



Education &  
Communities

# Anti-bullying Plan

School Name: Southern Cross School K-12





# 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.

## Implementation

The ongoing development and revision of this policy will be undertaken in consultation with the school's student and parent representative groups, the SRC and P&C respectively, and the whole staff through specific meeting set for that purpose bi-annually.

## Statement of purpose

Students will safely attend our school, undertake their studies and engage in quality learning in an environment that is free of any form of harassment and bullying regardless of the form or location (including electronic forms outside of the school). This purpose is embedded in the three school Values of Respect, Responsibility and Excellence.

## Protection

Our school operates daily using the accepted definitions of bullying listed above.

We believe that no form of bullying is acceptable and are committed to ensuring that the identification and redress associated with bullying is prompt and followed up with all parties concerned.

At our school we regularly promote the value of all community members being responsible for indicating when and where bullying may have occurred and being involved in resolving such matters with immediate due consideration quickly. We see the ongoing need for informing all of the community about what is and what isn't bullying and ensuring that the appropriate staff is identified for students, families and staff to report such occurrences.

As one of our three Values, Respect is highlighted regularly in all aspects of school life.

## Prevention

All newly enrolled students will be provided with this policy and have it clearly explained. At the commencement of each school year, all year groups will undertake a review of the policy so that everyone can be active in understanding what bullying sound, looks and feels like.

Each KLA will provide explicit teaching and learning opportunities around where and how bullying can be identified and how it effects people and communities with significant negative outcomes.

## Early Intervention

At the point of enrolment, students that have been identified as either the victim of bullying types of behaviours or potential perpetrators will have their names given to the school counsellor or student wellbeing team. Careful and sensitive arrangements will be used to ensure that privacy and support is provided with staff being notified to be extra vigilant. Close and early communication with parents/carers in supporting the development of student's appropriate skills and understandings around anti-bullying and harassment behaviours will continue.

Some of the programs and resources being used throughout the school to support our commitment to **no bullying and no harassment** are;

- Zero tolerance of bullying or harassment at Southern Cross School. This is an integral component of the schools ethos and management.
- Social skills programs taught in each class, targeting a specific social skills each week 'Friendly Kids - Friendly Schools'
- Stage 3 'Skills for Growing' and 'Skills for Adolescence' programs
- The 'Whole School Anti-Bullying Program' developed by the Tweed Heads/Ballina District Support Teacher Behaviour Team
- Targeted Students Social Skills Program - every Wednesday afternoon
- Personal Development PD/H/PE
- Individual behaviour contracts or agreements
- Behaviour monitoring and home-school communication books
- In-school Head Teacher /Assistant Principal Program (in-school suspensions with behaviour monitoring book)
- Year 7 welfare/social skills period per timetable cycle
- Year 10 mentoring of year 7
- Transition program for year 6 to year 7 students focuses on Bullying and
- Using our Support Teachers Behaviour and School Counsellors as an integral part of our current programs
- 'Time Out' with buddy class – K-6
- 'Stop, Think, Do' program
- Staff workshops and in-servicing focusing on Head Teachers
- Drama presentations, visiting speakers e.g. 'Sticks and Stones'
- Police workshops for students, staff and families via P&C
- Understanding consequences of electronic harassment (texting, mobile phones, e-mails)
- Training all staff in the procedures for handling bullying complaints
- Providing students with training in assertiveness and conflict resolution
- Providing students with training:

- (a) how to avoid being a bully;
- (b) how to manage bullying.

- WIN-WIN strategies K-6
- Anti-racism and anti-discrimination contact officers
- K-6 weekly values and award schemes
- Explicit teaching of rules
- Instilling and reinforcing the power of positive 'bystander behaviour'
- Anger management and social skills programs with the support teacher behavior
- K-6 thinking room to provide guidance in seeking alternative actions

## Response

Southern Cross School K-12 will:

- adopt a supportive approach to all parties involved in incidents of harassment
- make it clear to all involved that what has occurred may be regarded as bullying
- view bullying as serious, unacceptable and offensive behaviour. It will not be tolerated at Southern Cross School
- ensure that all members of the school community are informed about the Anti-bullying Policy
- maintain detailed documentation of each case in a central register, managed by the Deputy Principal
- through the Welfare Teams, endeavour to achieve appropriate resolution for all parties involved through thorough investigation of all applicable and relevant information
- ensure that any action taken will be in the best interests of both the victim and the aggressor and may include counselling and/or behaviour modification programs
- administer disciplinary consequences consistently and fairly
- evaluate this policy on a regular basis through the Welfare Committees
- promote individuals taking responsibility for inappropriate behavior

- using reconciliation through mediation where appropriate

## The Complaint Procedure

These are the steps to take when making a complaint.

1. The student, or an intermediary, on behalf of the victim, reports the incident of bullying to a staff member.
2. The staff member notifies the appropriate Year Adviser or Assistant Principal through a Notification of Bullying/Harassment form Appendix (1).
3. The INCIDENT REPORT becomes a part of the central register managed by the Deputy Principal.
4. All students are provided with the opportunity to provide a statement and to be interviewed.

## Dealing with the complaint

1. The students involved are interviewed by the Year Adviser/Head Teacher/Assistant Principal.
2. Interview sheets are completed by the Year Adviser/Assistant Principal and copies are sent to the Central Register managed by the Deputy Principal and a copy is placed in the students' file.

## Consequences for Students Participating in Bullying

One or another of the following actions will be taken when a student has been accused of bullying another member of the school community.

The consequences will be determined by the Assistant Principal/Head Teacher/Year adviser, in accordance with DEC an school policies but considering each individual context, also taking into account:

- whether this is the first offence recorded against the student
- the nature of the bullying

- the age of the student
- the awareness of the student (i.e. age or disability)

Second or third offences will involve more severe consequences and must be referred to the Deputy Principal Welfare.

