PREVENTING AND MANAGING BULLYING POLICY 2024

Wundowie Primary School

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Rationale

Bullying is a learned behaviour which is unacceptable. However, bullying behaviours can be changed. Wundowie Primary School takes an educative approach to managing and preventing bullying. Our processes and activities promote the development of the values and behaviours that create and maintain inclusive, safe and supportive environments.

Vision

At Wundowie Primary School 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.

Definitions

- Verbal bullying: The repeated use of words to hurt or humiliate another individual or group. Verbal bullying includes using put-downs, name-calling, insulting someone about the way they look or behave, spreading rumours, and homophobic, racist or sexist comments.

- Social/relational bullying: Involves repeatedly ostracising others by ignoring someone or keeping them out of conversations, convincing others to dislike or exclude an individual or group, spreading rumours, and sharing information or images that will have a harmful effect on the other person.

- Physical bullying: Includes violent actions towards another person that involves hitting, pinching, biting, pushing, pulling, shoving, damaging or stealing someone's belongings, and unwanted touching**.**

- Cyberbullying: Involves the use of technology to bully a person or group with the intent to hurt them socially, psychologically or even physically. Cyberbullying includes abusive texts and emails, hurtful messages, images or videos, imitating, excluding or humiliating others online, nasty online gossip and chat. [1]

- Bystanders: Bystanders are those who are aware of, or witnesses to, the bullying situation. A supportive bystander will use words and/or actions to support someone who is being bullied by intervening, getting teacher support or comforting them. All members of a school community need to know how to support those who are being bullied and how to discourage bullying behaviours.

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[1] Office of the eSafety Commissioner

Rights and responsibilities of school community members

Members of the school community have the right to expect that schools are safe and supportive learning environments. 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. Positive role modelling and demonstrating respect for all people is crucial.

Schools are encouraged to focus on ensuring all members of the school community have explicit knowledge of their roles and responsibilities as well as support to develop the required skills to fulfil them. It is through each school community member fulfilling their responsibilities that the rights of all are supported. Focusing only on the rights of individuals or groups will not effectively contribute to this same goal.

The whole-school community includes students, staff, parents, caregivers and the wider community who interact within the school context. *Bullying. No Way!* has developed a guide which provides practical suggestions for ways to engage students and their families with the school's bullying prevention policy or plan.[2] The following is a suggested framework for rights and responsibilities. These may be modified by schools as appropriate.

Whole-school prevention strategies

- promoting a whole-school student support approach with shared leadership;
- promoting collaborative relationships between the school, parents (see parent factsheet) and the wider community on developing and implementing school-based strategies and programs with students;
- developing a positive whole-school plan based on the teaching and recognition of respectful and pro-social behaviour;
- developing active, trusting relationships within the whole school community;
- establishing a skilled student support team;
- providing professional learning for staff and parents in identifying, preventing and addressing bullying (i.e. through *Be You* professional learning modules, the *Office of the eSafety Commissioner*);
- implementing a whole-school social competency development curriculum;
- aligning approaches and strategies with the Australian Student Wellbeing Framework;
- using resources such as - *Be You, Friendly Schools Plus* and *Bullying. No Way!* to guide the school's planning;
- implementing developmental, evidence-based social emotional learning programs such as *Friendly Schools Plus*, *Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS™)*, and *Aussie Optimism* to develop shared understanding of:
  - o what behaviours constitute bullying;

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[2] Bullying prevention is everyone's responsibility: a guide to engaging students and families, *Bullying. No Way!*

- o the impact of bullying;
- o safe and supportive bystander responses;
- o positive social problem-solving skills;

Targeted early intervention strategies

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

Procedures and actions to respond to bullying behaviours

- staff are provided with the support and training by school leadership to confidently manage bullying situations as they occur;
- provide parents with information including key contacts and how the school will respond to bullying incidents;
- staff, students and parents have processes 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;
- help all the students involved with the incident (e.g. the student(s) who bullied others; the student being bullied; bystanders) to discuss the incident such as using the Co-LATE model;
- Ensure staff members are aware of the processes for recording bullying incidences and monitoring the effectiveness of response strategies;
- students who are being bullied are provided with support by staff to promote recovery and resilience; and
- case management of students involved in persistent bullying is implemented.