

Sefton Infants School

Anti-bullying Policy



Working Together

Revised 2018

RATIONALE

A teaching and learning environment free from bullying encourages healthy, happy, successful and productive individuals. Sefton Infants School and Preschool does not tolerate bullying in any form, including online bullying. All members of the school community are committed to ensuring a safe, inclusive and respectful environment that promotes wellbeing for all students. This policy applies to all student bullying behaviour that occurs within all school settings and off school premises, as well as outside of school hours when there is a clear and close relationship between the school and the conduct of the student.

The Anti-bullying policy is a key part of student wellbeing and complements the school's Student Welfare and Discipline Policy and the Department of Education's Behaviour Code for Students.

DEFINITIONS

Bullying behaviour has three key features. It involves the intentional misuse of power in a relationship. It is ongoing and repeated, and it involves behaviours that can cause harm. Bullying can involve repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviours by an individual or group towards one or more persons. Bullying behaviour can also involve intimidation, victimisation and harassment, including that based on sex, race, religion, disability, or sexual orientation, both online and offline. Cyber bullying refers to bullying through information and communication technologies. Bullying can be illegal if it involves behaviours that include physical violence, threats of physical violence, damaging property or stalking.

AIMS

- To provide a safe, inclusive and supportive environment for all students
- To foster student wellbeing with effective whole-school approaches
- To enhance the school climate by proactively addressing any issues of bullying
- To deal effectively, fairly and consistently with bullying behaviour
- To provide staff, parents and students with strategies to deal with bullying behaviour

RESPONSIBILITIES

Preventing and responding to bullying behaviour is a shared responsibility of all departmental staff, students, parents, caregivers and members of the wider school community. All members of the school community contribute to the prevention of bullying by modelling and promoting appropriate behaviour and respectful relationships.

Principal

The Principal (or their delegate) has the responsibility to:

- complete and implement an anti-bullying plan for the school.
- ensure the development and communication of an anti-bullying policy and plan in collaboration with students, school staff, parents and caregivers.
- maintain a positive climate of respectful relationships where bullying is less likely to occur.
- develop and publicise clear procedures for reporting incidents of bullying at the school.
- organise the development and implementation of programs for bullying prevention.

- develop and implement early intervention support for students who have been identified as being at risk of developing long term difficulties with social relationships.
- respond to incidents of bullying that have been reported to the school quickly and effectively.
- follow procedures consistent with departmental policy (*Reporting incidents involving assaults, threats, intimidation or harassment / Incident Reporting Policy*)
- manage any complaints about bullying following the Department of Education's *Complaints Handling Policy*
- match a planned combination of intervention and consequences to the particular incident of bullying
- provide support and strategies to any student who has been affected by, engaged in or witnessed bullying behaviour.
- empower the whole school community to recognise and respond appropriately to bullying, harassment, victimisation and behave as responsible bystanders.
- undertake annual monitoring and review of anti-bullying policies, plans, approaches and strategies.

Teaching Staff

Teaching staff members have a responsibility to:

- respect and support students.
- model and promote appropriate respectful behaviour.
- have knowledge of, and implement, school and departmental policies related to bullying behaviour.
- report any bullying behaviour.
- respond in a timely manner to incidents of bullying according to the school's anti-bullying policy.
- provide curriculum that supports students to develop an understanding of bullying and its impact on individuals and the broader community.
- undertake active supervision to identify and remove occasions for bullying behaviour.

Non-teaching Staff

Non-teaching staff members have a responsibility to:

- model and promote appropriate respectful behaviour
- refer any report of bullying to a school executive staff or teacher.

Students

Students have a responsibility to:

- behave appropriately, respecting individual differences and diversity.
- follow the school anti-bullying policy.
- behave as responsible citizens and bystanders.
- refuse to be involved in any bullying situation.
- take appropriate forms of preventative action if present when bullying occurs.
- report incidents of bullying as soon as possible.

Parents / Caregivers

Parents and caregivers have a responsibility to:

- support their children to become responsible citizens.
- be aware of the school's anti-bullying policy and assist their children in understanding bullying behaviour.
- support their children to develop positive responses to incidents of bullying consistent with the school anti-bullying policy
- report incidents of school related bullying behaviour to the school.
- work collaboratively with the school to resolve incidents of bullying.

