



Anti-bullying Plan

School Name Vardy's Road 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.

The plan was presented to parents and staff in draft form so that all views could be taken into account when issuing the final plan. An ongoing process of evaluation will continue to involve all parties.

Students have the right to expect to learn in a safe, happy environment free from the fear of bullying, harassment and intimidation. As a school community we have a shared responsibility to create such an environment. Bullying must be taken seriously and is not acceptable in any form.

Bullying can involve all forms of harassment, humiliation, domination and intimidation. It can be verbal, physical, social/emotional or psychological. It can be direct or indirect and includes cyber bullying.

At Vardy's Road Public School inappropriate behaviour, which threatens a student's wellbeing or impedes teaching and learning, cannot be accepted.

Students, teachers, parents/caregivers and members of the wider community will not let cases of bullying go unreported. This is a shared responsibility.

We promote a positive and respectful climate through proactive student welfare and curriculum programs.

We will teach students anti-bullying strategies, raise community awareness and respond promptly to bullying situations.

Vardy's Road explicitly teaches students the following values: respect, resilience, responsibility, cooperation, excellence, integrity, fairness, honesty and caring.

These values were selected through parent and staff surveys. They are closely linked to our social skills program which is valued and taught in all Kindergarten to Year 6 classes.

This is underpinned by the implementation of Positive Behaviour for Learning. PBL is a broad range of systematic and individualised strategies for achieving important social and learning outcomes while preventing problem behaviours.

At a universal level, through the social skills unit 'cooperation', all students are taught:

- what bullying is
- what to do if you're bullied
- the consequences of bullying.

An acronym is also taught to assist students in remembering strategies.

STAND: Stay calm, Try to ignore, Ask them to stop, Never fight, Duty teacher.

Using student welfare data and teacher or parent referrals the Learning Support Team identifies students at risk (both of being bullied and of bullying) and makes decisions on the best course of action.

Actions may include; small group social skills programs, Rock and Water or individual counseling with the Chaplain, Counsellor or Assistant Principal.

In addition it is important to raise the awareness of students, teachers and our community that bystanders play an important role in stopping bullying behaviour. At age appropriate levels students are taught how to behave as a responsible bystander.

The provision of clear information on strategies that promote appropriate behaviour and outline the consequences of inappropriate behaviour is important to our school. Newsletter articles, a published Code of Conduct and updates at parent meetings are all used.

The Anti-Bullying Plan – Vardy's Road Public School

All stakeholders expect that complaints of bullying, harassment and intimidation are followed up quickly and efficiently.

Due to the nature of bullying, reporting an incident is often difficult for a student. All students must be assured that they are safe and that only by speaking up can the behaviours be stopped.

Student or parent/caregivers can speak to class teachers, executive staff or the Principal. All reports will be managed by the executive and Learning Support Team. They will be promptly acted on. If bullying occurs the school will:

1. Interview all parties involved and notify parents.
2. Provide support for the victim.
3. Discipline the bully appropriately and according to the School Code of Conduct.
4. Develop behaviour modification programs; seek counsellor or agency support as required.
5. Apply Departmental consequences such as suspension in cases of violence or repeated bullying.

An anti-bullying brochure given to all students will detail these procedures.

Each incidence of bullying will be looked at by executive and the Learning Support Team to develop the best possible recovery plan for all students involved. Factors such as age, ability levels, family circumstances and previous history will all direct the combination of interventions.

The school will proceed in accordance with the plan previously outlined, taking a sensitive approach with all parties. Principal/Assistant Principals will oversee a monitoring period and communicate within the bounds of privacy legislation with parents/caregivers.

In the case of incidents involving assaults, threats, intimidation or harassment of a serious nature the Principal/delegate would contact the local police, School Safety Directorate and District Office. The school, where necessary, would implement “Lockdown” procedures.

Where a student’s wellbeing is a concern staff/parents/community members should raise their concerns with the Principal. The Principal will then apply the Mandatory Reporter guide to the situation before calling the Child Wellbeing Unit. When directly accessing outside agencies the School Counsellor or Chaplain will assist.

If a situation remains unresolved there are avenues for feedback or complaint. Complaints, suggestions and other feedback help staff to meet expectations, remedy problems and improve situations. The concerns of the school are also important.

Procedures to enable concerns to be dealt with quickly and fairly are part of sound management practice. They help to improve communication, trust, motivation and productivity.

Attempts will be made to resolve matters at school level in the first instance. If agreement cannot be reached, parents would be made aware of procedures outlined in the policy “Responding to Suggestions, Complaints and Allegations’ or on the DET website:
www.det.nsw.edu.au/complaints/

The school endeavours to promote behaviours and understandings that lead to a climate where students feel safe from the threat of bullying. To identify patterns of behaviour that may be of concern and need to be addressed, the school uses data recorded and collected in playground management folders and on RISC (a student welfare data base). Data is analysed by the executive or the PBL team and where necessary system changes are made or small groups are targeted for support.

This plan will be presented for discussion at both a parent forum and staff meeting. The plan will then be made available on the school website. The effectiveness of the plan will be monitored and reviewed during a three year planning cycle. Relevant school-based data analysis and student, staff and community feedback will form the basis for refinement.

The school will report to community annually through the Annual School Report on the effectiveness of Student Welfare programs, including the Ant-Bullying Plan.

Additional Information

Police Youth Liaison Officer (YLO): Quakers Hill Police Station

TEAM MEMBERS:

Mrs Chris Clarke – Assistant Principal

Mrs Lea Stevenson – P&C President

Mrs Jen Berthold – School Counsellor

Mrs Amanda Connelly - Principal

School contact information

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