



Education &
Communities

Anti-bullying Plan

Cobar 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.

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

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

Cobar Public School recognises that bullying can often be a term that is used to describe conflicts and incidents between students. Please familiarise yourself with the definitions located at the beginning of this document to ensure you understand bullying is the *repeated misuse of power by the same person* in any form.

As participants in Positive Behaviour for Learning, the staff at Cobar Public School recognise that positive behaviour promotes learning. At Cobar Public School we expect that our students be; Responsible, Respectful, Learners. These three expectations are the three areas that underpin effective behaviour management. 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.

Our aim is to create a positive learning environment and a mutually supportive community with an ethos of respect and responsibility.

Protection

Cobar Public School does not tolerate any form 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 such as PBL, Learning Support Team and our Welfare and Disciplinary Procedures.

All staff, students, parents and caregivers have a shared responsibility in ensuring that bullying behaviours are dealt with quickly and effectively whenever they occur.

We realise that bullying behaviour occurs everywhere in our society, not just in our schools. We also realise that even though we may do everything in our power to prevent bullying, there will still be bullying behaviour. Therefore, we have strategies to deal with both the people being bullied and those doing the bullying.

Prevention and Early Intervention

Each fortnight students are taught an expectation through PBL lessons and complete activities surrounding this value. All students are expected to behave in a socially acceptable manner. The school expectations are in place to reinforce the values of our

society and community. At Cobar Public School our expectations of students are that they are Responsible, Respectful Learners.

Strategies for recognising positive peer relations and behaviour are

- Good egg cards
- Merit awards
- Presentation Day awards
- Verbal praise
- Positive phone calls home
- Positive entries on Sentral data
- PBL awards and recognition (Ernie's Eyes, Licences)

In addition, staff will support students to learn all they can through:

- The consistent use of positive behaviour management techniques
- Staff attendance at relevant training and development programs
- Staff modelling consistent, caring and controlled behaviour
- Discussions with parents and caregivers of their roles and responsibilities in managing student behaviour.

Early intervention strategies can be implemented if a student is being bullied or to assist the student doing the bullying by providing them with skills and strategies to work through the issue. Some of

these can be provided through the provision of integrated programs such as;

- Social skills programs
- Peer mentoring
- Buddy activities
- Peer learning
- Social stories
- Stress management programs within the classroom
- Individual Education Plans
- Referral to Learning Support Team

Response

One off incidents of inappropriate behavior are dealt with by the classroom teacher or teacher on playground duty as they arise. If the inappropriate behaviours are repeated, whether they are verbal, physical, social or physiological, then other strategies come into action.

All students are consistently reminded they have the right to come to school and feel confident in their learning and play, free from bullying and harassment. No one has the right to make another

person feel worried or uncomfortable. If someone is making a student feel like this, they must tell someone about it. Bullying only flourishes in a culture of silence. Telling someone about bullying is not 'dobbing', but merely asserting their right to feel safe while at school. All incidents are followed as soon as they can be by a staff member up when reported.

Strategies when bullying is reported or observed

- The incident is investigated by the teacher to whom it has been reported or observed by
- The staff member consults with the stage leader and using Sentral data and speaking to those involved, determines whether or not the incident is bullying according to the agreed definition
- Students must hand in at front office any phones or mobile devices. Students are only allowed to use their DEC email and DEC approved Blog sites during school hours.

If it is not bullying, the incident is dealt with by the staff member, if it is identified as bullying the following strategies and steps may occur.

- An interview with the student(s) doing the bullying with the principal or an executive staff member about the incidents
- Their parent or caregiver will be informed via a meeting

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- They may be removed from the playground or classroom
- They may lose privileges such as participating in special events, representing the school or participating in PBL reward sessions.
- They may be placed on a level or suspended (at discretion of executive staff depending on the incident).
- They will need to revisit the school wide expectations with an executive member of staff to ensure they are aware of the expectations surround peer interactions
- A learning support referral for the instigating student to assist in developing social skills
- The victim of the incident will also be spoken to and their welfare checked and if support is required for the victim a learning support referral can be made
- Peer mediation and group parent / caregiver meeting
- Regular monitoring of the victim and the student doing the bullying to ensure it is not continued.

Additional Information

The nature of bullying is so broad that there is no single sign that bullying is occurring. The following is a list of signs you may see in a child who is being bullied. Please note that these signs do not necessarily indicate bullying behavior and parents should pay attention to details to recognise changes in their children. Signs that your child may be being bullied:

- Dislike or avoidance of school
- Decline in academic results
- Wants to be taken to school / picked up unusually
- Takes a different way home / to school / avoids an area
- Possessions are damaged or missing
- Becoming withdrawn, anxious, depressed, mood swings, or crying for no apparent reasons
- Unable to explain bruising / injuries
- Complains of feeling unwell without specific symptoms
- Asks for, or steals, extra money
- Increased social exclusion
- Bad dreams or wetting the bed
- Easily angered when asked about his/her day

- Increasing negative self-perception
- Upset after using phone or social media
- Significant change to patterns of using phone or social media, decrease in usage or avoids using

Signs that your child may be bullying others:

- Aggressive behavior (inside and outside the home)
- Behavior is becoming more difficult to manage
- Oversensitive (feels that everyone is out to get him/her)
- Unhappiness
- Loses temper easily and often
- Decline in academic performance
- Teachers reporting changes in behavior, getting into trouble at school
- Difference in social circles
- Increase in possessions / money which is unable to be accounted for
- Other parents / children declining outside of school invitations or social interactions
- Hides usage of phone or social media
- Does not want to disclose or discuss social media content

Principal's comment

Our school has a low prevalence of bullying in accordance to its true definition; however, we do recognise that bullying behaviours can occur and that it needs to be dealt with in a fair and prompt manner. As a school, we aim to develop resilience and give students strategies to deal with bullying. The school will also work closely with students who engage in bullying to ensure our standards of education are met and our students' rights are met.

School contact information

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