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, putdows, 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.

Anti-bullying team consists of representatives from across the school including teachers, executive, students and parents. This team also falls within the guidelines of our Student Welfare committee.

All staff will be involved in the implementation and evaluation of anti-bullying programs across K-6. These programs will ensure the development, implementation and evaluation of this plan.

Annual reviews will be conducted at the end of the year and used as part of the annual school report.

This plan will provide the school with a structure to enable us to monitor and manage bullying issues as they arise.

Statement of purpose

At Metella Road Public School we believe that preventing and responding to bullying behaviour is the shared responsibility of a number of stakeholders such as staff, students, parents and the school community. All members contribute to the prevention of bullying by modelling and promoting appropriate and respectful behaviour and relationships.

At Metella Road Public School our aim is to prevent incidence of bullying and manage bullying issues appropriately. We also aim to equip our students with the skills and strategies to engage in responsible and appropriate actions as bystanders.

Protection

Metella Road Public School has developed the understanding that bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or groups towards others. We also understand that cyberbullying refers to bullying through information and communication technologies.

Bullying behaviour involves humiliation, domination, intimidation, victimisation and all forms of harassment. Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long term effects on those involved including bystanders.

The school will implement the following strategies to maintain a positive climate of respectful relationships where bullying is less likely to occur by:

- developing a shared understanding of all forms of bullying behaviour amongst the school community.
- outlining individual and shared responsibilities of students, parents, caregivers and teachers for preventing and responding to bullying behaviours.
- maintaining and fostering a positive climate of respectful relationships where bullying is less likely to occur.

Prevention

The school will implement the following strategies and programs to prevent bullying:

- Design, implement and evaluate anti-bullying programs across years K-6.
- Embed anti-bullying messages into all curriculum areas and in every year through the reinforcement of school-wide expectations.
- Survey staff, students and parents around bullying issues to assess areas of need in relation to preventing further bullying issues.
Early Intervention
The school will implement the following strategies and programs to provide support to students who have been identified as being at risk of developing difficulties with social relationships and those who have previously experienced or engaged in bullying behaviour before an issue emerges or escalates:

- Develop and implement early intervention programs to support students who are at risk of developing long-term difficulties with social relationships.
- Develop and implement early intervention programs to support students who are identified as having experienced bullying or engaged in bullying behaviour.

Response
The whole school community will recognise and respond appropriately to bullying, harassment and victimisation and will behave as responsible bystanders.

This will be achieved through the implementation of the following strategies:

- Developing and publicising clear procedures for reporting incidents of bullying
- Responding quickly and effectively to incidents of bullying that have been reported to the school.
- Utilising appropriate interventions to the particular incident of bullying
- Providing support to any student who has been affected by, engaged in or witnessed bullying behaviour.
- Regularly updating parents and caregivers about the management of bullying incidents.
- Identifying and responding to patterns of bullying behavior through the SENTRAL Welfare management system and Learning Support Team referrals.
- Explaining the school's procedures for reporting incidents of bullying to the police through ongoing staff communication, professional learning and compliance training.
- Communicating to staff the procedures to use when contacting the Child Wellbeing Unit or Community Services.
- Informing staff of departmental appeal procedures and providing information about the Complaints Handling Policy.
- Promoting and publicising this Anti-bullying Plan and making it available to the school community through the school website.
- Implementing processes such as student, staff and community surveys, to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the school's Anti-bullying Plan.
- Reporting annually to the school community on the effectiveness of the Anti-bullying Plan through the Annual School Report.
- Reviewing the school's Anti-bullying Plan with the school community through the Cyclic Review process and publishing results in the Annual School Report.
Additional Information

Police Youth Liaison Officer (YLO) - Wentworthville Local Area Command

School Liaison Police Officer (SLP) - Wentworthville Local Area Command

Kids Helpline Contact – 1800 55 1800

Principal's comment

The procedures outlined in this plan will assist students, teachers and parents in identifying, reporting and preventing bullying behaviour. By working together we can ensure that Metella Road is a place where children can learn and interact in a positive, peaceful manner.

Peter D’Ermilio – Principal
Scott Staveley – Deputy Principal
Sonya Larobina – Assistant Principal

School contact information

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