



Education &
Communities

Anti-bullying Plan

Nareena Hills 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.

Statement of purpose

Nareena Hills Public School is an inclusive environment, where diversity is affirmed and individual differences are respected. We aim to be a place where all are free to learn, play and express themselves without fear of ridicule, intimidation or violence. The school encourages effective communication strategies whilst working together as a school community to change bullying behaviours.

At Nareena Hills Public School quality education is provided for students to meet their learning needs in a secure, ordered and supportive school environment where students learn and grow with confidence. Students develop best in schools where teaching and learning occur in a context of positive student welfare. At our school the wellbeing, safety and health of students is a cornerstone of all school policies, programs and practices.

Partnerships with parents and the wider community are considered central to the success of addressing bullying when it occurs in our community. The Nareena Hills school community has made a commitment to address bullying in our school in a supportive and consistent manner. We will do this by educating victims, bystanders and those who are bullying in a range of strategies and interventions to prevent, intervene and respond to bullying behaviours.

Protection

Bullying can be defined as 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 communications technology.

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long term damaging effects on those involved, including bystanders.

Bullying can involve humiliation, domination, intimidation and victimisation of others, and all forms of harassment including that based on gender, race, disability, homosexuality or transgender.

CONFLICT OR FIGHTS THAT ARE SINGLE INCIDENTS ARE NOT DEFINED AS BULLYING.

Bullying behaviour can be:

- **Verbal** eg repeated and unwanted name calling, teasing, abuse, putdowns, sarcasm, insults, threats,
- **Physical** eg pushing, hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting, throwing objects, threatening either overt or covert
- **Social** eg ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating, making inappropriate gestures, sending inappropriate notes
- **Psychological** eg spreading rumours, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions, malicious SMS and email messages, inappropriate use of camera phones and/or social networking sites

Nareena Hills Public School has a zero tolerance policy to bullying behaviours. There is a clear mandate for all members of the school community to take appropriate action if they recognise bullying behaviours occurring. The procedures are outlined in the school's Anti-Bullying Plan and are regularly communicated to the whole school community.

Nareena Hills Public School will explicitly teach skills and strategies to reduce bullying behaviour; provide a framework in which victims and bystanders feel secure, supported and confident in reporting bullying; respond quickly and seriously against bullying; and support the emotional and social welfare and development of students who experience, witness or are bullying.

Areas of Responsibility

The responsibility of preventing and responding to bullying behaviour is shared amongst students, parents/carers and school staff. All members of the school community are responsible for following the school's Anti-Bullying Plan.

Students have a responsibility to:

- behave appropriately, respecting individual differences and diversity
- behave as responsible digital citizens
- recognise bullying as a variety of repeated harmful behaviours
- respond assertively as victims or bystanders of bullying in a manner consistent with the Anti-Bullying Plan
- report incidents of bullying to staff, and to follow reports up until they are satisfied that the incident has been addressed.

Parents/Carers have a responsibility to:

- support their children to become responsible citizens and to develop responsible on-line behaviour
- support their child (as victim or bystander) in recognising bullying behaviours and encourage them to respond assertively to incidents of bullying in a manner consistent with the Anti-Bullying Plan

- report incidents of school related bullying to school staff
- work collaboratively with the school to resolve incidents of bullying when they occur.

All School Staff have a responsibility to:

- model and promote positive relationships that respect and accept individual differences and diversity within the school community
- actively participate in, and be committed to, creating a positive school culture which fosters healthy social and emotional development in students and cultivates positive relationships in which bullying is less likely to occur
- recognise bullying as a variety of repeated harmful behaviours, being vigilant in observing and intervening where necessary.
- have knowledge of school and NSW DEC policies and plans relating to bullying
- respond promptly to reports of incidents of bullying as outlined in the Anti-Bullying Plan
- assist in the provision and determination of appropriate support strategies for victims, bystanders and bullies.

Identified staff have specific additional roles.

Teaching Staff have the additional responsibilities of:

- explicitly teaching students the appropriate skills to be respectful, responsible, cooperative and resilient school, community and cyber citizens
- explicitly teaching students the knowledge and skills of how to respond assertively, as victims or bystanders of bullying, in a manner consistent with the Anti-Bullying Plan

- referring students of social and emotional concern (whether victim, bystander or bully) to the Learning and Support Team.