STRATEGIES TO ASSIST IN THE PREVENTION OF BULLYING

Effective whole-school approaches provide a framework for Sefton Infants School to support positive behaviour for all students and for groups of students or individual students who require more intensive and individualised support. Bullying is less likely to occur in a culture that promotes positive, caring relationships among students and staff and between the school and home. A strong focus on building a positive school culture that both respects and values difference is an essential feature of anti-bullying strategies at the school.

In addition, the following strategies are designed to prevent and/or reduce the incidents of bullying in the classroom and playground by nurturing awareness, creating a positive and cooperative school environment, as well as empowering students with a sense of worth, ownership and greater independence.

- Clear expectations of appropriate behaviour with school rules explicitly taught and displayed prominently.
- Explicit teaching of pro-social skills across the curriculum, as well as teaching cooperative and relational skills that support social emotional behaviour. Specific teaching of social skills such as assertiveness, conflict resolution, communication, negotiation and cooperation in formal lessons and incidentally as situations arise.
- Consistent use of 'Super Sefton' commendation awards that form part of the school's behaviour award system for the reinforcement of positive behaviour.
- Consistent use of consequences for inappropriate behaviour.
- Bullying to be dealt with in specific social skill lessons.
- Reinforcement of 'No Go Tell' strategy from Child Protection Lessons.
- Teaching and implementation of social problem solving frameworks such as 'Stop Think Do.'
- Identifying 'at risk' students and providing support before an issue emerges or escalates.
- Regular communication of this policy and the school's anti-bullying plan and strategies to staff, students and parents/carers.

SPECIFIC STEPS TO DEAL WITH BULLYING

All staff members need to be proactive and timely in their response to cases of possible bullying. All complaints are to be taken seriously irrespective of the student/s involved.

INITIAL INCIDENTS

- STEP 1** The first time the class teacher or playground duty teacher is made aware of an issue, the teacher should discuss the incident with the children involved and the consequences if the behaviour continues into bullying. An appropriate consequence is given in accordance with school discipline policy.
- STEP 2** The class teacher is notified and the behaviour and incident is recorded.
- STEP 3** If the behaviour is repeated, the class teacher holds a meeting with the students involved. A record of the meeting is kept. Students are formally warned that if the bullying continues, their parents will be notified and the students will be placed on an anti-bullying contract. The class teacher is to discuss incident with principal and provide behaviour records.

REPEATED OR SERIOUS INCIDENTS (Steps to be undertaken by Principal)

- STEP 4** Interview children involved separately. Complete 'Bullying Incident Report Proforma' (See Appendix A)
- STEP 5** Bring parties together to discuss incident/s and steps to be followed. Use 'Pikas Method of Shared Concern' (See Appendix B)
- STEP 6** Appropriate consequence is given.
- STEP 7** Parents/caregivers are notified
- STEP 8** An individualised 'Anti-Bullying Contract' is signed (See Appendix C)
- STEP 9** Counselling given to all concerned by School Counsellor
- STEP 10** Follow-up of Pikas Method of Shared Concern.

SUPPORT FOR THE VICTIMS OF BULLYING

- Counselling by class teacher in first/ second incident.
- Counselling by school counsellor in repeated incidents or in serious incidents.
- Victim reports daily to class teacher for at least two weeks at the conclusion of each lunch session and lets him/her know if there are any issues or concerns. Class teacher follows up any concerns.
- Reconciliation with bully/bullies providing apology and any required restitution for behaviour.
- Activities to build social skills, assertive skills and self-esteem coordinated by class teacher and school counsellor.

Tell the child:

- It is not his/her fault
- He/She has the right to feel safe and happy
- He/She has the right not to be bullied
- It is okay to walk away
- Bullying can be stopped
- It is all right to tell school staff
- By telling others about the bullying, you are also protecting other students from the bully.

WHAT PARENTS CAN DO TO HELP

- Assure the child that the problem can be solved
- Let the school know that the child is being bullied. Do not try to approach the child or family involved.
- Communicate and cooperate with the school to solve the problem.
- Explain to the child that bullies are usually people with a problem themselves and they use bullying as a way to make themselves feel good
- Explain that bullies know that what they are doing is wrong and the reason that they pressure their victims not to 'dob' is because they are afraid.
- Positively reinforce your child's self-esteem and self-worth.
- Develop your child's social skills by teaching cooperation and sharing in group situations.
- Contact the School Counsellor if you wish to discuss any problems.

