

Anti-bullying Plan

North Gosford Learning Centre 2017 Reviewed October 10, 2017





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.

North Gosford Learning Centre (NGLC) understands the importance of whole school representation in the development, implementation, evaluation and review of an effective anti bullying plan. Input is sought and accepted from students, parents, P&C association and all levels of staff. Data is gathered through surveys, student welfare referral system and consultation with all stakeholders in the school community.

Statement of purpose

North Gosford Learning Centre is an inclusive environment, where diversity is affirmed and individual differences are respected. Quality education is provided for students to meet their learning needs in a secure, ordered and supportive school environment. The focus of quality education is for students to learn and grow with confidence. Students develop best in schools where teaching and learning occur in a positive and safe environment. The wellbeing, safety and health of students are the cornerstone of all school policies, programs and practices. Partnerships with parents and the wider community is considered centre to the success.

Protection

Bullying is not acceptable in any form. Students and teachers have the right to expect that they can go about their days work free from all types of bullying, harassment and intimidation.

Bullying is intentional repetitive behaviour from an individual or group that causes distress, hurt and risks your well being. Bullying can be verbal, physical, social and /or psychological. The school delivers programs to

the entire cohort with the view of providing students with the tools to recognise, refrain and eliminate bullying behaviour in themselves and others. Individual interventions are delivered to students identified as needing more assistance in understanding acceptable ways to interact socially. Ongoing information on bullying is provided in the school newsletter.

It is the responsibility of all staff, students, parents and members of the wider school community to continually work together to address bullying. The individual must encourage others to comply with the schools expectation on appropriate social interactions. All must understand that it is their duty to report any instances of bullying to executive staff so perpetrators can be identified and assisted to modify their behaviour.

The school believes constant modelling by staff of respectful and positive relations is a must. This coupled with ongoing gathering and monitoring of data on the student welfare system produces an environment where bullying is less likely to occur.

Prevention

NGLC implements a whole school program which includes:-

- Cyber smart program once every semester.
- You Can Do It social and emotional literacy program.
- NGLC social and emotional literacy work sheets.
- Stories of Us DVD program.
- Student and parent surveys on entry and exit.
- Links to resources and support agencies in school newsletter and school website.
- Professional development of staff related to bullying and strategies to counteract it.

Early Intervention

NGLC promotes early intervention through:-

- Pre enrolment surveys on social and emotional literacy.

- Analysis of prior documentation such as risk assessments, PLP's and access request information
- Compilation of a new student profile.
- Consultation with previous school staff and parents.
- Notify parents, students and all other stakeholders at initial contact of the importance of reporting any instances of bullying in past history and present,
- Identified areas of concern are addressed in students PLP, CMP and whole school planning.
- Issues that have been highlighted by the student welfare referral system are discussed at staff meetings where interventions are decided on to minimise the impact of the identified behaviours.
- Development and implementation of group and/or individual supervision plans for students in need of extra support.
- All stakeholders are aware that the executives are to be advised as soon as an instance takes place to assist in early intervention.

Cyber-Bullying

Introduction

Cyber-bullying is intentional, repeated behaviour by an individual or group that causes distress or undue pressure through the use of technology to other students. It includes all types of technological communication that threatens, humiliates, intimidates, or makes another individual feel 'put down'. Cyber-bullying can take the following forms

- Flaming – heated exchange.
- Harassing and threatening messages eg 'text wars'
- Denigration – sending nasty SMS, pictures or prank phone calls 'Slam books'.
- Impersonation – Using a person's screen name or password eg message to hate group with personal details.
- Outing or trickery – sharing private personal information, messages, pictures with others.
- Posting 'set up' images/video eg 'happy slapping'.

The Anti-Bullying Plan – NSW Department of Education and Communities

- Ostracism – Intentionally excluding others from an online group eg knocked off buddy lists.
- Sexting – sharing explicit material by mobile phone.

Department of Education Policy

The Student Discipline in Government Schools Policy makes it clear that "the school discipline policy may apply outside of school hours and off school premises where there is a clear and close connection between the school and the conduct of students".

The Suspension and Expulsion of School Students – Procedures provides that behaviour that may warrant suspension includes -

"hostile behaviour directed towards students, members of staff or other persons including verbal abuse and abuse transmitted electronically such as by email or SMS text message".

Prevention

- Encourage students to report cyber-bullying.
- Ensure that students have a clear understanding of what constitutes cyber-bullying.
- Publicise policies that address cyber-bullying to the school community.
- Promote all forms of anti-bullying throughout the school community as per the school's anti-bullying plan.
- Provide support to students who are bullied or who participate in cyber bullying activities.
- Contact the Police and the School Safety and Response Unit where incidents of cyber-bullying include possible criminal behaviour.

Responsibilities of The School Community.

