

Bullying of Students - Prevention and Response Policy

This policy sets out the department's position on student bullying and the requirements for preventing and responding to student bullying, including online bullying, in NSW public schools and preschools.

1. Policy statement

1. The department rejects all forms of bullying behaviour including online (or cyber) bullying.
2. NSW public schools work to provide safe, inclusive, and respectful learning communities that promote student wellbeing.
3. The department's [Behaviour Code for Students](#) requires students to be inclusive and respect other students, their teachers, school staff, and community members, and to not bully, harass, intimidate, or discriminate against anyone in our schools.
4. Schools are required to establish strategies and practices to encourage positive student behaviour, recognise and reinforce student achievement and wellbeing, and manage disruptive student behaviour, as outlined in the [Student Discipline in Government Schools Policy](#).
5. School staff need to encourage high levels of parental and community involvement in the school to improve student attendance, engagement, learning and behaviour.
6. Each school must complete and implement the [Anti-bullying Plan](#).
7. 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.
8. Bullying behaviour can also involve intimidation, victimisation and harassment, including that based on sex, race, religion, disability or sexual orientation, both online and offline.
9. Bullying can be illegal if it involves behaviours that include physical violence, threats of violence, damaging property or stalking.
10. The [NSW anti-bullying website](#) supports school staff, parents and carers, volunteers and contracted staff, and students to discourage, prevent, identify and respond effectively to student bullying behaviour, where it does occur.
11. Preventing and responding to bullying is the shared responsibility of all school staff, volunteers, and contracted staff employed by schools, and students, parents and carers.
12. Teachers and other school staff are provided with support and professional development to discourage, prevent, identify and respond to student bullying behaviour.
13. Reports of student bullying can be made to any staff member at a school. A teacher or school executive staff (such as the principal, deputy principal or assistant principal, head teacher) at the school will address the reported bullying in a timely manner.

14. If a student, parent or carer believes a matter is not being dealt with effectively, they can refer the matter to the school's principal (or delegate) for resolution.
15. If the student, parent or carer still has concerns, after referring the matter to the school's principal (or delegate), and would like advice, they can contact the [learning and wellbeing advisor or officer](#) at the local departmental office. If the matter is then still not resolved they can contact the [director, educational leadership](#), at the local departmental office, who must follow the [Complaints Handling Policy](#).
16. For incidents of physical violence, and where required, staff should administer first aid (consistent with their training and experience) and contact emergency services whenever necessary. Staff must also report the incident to the Incident Reporting and Support Hotline on 1800 811 523.

2. Audience and applicability

1. This policy applies to all NSW public schools and preschools.
2. This policy applies to all student bullying behaviour, including online (cyber) bullying, and applies outside of school hours and off school premises where students have been involved and there is a clear and close connection to the school.

3. Context

1. Public schools must comply with the NSW Education Standards Authority requirement to provide a safe, inclusive and supportive environment for students.
2. Ways to prevent or respond to student bullying behaviour are addressed through teaching and learning programs across the key learning areas including the self and relationships strand of the mandatory personal development, health and physical education curriculum.
3. This policy relates to student bullying in public schools. The [Work, Health and Safety Policy](#) applies to staff bullying in public schools. When bullying involves a student and staff member, both policies apply.

4. Responsibilities and delegations

1. Teachers:
 - support the school in maintaining a safe, inclusive and supportive learning environment
 - model and promote appropriate relationships and behaviours
 - promote a school culture where bullying is not acceptable
 - teach students to identify, report and respond to bullying at school and online
 - manage reports of bullying and escalate matters to the principal (or delegate) when necessary.
2. Non-teaching staff:
 - refer any report of bullying to a teacher or school executive staff.
3. Principals (or their delegate):
 - complete and implement the [Anti-bullying Plan](#) for their school
 - maintain a positive school climate that includes respectful relationships
 - identify patterns of bullying behaviour and initiate school action to respond

- manage complaints about bullying in accordance with the [Complaints Handling Policy](#).
4. Directors, educational leadership:
- manage complaints about how a school has responded to a report of bullying in accordance with the [Complaints Handling Policy](#)
 - where required, assist schools to implement the Anti-bullying Plan, to best meet the needs of the school community

5. Monitoring and review

1. The principal reviews the Anti-bullying Plan every year.
2. The Director, Student Engagement and Interagency Partnerships monitors the implementation of this policy and reviews its effectiveness, at least every three years.

6. Contact

1. Leader, Behaviour Services, (02) 7814 3809