



Education &
Communities

Ku-ring-gai High School Anti-bullying Plan





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.

Ku-ring-gai High 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.

Ku-ring-gai High School is a school that values and works closely with its students and families to ensure that every child has a safe, supportive and respectful learning environment. This anti-bullying plan has been written in consultation with stakeholders within the community of Ku-ring-gai, including students, staff and parents. The plan is implemented through whole school approaches (eg. assemblies, year meetings, staff meetings, staff development days, school camps). This plan will be evaluated and reviewed every three years.

Statement of purpose

Ku-ring-gai High School is an inclusive environment, where diversity is welcomed and individual differences are celebrated. We respect the rights of all to be safe at all times. We believe that everyone has the capacity to grow and learn, individually and collectively, from one another.

Our community expects that all students and teachers have the right to work and learn together in a happy and safe environment, free from bullying and harassment.

Our physical, intellectual and emotional health impacts on our ability to learn and to achieve our full potential. We learn better when we feel safe and happy.

We all have the opportunity and responsibility to create and maintain a safe environment at Ku-ring-gai High School.

Protection

Bullying has three main features – it:

- involves a misuse of power in a relationship
- is ongoing and repeated, and
- involves behaviours that can cause harm.

Bullying can happen in person or online (cyber), and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert).

Bullying can have a lasting impact on everyone involved, including those who witness it, which is why it is important to work together to create safe school communities for everyone.

Our school understands bullying behaviour can include:

- **Verbal:** name calling, sarcasm, insults, offensive names, ridiculing, teasing, abuse, humiliation, sarcasm, insults, threats;
- **Physical:** hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting;
- **Social:** ignoring, excluding, lying, nasty jokes, ostracising, alienating, making inappropriate gestures, forcing others to do something;
- **Psychological:** intimidating, manipulating, spreading rumours, glaring, hiding or damaging possessions, offensive notes or graffiti;
- **Cyber:** malicious SMS and email or social media messages, inappropriate use of camera phones.

Behaviour of this nature is not accepted and reported incidents will be investigated and managed.

The school understands that there are individual and shared responsibilities in preventing and responding to bullying behaviour. The school's plan will reflect an approach to bullying prevention which utilises systems and policies, curriculum exercises, pro-social skills development, environmental improvement and work with individuals and small groups. Creating a safe and respectful learning environment and community requires a collaborative approach on behalf of parents, students and teachers. Staff have a responsibility to act on reported and/or observed incidents of bullying in accordance with Department of Education Anti-bullying Policy, this Anti-bullying Plan and the school's Student Behaviour Management Policy and Procedures.

Ku-ring-gai High School endeavours to act in accordance with the *Disability Discrimination Act* (DDA 1992) so that all students are protected from discrimination. Our school works to both develop and implement strategies to prevent harassment and victimisation of people with a disability in accordance with *Disability Standards for Education 2005*.

At Ku-ring-gai High School we aim to provide a caring, respectful, inclusive and supportive school culture free from bullying and harassment. We aim to achieve this in the following ways:

- a clear whole school definition of bullying and our school's response to bullying is actively promoted throughout the school community
- a clear Anti-bullying Plan has been developed in collaboration with staff, students and parents/carers, which addresses all forms of bullying (including cyber bullying)
- establishing clearly defined roles and responsibilities of staff, students and parents/carers in preventing and responding to bullying
- procedural steps to appropriately respond to bullying incidents are clearly documented and promoted to staff, students and parents/carers
- teaching and learning programs promote aspects of personal wellbeing and address all forms of bullying through the teaching of language skills, social skills, resilience and coping strategies
- professional development is available to assist school staff to understand the school's Anti-bullying Plan, assist in the implementation

of anti-bullying related teaching and learning programs, and strategies to provide support for students

- students are consulted in relation to the types of bullying behaviour and in what school and social contexts bullying occurs
- students are given an option for effectively reporting bullying incidents
- staff supervision practices and physical environments are reviewed to limit the incidences of bullying (including cyber bullying)
- families are informed and supported throughout the inquiry and management of bullying incidents

