discuss with your child

- the school's expectations about behaviour
- ways to respond if his/her rights are infringed

Encourage constructive responses

- physical bullying or persistent teasing should be reported
- hitting back or retaliating with name-calling is unacceptable and won't solve the problem

Set an example

- be firm, but not aggressive in setting behaviour limits
- be positive in things you say and do

Be alert for signs of distress

- unwillingness to attend school
- dropping off in academic performance
- damaged clothing and frequent loss of personal property
- loss of confidence and uncharacteristic mood changes
- withdrawal from social activities.

ACT

- If your child is being bullied at school, report it to a teacher, or the Principal. **Your report will be followed up.**

WHAT CAN HAPPEN

Should a particular child be found to be a persistent perpetrator of bullying acts in the playground, they may be:

- withdrawn from the playground
- found alternative activities at break times e.g. playing near the office, go to chess club or
- undergo social skills sessions with SLST or appointed staff member.

Should it be deemed necessary after discussion between an executive and parents, counselling may be offered to the victim and/or bystanders. Likewise counselling may be deemed necessary for the perpetrator as well in an effort to have them understand their own actions and the impact they are having on other students.

NOTE: No child will be seen by the Counsellor without the knowledge and permission of the parent/s.

In other instances, special social skills sessions may be arranged to help and assist all students involved.

Parents will be kept informed of incidents as they occur and on an individual basis. Follow-up communication will inform parents of the consequences given to perpetrators and the actions taken to ensure such incidents do not occur again. Such information will be issued between the families concerned and the school ONLY.

Should the school deem that, due to the serious nature of an incident, it should be referred to the Police, the Principal or executive will do so at the earliest convenience.

Should an incident involving assaults, threats, intimidation or harassment occur outside the school, families will be directed to report their concerns directly to Police themselves.

Should an incident or the welfare of a student be of significant concern, the school also has the mandatory responsibility to contact the Child Wellbeing Unit or Community Services where appropriate. Should this happen, parents will not be notified as it is a mandatory reporting requirement.

Should a child be suspended due to their behaviour, parents will receive a package at the time informing them of their rights and responsibilities. Unless it is a very extreme first case of violence or other suspendible offences, the parents will have had discussions with the school or received a warning letter prior to this time. Most suspensions should not come as a surprise to a family unless they are very extreme in the first instance.

Parents' rights to appeal any decision made will be available to them at the time of suspension.

Parents will be reminded regularly of our school's anti-bullying procedures in newsletters and the policy will be placed on the school's website.

Playground behaviour books as implemented in our PBS procedures, will be monitored by the deputy principals to gather data and look for common names and occurrences. This may result in a student being asked to explain their behaviours and disciplinary action could follow.

As part of the annual School Satisfaction Survey to parents, staff and students, this policy can be reviewed at any time and as a need arises.

As part of our regular and planned evaluation cycle, this policy will be reviewed as a staff, community and student groups approximately every three years. Most reviews involve on-line surveys and focus group input.

Additional Information

Child Wellbeing Unit: 9269 9400

Police Youth Liaison Officer: 62980506

Kids Helpline: 1800 55 1800

School Counsellor: Mrs Vicki Swann through the school ph. 62998860

AFP – Think U Know – cyber awareness community campaign

Principal's Comment

In developing this up-dated plan, it was a re-affirmation that the school's past plan was being implemented successfully and that the incidence of bullying at this school negligible. We are a strong "no bullying" school.

Chris Hunter, Principal

Peg Townsend, Deputy Principal

Janine McNaughton, Deputy Principal

Richard Hancock, Assistant Principal

Karen Harradence, Assistant Principal

Mandy Leigh, Assistant Principal

Mary-anne Giltrap, Assistant Principal

Staff and P & C

School Contact Information

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APPENDIX 1:



BYSTANDERS CODE OF CONDUCT

- Don't join in
- Don't smile or laugh to show that you agree with the bully's behaviour
- Tell others that you don't like the bullying behaviour
- Call a teacher to help immediately
- Go with the victim to tell a teacher
- Show care for the victim by standing near him or her
- Ask the bullied student to join your game
- Ask the student if they feel O.K.
- Distract the student who is bullying – play another game, change the topic

APPENDIX 1:2. Bullying Posters for Classrooms

Bullying can be **Physical**



Hitting
Punching
Kicking
Scratching
Tripping
Spitting
Pinching

Bullying can be **Social**



Spreading Rumours
Stalking
Negative body language
Hiding or damaging possessions
Leaving children out of games
Ignoring children