Executive Teachers also have a responsibility to:

- engage as a group in collaborative, reflective practices to analyse data on bullying in order to determine, design and implement effective school-wide or individual anti-bullying programs and support strategies where necessary
- take an active role in addressing reported incidents of bullying, following the guidelines and processes outlined in the Anti-Bullying Plan, including liaising between home and school in order to effectively manage incidents of bullying
- process documentation and record incidents
- provide ongoing support for all involved.

Additionally, **the Principal** has a responsibility to:

- lead the executive team and the wider school community in collaborative, reflective practises to analyse data on bullying in order to determine, design and implement effective school-wide or individual anti-bullying programs and support strategies where necessary
- ensure that the Anti-Bullying Plan reflects the current school community priorities; responds to evolving theories of best practice in this area and is implemented consistently and equitably
- allocate resources and staff as necessary and appropriate to effectively prevent, intervene and respond to bullying
- liaise with welfare agencies and seek NSW DEC support as necessary and appropriate to effectively prevent, intervene and respond to bullying.

The Learning and Support Team has a responsibility to:

- respond to the referral of students by staff for social and emotional reasons by developing individual support strategies in consultation with class teachers, implementing conflict resolution/anti-bullying programs, or initiating whole school interventions as appropriate.

Creating a Positive Climate

Nareena Hills Public school implements the following programs to maintain a positive climate of respectful relationships where bullying is less likely to occur.

- **Life and Social Skills Programs.** The school provides programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and communication skills, eg Life Education Program, Child Protection and Drug Education
- **Whole school value focus.** All teachers explicitly teach what the school values and rules are and what they look like in practice.
- **Whole school reward system.** The school reward and award system acknowledges positive behaviour and relationships.
- **Peer Support Program.** Students are divided into K-6 groupings and led by Stage 3 students to complete activities based around values such as co-operation, tolerance, kindness, responsibility and perseverance. This program supports the underlying belief that if students know each other better then they will be less likely to engage in bullying behaviour. This unofficial buddy system fosters a sense of whole school community.
- **Student Representative Council.** Elected representatives have a responsibility to be supportive school members as well as being a person to whom other students can communicate any concerns. It is expected that all SRC members are role models of appropriate behaviour.

- **Classroom management.** Classroom management strategies are positive and reinforce school expectations of behaviour.
- **Playground Supervision.** Playground supervision is proactive and rostered teachers are vigilant in supervising the playground. There is active supervision and this may involve reminding students of school behaviour expectations and safety rules.
- **Whole School Community Engagement.** The whole school community is constantly engaged in consultation and dialogue around key issues such as student welfare programs, whole school events and supporting quality learning and teaching. Methods of communication include weekly newsletters, website updates, specialist information notes, carer/teacher meetings, regular staff meetings and workshops, and countless informal opportunities to connect. Executive staff all have 'open door' policy and are committed to collaborative management practices.

Prevention

Social, Emotional and Welfare Support

Nareena Hills Public School believes that bullying behaviour is often the symptom of a student's low self-esteem or other social/emotional skills deficits. Victims of bullying often also exhibit under-developed social/emotional skills, insecurities or low self-esteem. Therefore, an important way to prevent bullying behaviours is to provide support to all students, but particularly those who are assessed as having social and/or emotional challenges.

Social/emotional support is offered to students through:

- a nurturing, positive school culture
- the provision of rich learning experiences addressing NSW PDHPE Curriculum Outcomes.

Education – Anti-Bullying Lessons

Education has a significant role in the prevention of bullying behaviour. Students need to understand the causes and effects of bullying; have opportunity to practise bystander interventions and victim assertions; and

to have a clear understanding of how to access their social and emotional support network.

Nareena Hills Public School has developed a series of 'Anti-Bullying Lessons' that draw on PDHPE Curriculum Outcomes and teach communication, inter-relationship and problem-solving skills. (Appendix 1) These are taught at the beginning of each year, supported by stage-appropriate activities. Teachers can during the year, adapt lessons to address particular issues or arising problems within the social relationships of their students. The key themes of the Anti-Bullying Lessons, and specific school-wide strategies that are included within them, are reviewed with the Anti-Bullying Plan to ensure that they are up-to-date and remain in line with NSW DEC policies.