Prevention

The following strategies and programs are being implemented at Ku-ring-gai High School for bullying prevention:

- annual year level excursions and/or days that focus on relationships and foster year group cohesion.
- themed days, organised by the SRC and/or Wellbeing team, that promote tolerance and community, for example, Harmony Day, NAIDOC Week, Spring Festival, Aboriginal Awareness Incursions, Spirit Week, National Day of Action against bullying and violence
- partnerships with external agencies include: Brainstorm Productions, HeadSpace, Black Dog Institute, Beyond Blue, Cancer Council, Mission Australia
- a sustained relationship with the Police School Liaison Officer
- internal school wellbeing initiatives include: Peer Support, Peer Mentoring, Mentoring Programs
- provide professional learning for staff include: Child Protection annual updates, KYDS, Positive Psychology
- Wellbeing team including: Year Advisers, Assistant Year Advisers, Head Teachers, Wellbeing Coordinator, School Counsellor, Deputy Principal and Principal
- communication with parents to encourage respectful relationships, relevant school assemblies and year group activities

- Personal Development, Head and Physical Education and Technology subjects specifically focus on issues such as bullying, cyber bullying, self-esteem and identity as part of the curriculum
- Talent Enrichment Program (TEP) to encourage self-expression through selection of academic and creative pathways in a vertical classroom environment
- clear processes for reporting bullying incidents
- encourage the empowerment of the whole school community to recognise and respond appropriately to bullying, harassment and victimisation;
- Orientation Day

Early Intervention

It is important that students who are identified as being at risk of developing long term difficulties with social relationships or as having previously experienced bullying or engaged in bullying behaviour are supported before an issue emerges or escalates. For this reason the following early intervention strategies and programs have been implemented at Ku-ring-gai High School:

- transition program – Liaise with Primary schools through the student transition period to identify students with previous wellbeing issues. This allows students to be supported and monitored throughout their integration in to the high school environment. An integral part of this program is a day visit to the school prior to orientation to become accustomed to their new environment.
- referrals to Learning Support Team regarding learning and social concerns.
- referrals to Counsellor of students at risk.
- Peer Support to support year 7 students and provide them with suitable role models.
- on arrival at Ku-ring-gai High School all new students are paired with a suitable buddy to ensure a smooth transition to learning and social environments.

- ‘Big fish Little fish’ program to equip year 7 students with the required skills to transition successfully in to high school.

Response

The school empowers the school community in recognising and responding appropriately to bullying, harassment and victimisation by encouraging the notions of respect, responsibility and personal growth with the following expectations from the school community:

The obligations of the community:

Students, parents, community and staff work together to establish whether or not an incident of bullying has occurred. It is important to differentiate between a one off incident and ongoing behaviour that causes distress.

Staff: Staff respond appropriately to bullying by counselling the student(s), recording the incident details on Sentral and notifying appropriate school personnel.

Executive staff: Executive staff respond to bullying incidents by counselling the student(s), investigating the matter and implementing consequences, where appropriate.

Parents: Parents who feel their child may be a victim of bullying should contact their child’s Year Adviser or Deputy Principal in order that the school may support the child in a caring, protective manner; the procedures for managing a bullying incident should be implemented.

Students: Students are expected to report any incident that they feel constitutes bullying in the following ways:

- In the classroom: firstly to the classroom teacher
- In the playground: to the teacher on duty first and HT on duty or the Deputy if teacher unavailable.
- Travelling to and from school: to the Bus Driver, to the Year Adviser, Deputy or Parent/Carer
- At Sport: to the supervising teacher at sport or Teacher in charge of Sport
- At TEP: to the supervising teacher at TEP

- In all cases students must complete an incident report, which is available from a DP or Year Adviser.

Reporting of incidents also applies to responsible bystanders. Ku-ring-gai High School encourages the notion of responsible bystanders through the following strategies:

- Year meetings with students to reinforce the message
- Whole school assemblies to reinforce the message
- School involvement in the National Day of Action against bullying and violence

Dealing with bullying incidents

1. Reported and/or observed incidents of bullying will have investigations initiated as soon as possible.
2. Reported and/or observed incidents will be recorded on Sentral.
3. Where significant bullying has been determined, parents/carers of those students will be informed, within the bounds of privacy legislation.

