

Appendix

Bullying:

Preventing and Responding to Student Bullying in Schools Policy

The NSW Department of Education 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 is a 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, tipping, spitting
- **Social** eg ignoring, excluding, ost racising, 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 response 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 students bullying at Matthew Pearce Public School and reflects the ***Bullying: Preventing and Responding to Students Bullying in Schools Policy*** of the New South Wales Department of Education.

In 2010, the school initiated the Positive Behaviour for Learning program (PBL). PBL focuses on the implementation of positive proactive behaviours to support student learning in a variety of settings across the school, while minimising problematic behaviour.

The Matthew Pearce Public School PBL team is made up of teachers and executive across the school who regularly meet and then feedback to the rest of the school community through staff communication, professional development meetings and also the P & C. Regional staff throughout the year supports the PBL team.

The staff have reviewed our programs and playground policies against our central theme of creating a 'safe, respectful and responsible' learning environment at Matthew Pearce Public School. Developing 'safe, respectful and responsible learners' was adopted as our core belief with 'respect and manners' as the area targeted.

In 2018, the Tier 2 interventions training was provided to staff addressing students' social-emotional skills through evidence-based programs such as the School Chaplain program delivered to small groups of students or individual students.

Statement of Purpose:

Matthew Pearce Public School does not tolerate bullying. Every member of the school community has the right to learn and teach in a happy and safe environment. The school therefore promotes positive and respectful relationships between all members of the school community.

Protection:

Students, teachers, parents, caregivers and members of the wider community can expect:

- that students will be safe at school, free from fear of bullying, harassment and intimidation.
- to be involved in the collaborative development of the school Anti-bullying Plan.
- to know what is expected of them and others in relation to the Anti-bullying Plan.

Students, teachers, parents, caregivers and members of the wider community have a responsibility to:

- promote positive relationships that respect and accept individual differences and diversity within the whole school community.
- contribute to the development of this Anti-bullying Plan and support it through words and actions.

actively work together to resolve incidents of bullying behaviour when they occur.

Bullying occurs when someone deliberately and repeatedly hurts or frightens someone weaker than themselves. It is recognised in this school as harassment and includes physical, cyber, written and verbal forms.

Examples of bullying:

- any form of physical violence such as hitting, pushing or spitting on others
- interfering with another's property by stealing, hiding, damaging or destroying it
- using offensive names, teasing or spreading rumours about others or their families
- posting or sending harmful images or text via the internet or other digital communication tools
- using "put-downs" belittling others' abilities, achievements or medical conditions eg anaphylaxis
- writing offensive notes or graffiti about others
- making degrading comments about another's culture, religious or social background
- hurtfully excluding others from a group
- ridiculing another's appearance
- forcing others to act against their will.

Prevention:

All members of the school community must play their part in preventing bullying.

Members of staff will:

- be role models in action and speech
- be alert to the possibility of bullying
- promote a safe and happy playground environment by being active in their supervision
- arrive at class on time
- be proactive in their response to bullying by removing the victim from the situation and reporting incidents to appropriate members as outlined in the procedures
- promote the key elements of PBL.

Students can expect to:

- know that their concerns will be responded to by school staff
- be provided with appropriate support (for both the subjects of and those responsible for the behaviour)
- take part in learning experiences that address key understandings and skills relating to positive relationships, safety, gender equity, discrimination, bullying and harassment. The Personal Development Health and Physical Education syllabus and other Key Learning Areas will guide these experiences.

Prevention programs provided by the school are explicitly taught each year. These programs include:

- The Bounce Back Program which explicitly teaches students skills that promote resilience. This program is taught K-6 each year.
- Cybersmart online bullying program which targets digital media literacy, positive online communication, peer and personal safety and e-security. Each grade will present lessons from the program that is relevant to the age of the students within their class.
- Anti-bullying units of work are taught to all grades as part of the PDH program. These units are normally taught early within the year and the teachers throughout the year reinforce the concepts.
- Bully proofing programs that assist parents to discuss bullying with their children and develop strategies to prevent and manage bullying.

Early Intervention:

With Matthew Pearce Public School being a PBL environment, the staff and whole school community have implemented programs and strategies to encourage positive behaviour by all of our students.

Strategies used by the staff to prevent bullying and to foster a positive learning environment include:

- Encouraging students to report bullying incidents involving themselves or others.
- Teachers regularly reminding students to report incidents.
- Parents encouraged to contact the school immediately if they become aware of a problem. This is regularly promoted in newsletters, P&C meetings and orientations.
- Recognising students at Matthew Pearce Public School for positive behaviours.
- Celebrating students at Matthew Pearce Public School acknowledging that they are a valued member of the community and have something to contribute.

Response:

If bullying occurs:

Students:

1. Tell a teacher immediately. This may be the class teacher, the year supervisor, the teacher on playground duty, the Deputy Principals or the Principal.
2. There is an agreed process that will then be followed by the school staff. It is contained within the school's discipline policy. Your concern will always be taken seriously.
3. Cooperate with the immediate and on-going resolution and preventions strategies.

Staff:

If a student reports bullying, or you witness bullying incidents yourself, it is suggested that:

1. You listen and acknowledge the seriousness of the report, no matter how trivial it may appear at first.
2. You discuss the incident with the bully/bullies and where relevant, respond according to the school's discipline policy.
3. Inform the grade supervisor who will, in conjunction with a member of the Senior Executive, provide ongoing support to the victim.

Parents:

1. It is suggested that you encourage your children to discuss bullying as much as possible. A thorough reading of this plan with your children is highly recommended.
2. If your child reports that they are being bullied at school, encourage them to follow the procedures above.
3. When the school's attempts to deal with reported bullying and victimisation do not appear to be working, your assistance may well be sought. In cases of a really serious nature you will automatically be involved.

Whole School:

1. Students and teachers discuss the Anti-bullying policy and the discipline policy at least, annually in each class.
2. School assemblies are used to discuss the school's policies and to reinforce good and appropriate behaviours.
3. Resources and programs relevant to happy and safe schools are integrated into teaching and welfare programs in the school.
4. Data is collected to inform the school on the success of the policy.
5. Time and resources are allocated to strategies that assist the identification, the remediation and elimination of issues of bullying.

The school will use Sentral tracking software to monitor incidents of bullying within the school. This data will be used to evaluate and adapt school procedures. The school executive will use the information to identify patterns of bullying behaviour and strategies to respond to such patterns.

This information will be fed back to staff through whole staff communication meetings, executive meetings, PBL committee meetings and the Learning Support Team. With PBL being a major initiative at Matthew Pearce Public School, the PBL team will report back to the school community.

Review:

The Matthew Pearce Public School Anti-bullying Plan will be reviewed by staff each year and will be presented to the school community every two years.

Additional Information:

Police Youth Liaison Officer for Castle Hill Command
Robert Patterson – Ph: 9680 5399

Interrelate Family Centre Norwest
Ph: 1300 473 528

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