Anti-bullying Plan

Palmers Island 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.

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

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

At Palmers Island Public School we value and show tolerance of others in a safe and supportive environment. We foster positive relationships through our strong Student Welfare programs. Our Anti-Bullying policy aims to deal effectively with and prevent incidences of bullying within the whole school community.

Students attend Palmers Island Public School to participate in quality education that will help them to become self-directed, life-long learners who can create a positive future for themselves and the wider community. Any inappropriate behaviour that gets in the way of teaching and learning at the school and interferers with the well-being of students will be dealt with in consultation with staff, student, parent and/or caregivers involvement. Supportive strategies will be implemented to address the incident.

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

- 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, 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 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.

Protection

Definition:

Bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behavior that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or groups towards one or more persons.

Cyber bullying refers to bullying through information and communication technologies.

Bullying can involve humiliation, domination, intimidation, victimization 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.

Prevention

Different Types of Bullying maybe:

Physical:

- Hitting/punching
- Pushing/shoving
- Kicking
- Throwing objects

- Taking others' belongings/stealing from others
- Damaging others belongings
- Spitting at others
- Intimidation-making someone do something they don't 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
- Inappropriate gestures

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 reason attacking players in online gaming
- Stealing passwords
- Blogs
- Websites

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.

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

Preventative strategies:
- Education and promotion of the school's Anti-Bullying Policy
- Use of Peer Support Programs
- Productive and respectful relationships established between all members of the school community
- Classroom rules, routines and processes negotiated and applied consistently
- Adequate supervision of students during breaks on playground and classrooms
- Active intervention when bullying occurs

Strategies to Deal with Bullying

Reported cases can be dealt with in several ways. It is recognised, however, that each case is different and may require an individual, case by case approach. In all cases it is important to ensure:

- That victims are heard and made safe
- Restorative practices are implemented
- School counsellor intervention when required
- Monitored by the learning and support team
- Incidents kept on the school data base
- Parents and school staff work together

Strategies to Deal with Bullying

Behaviours
- Stay in sight of peers and adults
- Try to stay calm. Walk away without looking back
- Try to show you are not upset. Practice this:
  - *Use an 'I' message. Express your feelings in an assertive way eg. 'I want you to stop' or 'I don't like it'*
- Go to a safe place e.g. with other children, near a teacher
- Talk to someone who can help you (a teacher or your parent). Tell them what has happened, how you feel and what they can do to help. This is not dobbing.
- Report to a teacher or an adult
- Never keep bullying a secret

Procedures for dealing with bullying behavior

- All students have the right to be heard and listened to
- Class teacher deals with smaller issues in the classroom in-line with the school student Welfare Policy and class rules
- Teacher on playground duty deals with smaller issues in the playground – if more serious in nature the duty teacher informs the Principal who then deals with the bullying
- Have discussions with the students involved – take appropriate action
- Parents and class teacher work with student to look at underlying problems and seek solutions
- Principal, work with parents and individuals to identify bullying behaviours where necessary
- School Counsellor and Learning and Support Team and DoE Student Welfare 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
- Students with identified bullying behavior will take responsibility for their actions
- Principal deals with major bullying incidents and may need to implement the DoE suspension and expulsion of student procedures
- Principal will enhance playground safety and wellbeing through the development of Playground Supervision Guidelines and "Hands Off" policy, including an anti-bullying clause into class rules and including anti-bullying activities in the Peer Support Program each year.

Procedures for dealing with bullying behavior

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 to develop and implement effective coping strategies
- The Students' parents are 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.

Provided are the following strategies for 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
- 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)
- 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 Well Being Unit.

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

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 behavior. These are some ways we deal with this:

- Referral to Learning and Support Teams
- 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.

Procedures for Reporting Bullying

- Teachers and executive staff will contact the parents of the students being bullied and the student doing the bullying immediately as 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
- The Anti-Bullying Policy will be available on the schools website and information will be posted in the school's newsletter.
- In regards to assaults, threats, intimidation and or harassment, these will be reported to the police by the Principal. The schools handling and response unit will also be contacted where necessary. The schools handling critical incidences policy will be implemented in such incidences
- If there is need to contact support agencies, then the Principal will contact the Child Well Being Unit. The school counselor will also research support
- In regards to staff the Complaints Handling Policy will be used and staff can be directed to EAPS.

Additional Information

Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800

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.

School contact information

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