



Education &
Communities

Anti-bullying Plan

Turvey Park Public School

School Report for 2017





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 Annual Report

Our school anti-bullying 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.

A copy of the school's anti-bullying plan can be obtained from the school or can be accessed on the school website at:

<http://www.turveypark-p.schools.nsw.edu.au>

To comply with the *Bullying: Preventing and Responding to Student Bullying in Schools Policy* schools are required to report annually to their school community on the effectiveness of their anti-bullying plan.

Statement of purpose

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 school staff, students, parents, caregivers and members of the wider school community.

Bullying behaviour is not acceptable and as a school community we work together to provide a safe and happy learning environment.

Bullying is acknowledged as a serious issue. School policies, programs and practices reflect the priority placed on addressing bullying within the school community.

Students have the right to expect that they will spend the school day free from the fear of bullying, harassment, intimidation and victimisation.

Protection

The forms of bullying, including cyberbullying, are defined to the school community to develop an understanding of the unacceptability of this behaviour and a clear understanding of what it is.

School expectations and responsibilities regarding the prevention and dealing with bullying behaviour are explained and distributed to students, parents and staff. Parental responsibilities are distributed in the school's newsletter and parents are invited to obtain a copy from the school or to discuss any aspects of the plan with the principal or assistant principal – student welfare.

The school's P&C association has reviewed the school's anti-bullying plan for its currency and responsiveness to dealing with bullying in a proactive way. The P&C has endorsed the plan in 2017 and approved the measures documented in it to prevent, intervene and respond to bullying.

The school's student welfare committee evaluated the anti-bullying plan with the school staff and students as a part of the school's evaluation cycle. It was determined that the plan is reflective of school practices and is strong in its intent to support students who are affected by bullying and in developing understandings in all to address bullying.

The plan will be evaluated in 2018 by surveying the school community regarding the purpose of the plan, the definition of bullying and the expectations and responsibilities of all community members.

Prevention

The school anti-bullying plan was evaluated by the student welfare committee by surveying staff and students to determine how clearly it outlines specific expectations and requirements of these stakeholders in addressing bullying and harassment, including reporting, intervention and professional learning for staff. Responses were generally positive to the planning and action that the school has implemented.

A Term 3 staff meeting was dedicated to the consistency of dealing with bullying by teaching staff. Teaching staff reported that positive and

consistent playground strategies are regularly taught to students to report incidents, to develop positive relationships and to access support.

A cyberbullying policy was developed to address this specific issue and incorporates units of teaching and learning for all Stage levels. It is due for evaluation in 2018.

Flexible student wellbeing funding has enabled the school to employ a student wellbeing teacher to support students across the school to develop their interpersonal, social and resilience skills. The teacher works with whole classes, small groups of students and targeted students who have difficulty in regulating the behaviour. The “Bounce Back” program has been implemented over the past two years to support teachers and schools in their efforts to promote positive mental health, wellbeing and resilience for both students and teachers and build safe and supportive class and school learning environments. The program has had a positive influence in enabling some students to more effectively manage their emotions and to adopt more pro-social skills when interacting with peers.

The playground supervision policy was reviewed with all staff to ensure that all duty of care obligations are adhered to regarding the handling of bullying-related playground incidents and playground mobility by staff. Feedback and supervision practices indicated that teachers are conscious of their duty of care and of the need to act promptly in situations of bullying, both perceived and real. This area needs to be addressed regularly to ensure consistency of practice.

Specific class lessons are taught K-6 as part of schools social skills program. Class appropriate programs are implemented that focus on learning experiences (understandings and skills) and strategies including discussions relating to ‘social skills’, ‘how to play fairly’, ‘positive relationships’ and ‘anti-bullying’. These programs include learning experiences from specific lessons drawn from PD/Health/PE syllabus. As a result, teacher program evaluations indicate that students are more aware of appropriate ways to deal with incidents of bullying, intimidation or harassment and how to resolve conflicts.

The Peer Support Program this year focused on resilience and the positive handling of bullying-type behaviours by students. Group leaders were positive in session briefings and supervising teachers conveyed that

student cooperation was high. However the ability for students to apply this knowledge and skills is questionable.

The revision of class and school rules was again carried out by teaching staff. This process occurs on a regular basis to ensure that students understand school behavioural expectations and are informed of everyone’s right to a safe, non-threatening and happy school environment.

