Sawyers Valley Primary School

An Independent Public School

PREVENTING

AND

MANAGING BULLYING

Guidelines

PREVENTING AND MANAGING BULLYING

Rationale

Sawyers Valley Primary School aims to create and foster an environment where students become independent learners, enabling them to take responsible control of their lives and contribute meaningfully to society.

Bullying is a learnt behaviour, which is unacceptable and can be successfully changed. The school takes an educative approach to managing and preventing bullying. The school's processes and activities promote the development of the values and behaviours that create and maintain inclusive, safe and supportive education environments.

Definitions and Terminology

Bullying is when an individual or group misuses power to target another individual or group to intentionally threaten or harm them on more than one occasion. This may involve verbal, physical, relational and psychological forms of bullying. Teasing or fighting between peers is not necessarily bullying.[1]

Confirming if the behaviours were intentional is not required to implement the strategies for responding effectively. Young people involved in bullying are not always fully aware of the impact of their actions on others. It is more important to act as a result of the effects on the targeted individual immaterial of the determination of intent.

Bullying involves:

- Verbal Bullying: The repeated use of words to hurt or humiliate another individual or group. Verbal bullying includes using put-downs, insulting language, name-calling, swearing, nasty notes and homophobic, racist or sexist comments.

- Emotional/Psychological Bullying: Includes repeated stalking, threats or implied threats, unwanted email or text messaging, abusive websites, threatening gestures, manipulation, emotional blackmail, and threats to an individual's reputation and sense of safety.

- Relational Bullying: Usually involves repeatedly ostracising others by leaving them out or convincing others to exclude or reject another individual or group, making up or spreading rumours, and sharing or threatening to share another's personal information.

- Physical Bullying: Includes repetitive low level hitting, kicking, pinching, pushing, tripping, 'ganging up', unwanted physical or sexual touching and damage to personal property. More serious violent behaviours are not necessarily treated as bullying and may be better managed through the school's discipline processes.

- Cyber Bullying: Involves the use of information and communication technologies such as email, text messages, instant messaging and websites to engage in the bullying of other individuals or groups. This technology provides an alternative means for verbal, relational and psychological forms of bullying.

- Bystanders: Bystanders are those who are aware of, or witnesses to, bullying but are not directly involved in bullying or being bullied themselves. All members of a school community need to know how to support those who are being bullied and how to discourage bullying behaviours. Any member of the school community can be a bystander and can learn ways to act successfully in preventing or stopping bullying.

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[1] *Behaviour Management in Schools* policy, Department of Education

The Department of Education promotes the use of affirmative language that supports the values of the *National Safe Schools Framework 2011* and *Western Australian Curriculum* (i.e. Civic and Citizenship).

The terms 'bullies' and 'victims' are not recommended as appropriate terminology to use when identifying, reporting, recording and responding to bullying incidents. More appropriate terms to use may include 'bullied students', 'students who are bullied', 'students who bully' and 'students who engage in bullying behaviour'. This will ensure that the unacceptable behaviours are addressed in a manner that supports the individuals involved to learn and demonstrate more acceptable social behaviours without the impact of enduring labels.

Rights and Responsibilities of School Community Members

Members of the school community have the right to expect that the school is a safe and supportive learning environment. This expectation comes with a shared responsibility by the whole-school community to prevent and effectively respond to behaviours that have the potential to affect school safety and wellbeing, including bullying.

MEMBERS	RIGHTS	RESPONSIBILITIES
All	• Are safe and supported in school environment • Are included and treated with respect	• Participate and contribute to school positive behaviour programs • Build positive relationships • Demonstrate respect and tolerance towards others
School leadership	• Is supported in developing school's plan to prevent and effectively manage bullying • Is supported in implementing strategies and programs under school's plan	• Provides leadership in resourcing school's plan • Ensures plan is shared with school community • Implements plan • Supports staff to implement strategies and programs under plan
Staff	• Feel safe and supported in the workplace • Are informed of school's plan on bullying • Have access to professional learning in preventing and effectively managing bullying • Have access to curriculum resources suitable for supporting students in building positive relationships, resiliency, safety and bullying prevention (including social/ emotional learning)	• Promote and model positive relationships • Participate in developing school plan • Identify and respond to bullying incidents • Deliver strategies and programs to students in responding to bullying effectively • Promote effective bystander behaviour • Promote social problem-solving • Use appropriate terminology when referring to bullying and students involved
Students	• Have access to curriculum that supports building of resiliency and social skills • Are informed of school's plan on bullying • Are provided with supports to stop bullying	• Understand and value concepts of inclusion and tolerance • Identify and respond effectively to bullying • Are aware of themselves as bystanders • Seek help for themselves and others as needed
Parents	• Are treated with respect • Are confident their children are provided with a safe and supportive school environment • Are provided with access to information on prevention and management of bullying • Are informed of school's plan and opportunities to participate	• Support and encourage children to treat others with respect and tolerance • Act in accordance with school plan if they observe/ know about bullying • Encourage children to report bullying incidents • Work effectively with school in responding to bullying
Wider community	• Are strategically included in prevention and bullying management	• Provide support and input into school's approach to preventing and managing bullying

School Strategies to Prevent and Manage Bullying

What follows here are the school's processes, strategies and programs for preventing and effectively managing bullying. At times a diverse range of school strategies will be required, which may include whole-school prevention, targeted early intervention and intervention for bullying incidents. The school engages in ongoing planning, monitoring and review its processes, strategies and programs to ensure effectiveness in preventing and managing bullying.