Planned combinations of interventions to different incidents of bullying may include:

- Mediation or peer mediation;
- A referral to the Learning Support team for additional support;
- Parent/carer interviews, when appropriate and within the bounds of privacy legislation
- Disciplinary consequences (in accordance with the School's Student Behaviour Management Policy and Procedures and the Department of Education – Suspension and Expulsion of Students – Procedures);
- Referral to counsellor or outside agencies;
- Year meetings with the Year Adviser to address widespread problem behaviour;
- Appointment of a student or teacher mentor;
- Referral to School Safety and Response Unit
- Referral to School Education Director
- Contact with the Police Youth Liaison Officer or School Liaison Police Officer

- Contact with local Police (for matters including: incidents involving assaults, threats, intimidation or harassment)
- Referral to the Child Well-Being Unit or Community Services.

The school will endeavour to respond to any report of bullying quickly and effectively.

Any suggestions, complaints and allegations to the school will be dealt with according to Department of Education policy: *Complaints Handling Policy PD/2002/0051/V05*. The complaints handling policy establishes the standard approach to resolving complaints, including complaints about the way a reported incident of bullying has been managed and it is required that it be used in all learning and working environments of the Department of Education. If a student is suspended, parents/carers are able to appeal the decision as per Department of Education *Suspension and Expulsion of School Students – Procedures* which is provided to parents/carers with a letter notifying of suspension.

Monitoring and evaluation

The school has a number of strategies for identifying patterns of bullying behaviour:

- gathering and analysing all up to date and relevant information on the nature and extent of bullying, harassment and victimisation, including data that highlights patterns and trends, such as suspension data
- evaluating (based on the data) the extent to which the school's Anti-bullying Plan has been effective in addressing bullying, harassment and victimisation and promoting a safe and secure environment
- developing and implementing a refined or revised plan, if and when necessary

All available data will be analysed to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the Anti-bullying Plan. Referrals to staff, and reports from students and parents will provide essential information on the effectiveness of the Anti-bullying Plan.

The Anti-bullying Plan will be promoted and publicised through internal school systems with all stakeholders, such as staff meetings, P&C Meetings, Year Meetings, school assemblies and on the school website. The Anti-bullying Plan will be reviewed every three years in consultation with the staff, students, parents and community.

Current research as well as Department of Education policy reviews will also inform the shaping or reshaping of this policy.

Strategies to review the school Anti-bullying Plan include:

- gathering and analysing all up to date and relevant information on the nature and extent of bullying, harassment and victimisation, including data that highlights patterns and trends, such as suspension data;
- evaluating (based on the data) the extent to which the school's Anti-bullying Plan has been effective in addressing bullying, harassment and victimisation and promoting a safe and secure environment;
- developing and implementing a refined or revised plan, if and when necessary.
- monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the plan on an ongoing basis.

Additional Information

Police Youth Liaison Officer (YLO):

Senior Constable Stefanie Murray
Hornsby Police Station, 292 Peats Ferry Road, Hornsby, 2077
Ph: 9476 9799

School Liaison Police Officer (SLP):

Senior Constable Lynda Hart
Hornsby Police Station, 292 Peats Ferry Road, Hornsby, 2077
Ph: 0437 883 239

Some suggested Support Services:

Kids Helpline	1800 551 800
Lifeline	13 11 14
Mental Health Access Line	1300 369 968
HeadSpace (Chatswood)	8021 3668
eHeadSpace	https://eheadspace.org.au/
KYDS (Lindfield)	9416 0900

Principal's comment

We are committed to ensuring Ku-ring-gai High School is a safe, supportive and inclusive environment for all students. Our Wellbeing programs are proactive in developing positive emotions and positive relationships for our students. We will continue to work with our community to ensure we are addressing concerns of bullying in a timely and effective manner.

Anti-Bullying Prepared by:

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