Appendix A

SEFTON INFANTS & PRE-SCHOOL

BULLYING REPORT

Name of student being bullied: _____ Class: _____

Name/s and classes of students bullying:

Person reporting bullying: _____

Date bullying reported: _____ Duration of bullying: _____

Location of bullying: _____

Form of bullying:

PHYSICAL		VERBAL	
• Hitting / punching		• Insulting	
• Kicking		• Teasing	
• Throwing items		• Rumours	
• Spitting		• Discriminatory remarks	
		• Online	
SOCIAL		PSYCHOLOGICAL	
• Excluding / ignoring		• Intimidation	
• Damaging property		• Inappropriate gestures	
		• Threatening behaviour	
		• Malicious notes, emails, text messages	

Comments: _____

Actions taken after report:

Date parents informed: _____

Comments: _____

Follow up (and dates):

Teacher Signature: _____

Principal Signature: _____

PIKAS METHOD OF SHARED CONCERN

This method (developed by Pikas, 1989) enables the teacher or counsellor to establish shared concerns and to encourage shared solutions to problems. Instead of 'bullying the bully', this strategy develops shared solutions to reconcile differences and encourage more equitable behaviour.

The Stages

STAGE A - Individual interview with bully

The suspected bullies are interviewed individually in turn, beginning with the student who seems most likely to fill the role of ringleader.

1. *"I hear that you have been nasty to 'X'. Tell me about it."*

- Let the student talk
- Avoid closed questions
- Don't question if they complain about the victim

2. *"So it sounds like 'X' is having a bad time."*

- As soon as they agree, move on to Stage 3
- If they say "it's his/her fault", agree this may be the case but still point out that they are having a bad time.

3. *"Good. I was wondering what you could do to help improve 'X's' situation."*

- Accept suggestions. Reinforce positive suggestions
- Don't bargain or question
- Don't discuss "how"

4. *"Okay. I'll see you tomorrow to find out how you are getting on."*

- Arrange a time to meet again to discuss progress

STAGE B - Individual interview with victim

The victim is seen after all the suspected bullies have been interviewed.

1. *"How have things been going at school lately?"*

- Express concern, sympathy and support over what has been happening

2. *"Have you been doing anything which might have caused the bullying?"*

- Accept any responses without blame
- If the victim has behaved provocatively, the interviewer must seek to facilitate adjustments in the behaviour of both sides.
- Disclose that you have met with bullies individually to help improve situation.

STAGE C - Group meeting with suspected bullies

After further meetings have been held with individual bullies and real progress towards improving the situation has been confirmed, a meeting with the whole group of suspected bullies is arranged. At that meeting it is possible to (i) compliment the members on the progress that has been made; and (ii) respond to (or elicit) a suggestion from members of the group that the victim be invited to join them for a final meeting to demonstrate that the problem of bullying has really been resolved. Reassurances must be given by group members that they will act positively towards the victim at such a meeting.

STAGE D - Final group meeting of all involved

The final meeting is to provide confirmation that the bullying is over and acceptable relations between all the students has been established. Agreements may be signed on how the students will behave towards each other in the future.

SEFTON INFANTS AND PRE-SCHOOL

ANTI-BULLYING CONTRACT

Student Name: _____ **Class:** _____

Bullying is unacceptable at Sefton Infants Public School. Bullying can cause distress and hurt.

(Behaviour report attached)

I agree that my bullying behaviour has been most unacceptable. I agree to change my behaviour so that all students at Sefton Infants Public School can feel safe and happy.

Student's Signature: _____

School rules I need to follow:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

I will report to the Principal at the end of lunch each day for two weeks to discuss my behaviour. If this contract is not followed, my parents will be notified and further consequences will occur.

Student Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Principal Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

At the end of two weeks:	✓	OR	X
Improvement shown			
Contract completed successfully			
Contract to be continued			
Follow up interview			
Counsellor referral			

Principal's Comments: _____

