

Anti-bullying Plan

Lithgow Public School





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 psychological behavior 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.

The school community has been represented by staff, parent and student's surveys and parents, staff and student meetings.

Statement of purpose

The Anti-bullying Plan is based on the following key ideas:

1. Students attend school to participate in a quality education which includes developing a positive self-image.
2. Any inappropriate behaviour that gets in the way of teaching and learning at our school and interferes with the wellbeing of our students will not be accepted.
3. Students, teachers, parents, caregivers and members of the wider school community have a shared responsibility to create a safe and caring environment which promotes personal growth, achievement and positive relationships.

Lithgow PS Aims to:

- Educate our community on all forms of bullying.
- Support students who have experienced bullying and or who have been the bully.
- To actively monitor and report on bullying incidents and the actions taken by the school.

Protection

What is bullying?

Bullying can be defined as intentional, repeated behaviour by an individual or group of individuals that is harmful and involves the misuse of power. Bullying behaviour causes distress, hurt and psychological harm. Bullying can also involve humiliation, domination, victimisation and all forms of harassment. Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved including bystanders.

No forms of bullying are accepted or tolerated by Lithgow Public School's community.

Bullying behaviour can be:

1. **Verbal:** name calling, teasing, abuse, putdowns, sarcasm, insults, and threats.
2. **Physical:** hitting, punching, scratching, tripping, spitting, pushing, and kicking.
3. **Social:** ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating, and making inappropriate gestures.
4. **Psychological:** spreading rumours, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions, inappropriate use of mobile phones, malicious SMS, inappropriate use of photographic images, inappropriate emailing and inappropriate use of social sites e.g. Facebook and Twitter.

The whole community has a shared responsibility to respond to bullying.

Students can expect to:

- Be safe at school, free from fear of bullying, harassment and intimidation.

- Know that their concerns will be responded to by school staff.
- Be provided with appropriate support.
- Take part in learning experiences that address bullying issues and how to respond.

Students have a responsibility to;

- Behave appropriately, respecting individual differences and diversity.
- Follow the school anti-bullying plan.
- Not retaliate with physical or verbal bullying
- Tell an older person.

Parents and caregivers have a responsibility to;

- Be aware of the school's 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's anti-bullying plan.
- Inform their child's teacher of suspected bullying.

Teachers and school personnel have a responsibility to;

- Respect and support all students in all aspects of their learning.
- Model appropriate behaviour.
- Listen to the child's concerns.
- Ensure the children feel safe and valued in the classroom.

- Respond in an appropriate and timely manner to incidents of bullying according to the school's anti-bullying plan.
- Undertake professional learning in student welfare issues.

A positive climate of respectful relationships occurs when:

1) All Leadership are committed to a safe school

At Lithgow PS we view all staff as leaders therefore this element is characterised by:

- All staff accepting their responsibility in developing and maintenance of a safe, supportive and respectful learning and working environment for all members of the school community.
- Formulating a clear school vision which is revised, evaluated and implemented in all aspects of teaching and learning.
- Purchasing resources to support the implementation of our school vision. The school executives are responsible for the safety and well-being of students in their stage and make referrals to the student welfare committee, school counsellor and the principal.
- Collecting data to help identify the effective interventions to be delivered.
- Ensuring the mandatory requirements and legal issues in relation to a child maltreatment, harassment, aggression and violence are communicated to staff.
- Ensuring all staff are also made aware of rights and responsibilities in relation to safety issues that occur out of school hours.

2) There is a supportive and connected school culture

This is characterised by:

- Students feeling connected to the school.
- Teachers and staff modelling and promoting values and behaviours that is socially acceptable.
- Displaying respect and support for our diverse society.
- Positive, caring and respectful student -peer relationships, student-teacher relationships and teacher to teacher relationships.
- Appropriate monitoring and response to child protection issues.
- Recognition of the needs of specific groups.

3) Policies and procedures:

This element is characterised by:

- Collaboratively developing policies, plans and structures for supporting safety and well being.
- Clear procedures that enable staff, parents, carers and students to report any incidents of bullying.
- Clearly communicated procedures to staff to follow when responding to incidents of bullying.
- Agreement for the responsible use of technology by staff and students.
- Regular risk assessments of the physical school environment and effective risk management plans developed.

- Code of conduct protocols established and understood about appropriate and inappropriate adult to student contact and interactions within the school context.
- Induction of new staff and families into the school's safety and well-being policies and procedures.