Classroom management strategies that promote respectful relationships and empower students to “speak up” against bullying are implemented across the school. Teachers constantly promote positive interpersonal relationships and the need for students to be assertive in bullying situations.

Anti-bullying strategies will be evaluated in 2018 in student welfare committee meetings, by gaining feedback at staff meetings and briefings, through school supervision practices and the review of student welfare related school policies.

Early Intervention

There have been a few students in 2018 identified as being at risk of developing long term difficulties with social relationships or who have previously experienced bullying or engaged in bullying behaviour. There have been no students enrolled this year with a history of being bullied or evidence of them engaging in bullying.

The school has the following support structures for students in place to address bullying issues and are continually monitored for their effectiveness.

- Referral to the School Learning and Support Team for discussion and recommendations for support made.
- Referral to the school counsellor with parental consent to develop strategies to strengthen social skills.
- Engagement in an intensive social skills program with peers who lack similar social competencies in an endeavour to improve their abilities to relate to other students in a pro-social way.

- Support by classroom teachers by monitoring their behaviour and make provisions for friendship groups to be established.

The structures are evaluated in a collaborative approach between the Learning and Support Team, school counsellor and class teachers. Parents are contacted regularly to provide updates on support and to gain feedback on their child's social and emotional development.

Response

There have been many strategies implemented by the school to empower the school community to recognise and respond to bullying including documented procedures for reporting bullying. These include:

- playground behaviour boards for recording bullying incidents
- interviewing witnesses concerning reported bullying incidents
- anti-bullying classroom lessons that focus on response strategies
- roles of victims and bystanders in bullying incidents
- completion of incident report and detention notification forms
- all bullying incidents entered on student discipline data base
- Learning and Support Team Meetings and development of student behaviour support plans
- parents are encouraged to report incidents of bullying to school executive and staff and are provided with verbal feedback regarding the action or decision taken
- serious incidents of bullying are addressed by the school executive in accordance with the school's Discipline Policy and DoE policy and procedures for suspension and expulsion.
- student conferencing by staff regarding bullying incidents – victims, bystanders and perpetrators
- school counsellor intervention support

These strategies have been evaluated by the school's student welfare committee and an analysis of the school discipline data specific to bullying incidents.

There were 27 reported incidents of bullying this year, with all but three being one-off incidents. The three students involved in more than one

case of bullying have had Learning and Support Team and school counsellor intervention with adjustments made to their educational programs. There were no incidents of cyberbullying.

The Learning and Support Team, through its regular meetings, appraise the effectiveness of these strategies based on referrals of students who are regular perpetrators and students who have experienced ongoing episodes of bullying.

Strategies used to monitor the plan's effectiveness next year will include:

- Student surveys or focus group sessions
- Staff surveys
- Parent surveys
- Peer Support Program evaluation
- LST meeting feedback (ongoing)
- P&C meeting feedback (ongoing)

The "Tell Them From Me" Student Survey, which is implemented twice a year, allows students from Years 4 to 6 to indicate if they have been the victim of bullying. This data is used to explore further the perceived level of bullying present in the school.

Additional Information

The anti-bullying plan will be monitored regularly and evaluated in line with the school's schedule for the review of all school policies. As part of school planning cycle all aspects of student welfare and discipline will be reviewed in 2018.

Incidents of bullying will be documented by teaching staff and school executive. All data is entered on the school student welfare database so that the executive and student welfare committee can identify emerging patterns of bullying and harassment. Suspension data will be analysed and may be used to inform changes to policy and procedures.

The anti-bullying plan will be modified in response to the effectiveness of its implementation and seek to consistently uphold the welfare and safety of all school students. A formal review of the plan will be conducted every three years to ensure that it reflects departmental, community and

societal expectations regarding the management of bullying. This will be performed in conjunction with the school's P&C Association as being the key parent stakeholder in the school. Data will be presented to the school's P&C association for feedback and response and parent surveys developed to obtain community perceptions on bullying management. Students opinions will be collected by survey and focus group methods.

Principal's comment

It is imperative that Turvey Park Public School is proactive in its stance and actions to deal with bullying. Bullying is a whole school community issue and the management of it must reflect societal expectations. Therefore the anti-bullying plan should be regularly reviewed and evaluated for its effectiveness and consistency.

School contact information

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