Bullying can be **Psychological**



Ignoring
Excluding
Ostracising
Alienating
Talking about people in an unkind way to others
Hiding or damaging other children's things

Bullying can be **Verbal**



Name Calling
Putdowns
Threats
Teasing

APPENDIX 3:

Departmental References:

1. Memorandum to: Principals DN/10/00225

An incident is broadly defined in the Department's *Incident Reporting Policy* as an event which:

- causes disruption to an organisation, or
- creates danger or risk that could significantly affect individuals within the organisation, or
- impacts on the effective operation of the workplace, or
- attracts negative media attention or a negative public profile for the workplace or the Department of Education and Training, or
- Workcover describes as a "serious incident" which must be reported by law.

Such incidents that involve assaults, threats, weapons, illegal drugs and criminal activity **must** be reported to the School Safety and Response Hotline on 1300 363 778.

The vast majority of students attending public schools maintain high standards of behaviour. Occasionally, the behaviour of students at school, while travelling to and from school, or at school related activities, is inappropriate and impacts on safety. Behaviour in other circumstances, including at home, can also impact on the school.

The *Incident Reporting Procedures* set out the Department's incident reporting requirements for principals. Under these procedures, incidents must be reported as soon as possible, but within 24 hours. This ensures appropriate advice can be provided to the principal by Safety and Security officers including whether police must be notified. It also allows support to be provided to assist the principal with the management of the incident.

The immediate reporting of incidents under the *Incident Reporting Procedures* does not require the principal to complete any forms, fax details or enter the incident on a database as all details will be taken over the phone. An incident report will be issued to relevant officers by email after the details are recorded. Other records may need to be kept by the principal such as accident reports or mandatory risk of harm reports.

If a student is injured in the course of an assault at school, or while travelling to or from school if the incident is connected to the school, it is the responsibility of the principal to notify police. Police are to be notified regardless of whether parents, carers or students indicate that they do not want police involvement. It is not the responsibility of parents or carers to report school related incidents to police, although they also may choose to do so.

Principals need to consider whether school disciplinary action should be taken when they receive reports of inappropriate behaviour which occurred off school premises and outside of school hours. Behaviours which need to be considered include possession/use of weapons, fights or threats made while students are travelling to or from school, reports of serious cyberbullying, or threats made over other telecommunication devices. Where the behaviour is capable of having a harmful effect on staff and students, the principal must notify police and take appropriate disciplinary action, including notifying the School Safety and Response hotline.

Principals must ensure that every deputy principal and assistant principal at their schools is familiar with the Department's incident reporting requirements and that each is able to implement those procedures in their absence.

It is impossible to identify and specify every possible scenario and there may be times when it is difficult to make a decision about whether to contact the police or not. If a principal has any doubt, they should contact the School Safety and

Response Unit and seek advice.

A list of considerations to assist principals in making decisions about whether to report an incident to police is below.

For further information please contact Sara Thorley Smith, Senior Manager, Safety and Security on telephone 96722060.

2. Factors for consideration for principals

The following factors should be considered when deciding whether an incident involving assault, threats, harassment or intimidation is serious enough to warrant reporting to police. Where one of the factors is at a significant level or more than one of the factors applies to the incident, the principal should seriously consider making a report. This is not a checklist or an exhaustive list. Principals are encouraged to seek further advice from the School Safety and Response Unit if they are still uncertain about whether to report the incident to police.

- Did the assault or incident result in a visible injury such as bruised face, split lip, or swelling?
- Did the incident result in a participant complaining of pain or discomfort?
- Was the incident premeditated or planned?
- Was the incident recorded on a mobile phone or camera and then posted on a social networking site or broadcast to others?
- Was external assistance e.g. an ambulance required to attend to one of the participants?
- Did the incident occur in the context of bullying, cyberbullying, harassment, stalking or intimidation?
- Will the incident have a sustained impact on the school or its community e.g. school will need to access outside support services such as EAPS to recover from the incident?

- Did the incident significantly affect school routines or operations for a period?
- Is there a history of aggression by one or more of the participants, or is there a history of this conflict in the community?
- Has a staff member, parent or carer requested that you notify police regardless of your intention?
- Were weapons involved? (If so, there is no discretion and the incident must be reported).