4) Professional Learning is ongoing and evaluated

This element is characterised by:

- Capacity to respond effectively and sensitively to possible incidents of bullying.
- Ongoing professional learning and emerging changes in research and technology in relation to student safety.
- Inclusion of non-teaching staff and casuals, specialist teachers and visiting staff in relevant professional learning opportunities.
- Survey all the school community to gauge trends and to identify incidents.

5) Positive behaviour management is a part of the school discipline system (welfare committee)

This element is characterised by:

- Careful evidence based behaviour management approaches that align with the schools needs
- Promotion and recognition of positive student behavior through personalized rewarding systems and whole school Positive Behaviour Plan.
- A clear understanding and consistent implementation by all staff of the school's selected positive behaviour management approaches within the school and classroom context.

- Effective risk prevention plans for the use of technology in the classroom and for playground organisation and supervision.
- Effective risk prevention plans for student behaviour management during off campus and school related out of hours activities.

6) There is engagement, skill development and the delivery of a safe school curriculum

This element is characterised by;

- A strong focus on the enhancement of student engagement with learning.
- The extensive use of cooperative learning and other related teaching strategies.
- Teaching of skills and understandings to promote cyber safety and for countering harassment, aggression, violence and bullying.
- Teaching of skills and understandings related to personal safety and protective behaviours.
- Teaching of social and emotional skills (e.g. listening, negotiation, sharing, and empathic responding) in all subjects and across all years.

7) Student Wellbeing and Ownership is evident within the school structures.

This element is characterised by;

- Defined structures and strategies for enhancing student well-being.
- Multiple opportunities for students to develop a sense of meaning and purpose.

- Strengths-based approaches to student learning and participation.
- Provision of a wide range of opportunities for student ownership and decision making, student voice and peer teaching.

8) There is Early Intervention and Targeted Student Support

This element is characterised by:

- Effective processes for the early identification of students and families who need, or could benefit from, additional support.
- Appropriate early intervention with students requiring support and skill development.
- Ongoing follow up support to individual families in times of need.

9) There are Partnership with Families and Community.

This element is characterised by:

- Working collaboratively with parents and carers by providing opportunities for education on issues related to student well-being and safety.
- Working with community organisations to provide a consistent message about safety and well-being.
- Working with organisations to extend support to students and families as needed.
- Working with the justice system in relation to student's safety and wellbeing both at a preventative and legal level.

Prevention

At Lithgow Public School the programs & strategies implemented to prevent bullying are;

- A clear and direct plan to support student, staff and parents that suffer from any forms of bullying.
- This plan is available to all community members. It is updated and evaluated yearly.
- An active Learning Support Committee.
- Implementing a school developed "Social Skills Program" across the K-6 spectrum in 2016.
- Implementing programs focusing on anti-bullying and playground games skills.
- Teaching students strategies such as "Stop it! I don't like it!"
- Creating positive classroom environments through student engagement and relevant learning.
- Creating a passive recreation area for students needing less active pursuits.
- Consistently rewarding positive behaviour and effort
- Class based programs of personal development.
- Ensuring that bullying education is integrated into all curriculum areas and learning.
- Implementing mandatory K - 6 programs:
 - Drug Education Program
 - Child Protection Program
 - Social Skills programs

- Elected school leaders and SRC actively take on leadership roles and mentoring.
- Transition programs for students at identified entry points e.g. Year 2 to Year 3 Year 6 to Year 7.
- Including students in active sports programs (including PSSA).
- A committed Learning Support Team and Learning Support Co-ordinator that actively monitor students that report bullying incidents.
- Identifying areas for passive, protected play e.g. the library, computer lab opened at lunch times.
- Educating staff, students and parents on cyber safety.
- An active P & C and parent group that supports parents. An active update through newsletters and parent meetings.
- Identifying homophobia language and phrases and alerting parents ,staff and students of this unacceptable behaviour

At Lithgow Public School anti-bullying messages are embedded into each curriculum area by;

- Staff Development days/staff meetings to develop strategies and to embed these strategies into planning, programming and classroom delivery.
- Planning, cross curriculum linking through integrated units of work. Through literature, visual aids and ensuring that staff are engaged in reading the latest research on bullying.
- Targeted professional learning within every team.
- Completion of all mandatory requirements.

- Targeted social skilling programs being taught within the classrooms.
- Regular updates on bullying preventions.
- Targeted collection of behaviour data and behaviour statics to look for trends and concerns.
- Regular sharing of resources and planned teaching units.