Whole-School Prevention Strategies

- Promote a whole-school student support approach with shared leadership through the Positive Behaviour Support Leadership Team;
- Implement the Positive Behaviour Support program on the teaching and recognition of respectful and pro-social behaviour;
- Develop active, trusting relationships within the whole school community;
- Establish a skilled resourced student support team through the Student Leader Strategy;
- Provide information for staff and parents in identifying, preventing and addressing bullying;
- Implement a whole-school social competency development curriculum through teaching of Expected Behaviours;
- Implement *KidsMatter strategies;*
- Promote a school culture that seeks to be proactive and restore relationships affected by persistent or unresolved conflict;
- Promote positive staff role modelling; and
- Implement a regular collaborative cycle of evaluation and review of the implemented strategies.

Preventive whole-school classroom strategies

- Develop supportive and inclusive classroom environments;
- Implement effective classroom behaviour management approaches that teach and encourage positive behaviours, and address negative behaviours effectively;
- Recognise and reinforce positive communication, empathy, tolerance and social problem solving;
- Promote the use of cooperative learning strategies;
- Encourage and support help-seeking and effective bystander behaviour;
- Utilise social problem-solving approaches to resolve peer-based conflicts;
- Implement developmental social/emotional learning curriculum which starts from the early years onwards and includes:
  o Understanding what behaviours constitute bullying;
  o Understanding the impact of bullying;
  o The development of effective bystander behaviour;
  o The development of positive social problem solving skills; and
  o Understanding cyber-bullying, including strategies for the promotion of cyber safety and positive cyber citizenship.

Preventative whole-school playground strategies

- A highly visible and active approach to playground supervision;
- Identification of and supervision adjustments to high-risk situations and settings;
- A range of organised activities during break times that encourage positive peer relations and networks;
- Developmentally appropriate unstructured playground activities and equipment for all students;
- Incentive system for reinforcing positive playground and pro-social behaviour;
- Whole-school processes for responding to playground problem behaviours.

Planning, monitoring and review processes

- Reviewing and updating of policy, guidelines and processes annually;
- Appropriate assessment tools to measure current bullying issues and the school's progress towards achievement targets (snap-shot measures);
- Seeking input from key sectors of the school community;
- Using data to monitor changes over time (longitudinal measures);
- Making adjustments to the selected strategies and programs based on the data;
- Reviewing available resources (including human resources) to ensure accessibility and suitability to the strategies and programs being implemented; and
- Communicating changes to the whole-school community.

Targeted Early Intervention Strategies

Effective schools identify and respond to bullying behaviours early. Early identification and effective responses reduce the associated risks and potential long-term harms caused by bullying. Therefore we seek to identify and respond to bullying behaviours early through the following targeted early intervention strategies:

- Raise awareness and plan around specific forms of bullying, such as cyber-bullying and racism;
- Identify and target early signs of problematic peer relationship issues within the school community;
- Identify individuals and groups at risk that require targeted programs;
- Teach effective bystander behaviour to targeted groups or for specific situations;
- Teach pro-social behaviour to identified students and groups;
- Provide high supervision areas for students with higher support needs;
- Provide effective options for individual students experiencing safety issues (such as buddy systems, alternative play areas and transition routines);
- Provide access to specialist/pastoral care staff and case management processes for students at risk of being targeted or those who demonstrate bullying behaviour; and
- Promote the inclusion of parents of students at risk in identifying and addressing bullying behaviours that may be occurring within the community.

Intervention for Bullying Incidents

- Staff are provided with the support and training to confidently manage bullying situations as they occur;
- Staff, students and parents follow process for reporting incidents of bullying or when they become aware that a student needs support because of bullying;
- Intervention practices that resolve conflicts, restore relationships, and promote tolerance and social problem-solving are used for responding to bullying incidents;
- There are processes for recording and monitoring bullying incidents and interventions;
- Bullied students are provided with supports to promote recovery and resilience; and
- Case management of students involved in persistent bullying is implemented.

Intervention approaches

- *Group Support Approach (*formerly referred to as the *No Blame Approach*);
- Social problem-solving approaches;
- Community circles;
- Small group and individual conferences.

Behaviour Management Sanctions

In situations resulting in significant harm or where violence has occurred, behaviour management sanctions may need to be implemented with reference to the school's Behaviour Consequence Plan. Sanctions are also warranted where evidence-based methods as described above have been unsuccessful in resolving the problem. It is important to remember that he use of sanctions as the first strategy may result in retaliation against those who reported or the bullied student.

Resources

The following websites represent examples of some of the online resources available that have informed our school planning of whole-school prevention and management approaches.

- http://www.scsa.wa.edu.au/ - *School Curriculum and Standards Authority* (*Western Australian Curriculum*: Civics and Citizenship)

- www.**bullyingnoway**.com.au - *Safe and Supportive School Communities (SSSC) Project*; Queensland Department of Education, Training and Employment on behalf of the Australian Education Authorities (2013)

- www.**det**.wa.edu.au/education/cmis/eval/curriculum/ict/ - *Managing Student Safety Online*; Department of Education (2013)

- www.**friendlyschools**.com.au – *Friendly Schools Plus (2012)*; Child Health Promotion Research Centre, Edith Cowen University

- www.**mindmatters**.edu.au - *Mind Matters Plus*; Australian Government Department of Health and Aging; Commonwealth of Australia

- www.**safeschools**.deewr.gov.au – *National Safe Schools Framework (2011)*; Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs. Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations; Commonwealth of Australia (2012)