



Education &
Communities

Anti-bullying Plan

Otford 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

The staff at Otford Public School reject all forms of bullying. No student, employee, parent, caregiver or community member should experience bullying within the learning or working environments of our school environment.

Protection

The policy applies to all student bullying behaviour, including cyber bullying, that occurs in our school, and off school premises and outside of school hours where there is a clear and close relationship between the school and the conduct of the student.

A definition of 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. Cyberbullying 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.

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

Bullying can happen anywhere: at school, travelling to and from school, in sporting teams, between neighbours or in the workplace.

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- **social** eg ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating, making inappropriate gestures
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Conflict or fights between equals and single incidents are not defined as bullying. Bullying behaviour is not:

- children not getting along well
- a situation of mutual conflict
- single episodes of nastiness or random acts of aggression or intimidation.

All members of the school community contribute to the prevention of bullying by modelling and promoting appropriate behaviour and respectful relationships.

Principal, Staff and the Learning Support Team in consultation with the **Student Welfare Team** must ensure that the school completes and implements the Anti-bullying Plan that:

- is developed collaboratively with students, school staff, parents, caregivers, and the community
- includes strategies for:
 - developing a shared understanding of bullying behaviour that captures all forms of bullying including cyber bullying

- developing a statement of purpose that outlines individual and shared responsibilities of students, parents, caregivers and teachers for preventing and responding to bullying behaviour
- maintaining a positive climate of respectful relationships where bullying is less likely to occur
- developing and implementing programs for bullying prevention
- embedding anti-bullying messages into each curriculum area and in every year
- developing and implementing early intervention support for students who are identified by the school as being at risk of developing long-term difficulties with social relationships
- developing and implementing early intervention support for those students who are identified at or after enrolment as having previously experienced bullying or engaged in bullying behaviour
- empowering the whole school community to recognise and respond appropriately to bullying, harassment and victimisation and behave as responsible bystanders
- developing and publicising clear procedures for reporting incidents of bullying to the school
- responding to incidents of bullying that have been reported to the school quickly and effectively
- matching a planned combination of interventions to the particular incident of bullying
- providing support to any student who has been affected by, engaged in or witnessed bullying behaviour
- providing regular updates, within the bounds of privacy legislation, to parents or caregivers about the management of the incidents
- identifying patterns of bullying behaviour and responding to such patterns
- monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the Plan
- reporting annually to the school community on the effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Plan.
- includes procedures consistent with DN10/00225 – Reporting incidents involving assaults, threats, intimidation or harassment and the Incident Reporting Policy
 - includes procedures for contacting the Child Wellbeing Unit or Community Services where appropriate
 - includes contact information for the police youth liaison officer (YLO) and school liaison police officer (SLP) where appropriate
 - includes contact information for appropriate support services such as Kids Helpline
 - includes information on departmental appeal procedures and the [Complaints Handling Policy](#) is promoted and widely available within the school community and published on any school website
 - is reviewed with the school community at least every three years.

Programs have been implemented which strive to develop a strong sense of community spirit within the school. Research has found children who bully others typically feel little or no pride in their school and are not well integrated into their community (Morrison 2002).

Senior students are given explicit leadership training and are positive role models for younger students.

Staff have been designated responsibilities and have participated in professional development to develop and implement programs such as peer support. We implement the program 'Better Buddies'.

An anti-bullying policy has been developed and is available to all parents.

Links have been established with the local high school through our Seacliff Community of Schools where high school leaders train our Stage 3 students in leadership.

Senior students participate in leadership training to give them the skills to lead peer support groups and to act as buddies for Kindergarten students.

The school community has been kept informed of initiatives via regular reports in newsletters, on school noticeboards and at meetings. The community also participates in school celebrations such as leadership inductions and special assemblies.

The school will continue to build upon the positive programs already established such as the Kindergarten Buddy Program and Better Buddies.

If bullying is not addressed, it can distract the school from its core business of teaching and learning.

Prevention programs need to be in place, as do effective reporting and intervention methods. Students also need to be provided with a diversity of peer friendships. The community needs to be actively involved in the process of creating a peaceful and socially cohesive school environment.

Principal's comment

Offord Public School is a small semi-rural school with a very supportive school community. We pride ourselves on being able to work in an open and inclusive relationship regarding all aspects of school life. The school and its community work closely to ensure that bullying is not tolerated within our school.

Offord Public School and our community work together to create a quality learning environment which is:

- inclusive
- safe and supportive
- conducive to student learning and wellbeing
- free from bullying, harassment, victimisation and intimidation.

School Team:

Rebecca Stone Principal

Janelle Cudmore Class teacher

Kirstin Flamme Class teacher

School contact information:

Offord Public School

Station Road

Offord NSW 2508

Ph: 42941323

Fax: 42943675

Email: otford-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au

Web: www.otford-p.schools.nsw.edu.au/