

# **Bullying**

## **PREVENTING AND MANAGING BULLYING**

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**To be read in conjunction with the school Behaviour Management Plan**

### **Rationale**

*All members of our school community are committed to ensuring a safe and supportive environment where all members have the right to be respected and have a responsibility to respect each other.*

### **Whole-school Community Rights and Responsibilities in Relation to Bullying**

Students, staff, parents, caregivers and the wider community have the right to a safe and supportive learning environment in schools. For this to occur all school community members have a responsibility to prevent and respond to reports and observations of bullying.

### **Rights and Responsibilities of School Community Members**

Refer to the table on page 1.

### **Common Understandings About Bullying**

#### **Definition of Bullying**

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.

## Types of Bullying

Bullying takes many forms and can include:

- 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.
- 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 from their social connections, 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.
- Cyber Bullying: Involves the use of information and communication technologies such as facebook, e-mail, 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 to Bullying:  
*Bullying also involves the concept of "bystanders".* A bystander may be someone who sees bullying or knows about it but he or she is not usually directly involved. Everyone at the school can have a role in supporting those who are being bullied. All members of the whole school community at Tambrey Primary School need to be aware of their role in supporting those who are being bullied and their responsibility to discourage bullying behaviours when they observe them. Any member of the school community can be a bystander and can act successfully to prevent or stop bullying. Sometimes it is difficult to act at the time of the bullying incident but reporting bullying behaviour is also important. Bystanders are encouraged to report to someone who can help, such as a member of the school staff.

## Terminology

The Department of Education promotes the use of affirmative language that supports the values of the *Curriculum Framework*. 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", "victimised students", "students who bully", "students who engage in bullying behaviour" and "students who bully others". This will ensure that the unacceptable behaviours are separated from the students involved. This allows the behaviours to be addressed in a manner that remains respectful of the individuals.

## **School Strategies to Prevent and Manage Bullying**

### **Whole-School Prevention Strategies**

The proactive and preventative whole school structures and strategies that schools implement should aim to:-

- facilitate the development of acceptable standards of behaviour to create a safe and supportive learning environment;
- promote an effective learning and teaching environment that allows positive aspirations, relationships and values to develop;
- foster mutual respect; and
- encourage all students to take increasing responsibility for their own behaviours and the consequences of their actions.

*Reference: Education Qld. Responsible Behaviour Plan for Students.*

- You Can do It program implemented in all classes
- Explicit classroom teaching focus on Values and Health, with particular reference to the TPS Code of Conduct (see page 1).
- Promote a safe and supportive environment across the school
- Build a sense of community and teamwork through faction activities, buddy classes, peer mediators, Student Leaders
- Tambrey Team Player (TTP) whole school and faction team rewards
- Regular classroom meetings in all classes to promote positive models of social problem solving
- Use elements of strategies such as *Mind Matters*, *KidsMatter*, *Friendly Schools and Families*, *Countering Bullying in Schools*, *Tribes*;
- positive staff role modelling;
- multi-age groupings (MAGS) to build student relationships across year groups through cooperative learning and teaching experiences
- offering a range of organised activities during break times that encourage positive peer relations and networks;

### **Targeted Early Intervention Strategies**

Early identification of bullying behaviours is vital if schools are to be most effective in managing bullying. It is important that schools respond in a timely fashion when issues are identified as it is understood that those who are engaged in bullying and are bullied can experience long term effects.

Targeted early intervention strategies could include:

- the development of effective bystander behaviour through the curriculum;
- identifying early signs of relationship issues within year groups and across the school (e.g. class meetings and social problem solving);
- proactive teaching of pro-social behaviour to identified students;
- actively providing other options for individual students experiencing unsafe areas or times at the school;
- referring identified students to appropriate specialist support staff;
- assisting in repairing and rebuilding trust and relationships between identified students and others;

- providing students at risk of being targeted or those who demonstrate bullying behaviour with access to specialist/pastoral care staff;
- setting up buddy systems for vulnerable students;
- using whole school behaviour management strategy methods for identified students eg friendly reminders of appropriate cooperative behaviours; and
- identifying cohorts of students and year groups who are either engaging in bullying behaviours or who are being bullied (or both) that require targeted programs.

### **Intervention for Bullying Incidents**

1. Document what you know about the situation.
  2. Forward this documentation to admin.
  3. Member of admin speaks with the students and contacts parents.
  4. Strategies may include the formation of an Individual Behaviour Plan (IBP) or contract, restricted areas at recess/lunchtime, detention or suspension, police involvement.
  5. If necessary, bullied students may be provided with counselling, for example to assist them to develop skills of resiliency and social problem solving.
- \* It is important that, while maintaining confidentiality, admin are made aware of external factors which may affect students' behaviour.

### **Planning, Monitoring and Review**

The Bullying Plan will be reviewed in line with the Behaviour Management Plan on an annual basis. Each semester, SIS behaviour data will be analysed to assess the effectiveness of the school's processes and identify areas requiring further attention.