Responsibility of Students

- Report incidents of cyber-bullying.
- Be responsible bystanders of cyber-bullying.
- Respecting individual differences and diversity.
- Behave as responsible digital citizens.

Responsibility of Parents

- Report incidents of cyber-bullying.
- Work collaboratively with the school to resolve cyber-bullying issues.
- Encourage responsible on line behavior.

Responsibility of Teachers

- Report all incidents and their actions related to cyber-bullying to the Year Advisor or Deputy Principal according to the Anti-Bullying plan.
- Ensure the acceptable use of technology in the classroom.
- Reinforce that cyber-bullying is not acceptable practice at NGLC.

Responsibility of Executive

- Address issues of cyber-bullying at the low level end through mediation.
- Address all issues of serious or repeated cyber-bullying as per the Anti-Bullying plan.
- Contact the Police and the School Safety and Response Unit where incidents of cyber-bullying include possible criminal behavior.
- Ensure all members of the school community including casual staff are familiar with the school's anti-bullying plan.

Responsibility of the Principal

- Apply the Student Discipline in Government Schools Policy and suspend in repeated or serious cyber-bullying cases.
- Contact the Police and the School Safety and Response Unit where incidents of cyber-bullying include possible criminal behavior.
- Implementation of the Anti-Bullying Plan.

Response

The strategies NGLC implement to empower the whole school community to recognise and respond appropriately to bullying, harassment and victimisation and behave as responsible bystanders include:-

- Provision of a safe and inclusive environment

- An established school culture of inclusiveness and respect.
- Ongoing education of staff, students, parents and the wider community on recognition and appropriate strategies to deal with bullying.

In any instances of bullying the action is first reported and/or recorded by the present staff member. Staff then reports the instance to the executive.

In an instance or the behavior happening outside the normal school hours concerns are directed to the executive to be dealt with.

In the case of issues relating to discrimination or racism the school ARCO is advised.

This process is readily available on the website and reinforced through the school newsletter.

In all instances of bullying NGLC staff attempt to understand the underlying motivation for the behavior occurring.

When a report of bullying is received staff attempt to redirect immediately, reinforcing standards that have been previously taught to students.

If the incident has reached executive level all reports are first gathered and reviewed. An interview process involving all parties is then undertaken. In the first instance individuals are interviewed then once the issues are understood a group interview may occur. This process occurs within 48 hours of receiving the notification.

Decision on resolution and management strategies required to be implemented are then made. All staff are advised of any outcomes and recommendations. The student body is informed at assembly.

If counselor support is required a referral is lodged. In instances where it is deemed urgent a counselor can be accessed from another site.

In an instance where the issues cannot be resolved by NGLC staff Regional support may be called upon.

In all instances of bullying NGLC follows the process of:-

- Identification
- Documentation
- Consult

- Educate
- Implement
- Review

NGLC provides regular updates on current trends related to bullying in our setting via the school newsletter and web site.

As is the requirement of the Department of Education and Communities Incident Reporting Policy in any incident involving assaults, threats, intimidation or harassment NGLC will request police response when required and the incident will be logged with the school safety and response hotline. This policy is available for viewing on the Department of Education and Communities website.

As is the requirement of the Department of Education and Communities policy, Protecting and Supporting Children and Young People, in any incident that may place a young person's safety, welfare or wellbeing at risk NGLC will contact the Child Wellbeing Unit or Community Services where appropriate. This policy is available for viewing on the Department of Education and Communities website.

NGLC abides by the Department of Education and Communities Complaints Handling Policy. In all instances NGLC seek to resolve any difficulties, grievances and complaints in a prompt, impartial; and just manner. This policy is available for viewing on the Department of Education and Communities website.

The NGLC Anti-bullying Plan can be viewed on NGLC website: www.ngosfordlc-s.schools.nsw.edu.au

Hard copies are available on request from the school office.

The NGLC anti bullying plan is continually monitored and evaluated through the collection of data from:-

- Surveys
- Student Welfare System
- Anecdotal sources
- Consultation

The Anti-Bullying Plan – NSW Department of Education and Communities

Results on the effectiveness of the Anti-bullying Plan will be updated in the school newsletter and published annually in the school report.

This plan will be fully reviewed in semester two 2018. Input will be sought and accepted from students, parents, P&C association and all levels of staff. A writing committee of no less than three staff will complete the plan review.

Principal's comment

North Gosford Learning Centre rejects all forms of bullying. No student, employee, parent, caregiver or community member should experience bullying within the learning or working environments of this school.

This Anti Bullying Plan communicates our commitment to make informed responses to bullying, harassment, discrimination and violence based on understanding of the issues helping us to create safe school community.

Bullying. No way! Clearly states that positive change incorporates support for individuals, fair and consistent expectations, and approaches that address the deeper issues and encourage wellbeing for all individuals, groups and the whole school community.

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