These lessons particularly focus on the role of the 'bystander'. Research has shown that bullying behaviour is less likely to re-occur if witnesses intervene, rather than providing an active or passive audience that condones the behaviour (Ken Rigby, 2012). We are committed to creating a culture within the school where individuals feel safe and have the necessary skills to take a positive bystander role and either intervene in, or report instances of bullying.

Early Intervention

Through the Anti-Bullying Lessons, students are taught to assert themselves and report incidents of bullying both as a victim or bystander.

Students practise the following phrases in role-play situations and are prompted by staff to use these when experiencing social problems:

1. No - "Stop it, Jane, I don't like it when you..."
2. Go - "Stop it, Jane, or I will tell the teacher." Go away from the situation.
3. Tell/ - Go and tell the teacher.

Students are reminded to keep their hands and feet to themselves - **Hands Off!**

These are commonly known as 'The Anti-Bullying Steps' and are widely used with the NSW education system. This provides continuity for students as they move from one school to another, from preschool to primary to high-school and, eventually, out into the community. Research

has shown that bullying behaviours are more likely to cease when the unwanted behaviour is clearly named, and when a bystander intervenes.

The 'Anti-Bullying Steps' are easily modified to be the same statements used by a bystander e.g. "Stop it, Jane, I don't like it when you pull Tom's hair."

Students are counselled to report the problem. Parents are advised to report the problem to the school if they become aware of bullying.

School staff are aware of the need to respond to reports of bullying in a serious and timely fashion.

Staff will be diligent, consistent and vigilant in identifying and reporting bullying behaviours. Our behaviour management system includes opportunities to record and communicate incidents of bullying providing data on its recurring nature, victims and bystanders.

Minor incidents are recorded on the yellow playground incident slips and communicated to the executive team and then to the class teacher. Major incidents are recorded as above and immediately referred to a member of the executive team. These cases are managed by the executive teachers who develop a keen sense of patterns and individuals involved in bullying incidents. A referral to the Learning and Support Team occurs after a number of 'major' incidents.

Students will also be referred to the Learning and Support Team (LAST) if they are identified as being at risk of developing long-term difficulties with social relationships and those students who are identified at, or after enrolment, as having previously experienced bullying or engaged in bullying behaviour.

Social and Emotional Learning Support

The Learning and Support Team includes the Principal, Executive Teachers, Learning and Support Teachers, the School Counsellor, as well as any interested or concerned classroom teacher or SLSO. The LAST makes recommendations and implements support programs that meet the individual learning needs of students. Programs developed to intervene in bullying behaviours may include strategies such as:

- the classroom teacher or Learning and Support Teacher teaching explicit skills using whole class or small group sessions

- available and relevant staff (eg Learning and Support Teacher, Student Welfare Officer) offering programs focussing on boys'/girls' social development
- the School Counsellor undertaking or recommending psychological and/or emotional assessment
- the School Counsellor/Principal liaising with other relevant support agencies
- all staff are made aware of, and implement appropriate support strategies for any students with special needs or programs.

Response

The Nareena Hills Public School Anti-Bullying Plan can be accessed through the school website and is available from the school office. The plan or a summary is provided on enrolment, and again, as needed. The summary will contain a clear definition of bullying and its specific behaviours. They will also contain descriptions of responsible bystander behaviour and appropriate responses to bullying.

Students are explicitly taught how to recognise, respond and behave when experiencing bullying, as detailed in our 'Prevention' strategy. This is part of the Personal Development and Health program.

Teachers are led through regular workshops on preventing/responding to bullying, engaging in professional learning and sharing current educational and behaviour theory in this area.

Teachers respond to reports of perceived bullying by counselling all students involved immediately whenever possible. Teachers will refer students to the school executive if counselling does not remedy the behaviour, and a pattern of bullying behaviour is identified. Behaviour slips are utilised and include the names of all students involved. These slips are provided to the executive immediately or, as a minimum requirement, on the same day as the incident occurs so that follow-up procedures can be implemented quickly.

The student welfare procedures are communicated to families, published on the school website and copies are available from the office. Elements

of the process are included in the school newsletter when necessary. Currently the Student Welfare Policy is being reviewed (2013).