## Procedures for Staff members to whom a complaint has been made

- The staff member will offer support and make clear to the complainant that bullying is a serious offence and unacceptable.
- The staff member will outline the seriousness of the situation to the student accused of bullying.
- The staff member will inform the student/s that the matter will be referred to the appropriate Executive staff.
- The staff member will complete a Notification of bullying/harassment form and pass it on to the appropriate Executive staff.

## First Offence Interviewing the Student

The student is informed of the accusations made against him/her. The student is then:

1. given the opportunity to admit to or deny the allegation
2. made aware of the serious nature of the bullying and its consequences
3. (i) where there is agreement regarding the facts and the resolution of the incident:

- the student may be placed on a green book, whole school level 2, or detention (K-6) Thinking room
- the student will be asked to sign a **Student Agreement Form** – Appendix (2) (specific to the year level), which will be placed in the student's file

- the Head Teacher/Assistant Principal will inform the parents of both parties of the action to be taken
  - depending on the nature of the bullying and the response of the student, the incident may be referred to the Deputy Principal
- (ii) where a mutually acceptable resolution is not reached:
- Years 7-12 students are required to sign a year level specific Student Agreement Form with specific guidelines, acknowledging their mutual differences, and agreeing to abide by the Southern Cross Merit and Discipline Policy. This form is then placed in the students' files
  - all students K-12 will be required to report back to the Year Adviser/Head Teacher/Assistant Principal within one week of the interview
  - depending on the response of the students concerned, the matter may then be referred to the Deputy Principal.

### **Second and Third Offences - Interview of the Student**

The student will be dealt with by the Deputy Principal who will implement steps 1 to 3 above. Subsequently:

- a period of suspension from the school may be recommended to the Principal for the purpose of safety and developing a risk management plan
- a parents/carers of the student are informed that any future incidents may result in the removal of the student from the school
- parents/carers will be asked to work closely with the school to assist the student in developing positive social skills
- the student will be the subject of a monitoring process for a period of time determined by the seriousness of the offence. This may include referral to the Quiet Room and/or Level 2 or 3.
- the school counsellor and other support staff will be involved

- K-6 students will be placed on a monitoring book and may be unable to attend extra-curricular activities

### **Further Offences:**

- the student will be interviewed by the Deputy Principal
- sanctions as indicated in the Student Welfare and Discipline Policy
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### **Managing Bullying using a Whole School Approach**

#### ***Awareness-raising***

- recognise that bullying exists in the school
- define what bullying is and establish that it is not OK
- advertise the fact that the school wishes to reduce bullying and involve the support of administrators.
- positive bystander behavior training

#### ***Involvement***

- involve a committee to plan and implement a program
- offer workshops for staff, parents and students

#### ***Policy Development***

- identify the amount of bullying that is occurring in the school: when, where, who, what (e.g. by using surveys)
- develop a whole school policy involving staff, students and parents

#### ***Strategies***

- provide a range of strategies across the school system and curriculum
- focus on behaviour change rather than punitive action
- involve students in the solutions as much as possible

- focus on what the school wants when there is no bullying

Any incident of significant cyber-bullying will be reported to the Police. The use of the local Schools Liaison Officer will be invoked in all matters as appropriate. If a student is deemed to have been abused, the Principal will utilise the services of the Child Wellbeing Unit or Community Services where appropriate

Parents/carers may utilise departmental appeal procedures by contacting the local regional office at Murwillumbah on telephone 02 6670 2300. Additionally, parents/carers can access the DEC Complaints Handling Policy either via the internet or from the local regional office.

Strategies the school will use to identify patterns of bullying behaviour will include the monitoring by the Assistant Principals as Stage Leaders in K-6 and the Year Advisers in 7-12 making use of the electronic RISC data, and the Bully Book entries. Where a pattern is considered, a formal interview will be undertaken with the student, the appropriate Deputy Principal and the parents will be informed to participate if they wish.

The school's Anti-bullying Plan will be made available upon request and will be attached on the readily accessible website.

A review of Anti-bullying data will be undertaken annually, with focus groups also providing feedback. The findings from this process will be reported in the Annual School Report.

A special review process which will have widespread feedback opportunities will be undertaken every three years with surveys, data analysis and interviews.

## Additional Information

Enter here contact information for the Police Youth Liaison Officer (YLO) and the School Liaison Police officer (SLP) via Ballina Police Station on 0266 818699.

## School Anti-bullying Plan – NSW Department of Education and Communities

Kids Helpline - 1800 55 1800

## Principal's comment

Southern Cross School K-12 is strongly committed to each and every student attending school each and every day free from any feelings of negativity associated with any form of harassment or bullying. Each student has the right to be able to focus on quality learning and growth in all activities that we provide. We believe that any bullying that makes its way into our school environment is our responsibility if it creates a negative learning environment for any of our students, and we will take appropriate prompt action to address these activities. Each child should develop a strong sense of self with in our school and broader community. It is the whole school communities' responsibility to support and encourage acceptable community behaviours that respect all others individuals.

Is it also important for us to be committed to equipping students with skills to deal with forms of bullying to function effectively in the global society after leaving school. Also assisting those who demonstrate bullying behaviour through identifying causes and supporting them to use other positive strategies to satisfy their needs.

## Team members of Anti-Bullying Plan.

John Baker- Principal

Kim Edwards- R. Deputy Principal 7-12

David Cox- Deputy Principal Distance Education

Michelle Slee- Deputy Principal K-6

John Noble- School Counsellor

Teena Reeves- Parent and P&C President

**School contact information**

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