Executive teachers use a wide range of strategies to respond to incidents. The unique nature of incidents requires individual responses. All will involve direct communication between staff and students, and usually, staff and carers. Students are led through a process of identifying:

- what specific behaviour is unacceptable or causing harm
- what the consequences of this behaviour are for others
- their role in the incident
- possible alternate actions or responses that could have avoided or solved the incident
- actions that can minimise harm or show acceptance of responsibility eg playground sanctions, timeout apologies, mentoring etc.

Students who have been affected by, engaged in or witnessed bullying behavior are all offered the opportunity to participate in a range of programs implemented as part of our Student Welfare Plan.

The Principal or executive team member will have phone and/or written contact with carers providing regular updates, within the bounds of privacy legislation, about the management of bullying incidents that have been reported at the school.

The consequences for bullying behaviour may include

- redirection and counselling
- playground restrictions, monitoring cards
- time-out from class or the playground
- in-school suspension or in extreme cases
- suspension from school.

Time-out and suspension procedures are used in accordance with NSW DEC policies on these matters.

It is important to note that research shows that using punishment as the only intervention is not effective in preventing bullying and more than one

intervention will usually need to be implemented. No one intervention is appropriate in all instances.

The staff of Nareena Hills Public School implement the policies and procedures of the NSW DEC. If incidents occur that require notification to the police according to NSW DEC policy, this procedure is followed eg, serious assaults, threats or harassment.

If it is identified that a child is at risk of serious harm due to bullying, a report will be made to either (or both) the Child Wellbeing Unit and Family and Community Services as per policy and procedures for child protection and wellbeing.

Parents/carers are informed through the newsletter and about the NSW DEC Complaints Handling guidelines. If parents/carers have concerns about bullying behaviour and/or the management of bullying in the school, it is recommended that they discuss the concerns with the Principal. In the event that parents/carers remain dissatisfied with the resolution to their concerns, they can contact the NSWDEC to lodge a complaint.

The maintenance of the school's incident recording system shows repeated incidents and reports of bullying. The system records all those involved, and it is possible to identify regular victims or bystanders of bullying behaviour. Students who appear to be experiencing repeated bullying behaviour (3 incidents recorded) will be referred to the Learning and Support Team. Repeated referral will insure that students remain a priority for this team and joint responsibility is taken amongst staff for urgently responding and supporting students.

As incidents of bullying are recorded, it is possible to measure whether the prevention and intervention programs are effective in reducing bullying behavior. The Learning and Support team and the executive team review data on a regular basis. Additionally, from time to time, the school self-evaluation committee will conduct an evaluation of the anti-bullying plan.

The effectiveness of the anti-bullying plan will be reviewed each year by the student welfare and fair discipline committee and they will report either to the Parents and Citizens Association or through the Annual School Report. The school will review this Anti-Bullying Plan with the whole school community every three years.

Additional Information

Cybersmart School Gateway

Cyberbullying Stories

Bullying. No Way!

National Centre Against Bullying

Kids Help Line

Contact Information

Police Youth Liaison Alison Burke 42267899

School Liaison Police Officer Sian Popp 02 42267899

Kids Helpline: 1800 55 1800

Salvation Army Youth Line: 1300 363 622

Parent line NSW: 13 2055

Lifeline: 13 1114

Principal's comment

All members of the Nareena Hills Public School school community contribute to preventing bullying by modeling and promoting appropriate behaviour and respectful relationships.

The care and safety of students is a major priority for schools. Students learn best in environments where they feel safe. Every student has the right to feel safe and expect that they will spend their days at school free from bullying.

This approach requires students to take responsibility for their own behavior and acting in a way that does not interfere every student's right to learn in a safe environment. It is expected that students will not participate in violence, discrimination, harassment or intimidation and that students will keep their hands and their feet to themselves – Hands Off.

School Anti-bullying Plan – NSW Department of Education and Communities

Our intent has been to make this plan easily understood and also to provide websites that teachers, parents and children can access for further clarification. Please do not hesitate to ask for help if you are unsure of how to report or support a child you believe is being bullied.

The following people were involved in the development of this plan:

Giselle Coltman	Principal
Margaret Fraser	Classroom teacher
Vanessa Glasgow	Parent representative

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Policy to be reviewed in 2016.