Early Intervention

Early intervention strategies at Lithgow Public School will include;

- Empowering bystanders through targeted lessons and role play.
- Identifying students at risk: bullies and victims.
- Consistent implementation of a Social Skilling program K-6.
- Linking values to school rules and one targeted weekly.
- Providing Counsellor Support to the identified students.
- Including regular discussion of bullying as part of the Learning Support Team agenda and whole school staff meetings.

Response

To empower the whole community at Lithgow Public School to recognise and respond appropriately to bullying, harassment and victimisation the school will:

- Ensure that Bullying Programs are embedded in regular classroom practice.
- Ensure that all community members are aware of the school's Bullying Policy and the consequences for bullying behaviour.
- Educate the community about bullying via specific parent meetings.
- Ensure that bullying prevention tips and knowledge is a regular part of the school newsletter
- Explicitly teach bystander behaviours as part of the school's behaviour program.
- Ensure that students are aware of the procedures that are in place to deal with bullying so that they feel that their concerns and problems are being listened to.
- Involve parents in the mediation of incidents of bullying.
- Notifying parents of the victim and perpetrator of bullying.

Procedures for reporting incidents of bullying at Lithgow Public School are:

All bullying incidents are to be reported to the school at the time of the incident. Teachers will notify their team leaders immediately.

Parents are to report all alleged incidents of bullying to the school. They are not to speak to the alleged perpetrator or their parents. The school will follow the defined procedures to investigate the incident and report back to the parents.

Students must report all incidents of bullying to their teacher and/or a member of the Executive. Teachers are to record bullying incidents so that any patterns in behaviours can be identified.

Procedures will be publicised to Lithgow Public School's community by:

- Specific parent meetings to inform and develop parent understanding of bullying, appropriate responses and the procedure of the reporting incidents of bullying.
- Regular mention of bullying and the related procedures in the school newsletter .

At Lithgow Public School when bullying incidents are reported immediate action is taken by:

- The reporting of the alleged victim to an executive team member.
- The thorough investigation of the incident on the day of the complaint by the Executive.
- The report of the incident to the Principal and Learning Support Leader for discussion. The Executive, in consultation with the Principal and the Learning Support Team, will determine the follow up action to be taken. This could involve a detention, counseling or suspension depending on the severity or regularity of the actions.
- Notification of parents in writing, by phone or both if any of the above actions are taken.

- Involvement of the school counselor who will talk to the students that have been involved in any bullying episodes. Feedback is given at all Learning Support Team meetings.
- Teacher referral of students who are considered to be ostracised or excluded.

The Processes that match planned interventions of bullying incidents

1. All students will be involved in a whole school Social Skills program.
2. By stander programs are implemented to classes where there appears to be a culture of hurting or excluding each other.
3. Any incidents of Cyber bullying will be reported and cyber education will implemented through the Police Liaison Officer and the Stages 2 and 3 school program.

The strategies and programs the school will implement to support any student who has been affected by, engaged in or witnessed bullying behaviour

The Strategies to be used are:

- The method of Shared Concern.
- Motivational Interviewing.
- The critical thinking line for younger students.
- Cyber and Social networking safety and use.
- K-6 Social Skills program.

The school's plans for providing regular updates, within the bounds of privacy legislation, to parents and caregivers about the management of bullying incidents that have been reported to the school.

The school community will be updated through:

- ASR on school website
- Regular parent and carer Stage meetings.
- Class/Stage newsletters will share the values, rules and plans.

The school's procedures for reporting incidents involving assaults, threats, intimidation or harassment to the police.

The school will report any incident of assault, threats, intimidation or harassment to Lithgow Police directly. The school will also alert the School Safety and Security of any of the above incidents.

The procedures the school will use with regard to contacting the Child Wellbeing Unit or Community Services where appropriate.

Lithgow Public School will contact the Wellbeing Unit in all cases where a child is at risk of harm. This will include such incidents where a child is reporting continual bullying or if a child has a history of bullying.

A DOCS referral will be made if the Mandatory Reporting Guide and the Wellbeing Unit recommends it.

Where a child is at risk of significant harm a DOCS referral is made immediately. The mandatory reporting guide is also used to support this decision.

Departmental appeal procedures and information about the Complaints Handling Policy

All parents/staff are informed about the Complaints Handling Policy through staff meetings, parent meetings and newsletters. If the school receives a complaint, all procedures are followed and once a

decision is made, all parties are informed of their right to appeal the decision. The documentation is made available to all parties so the appeal can be lodged with the correct Department delegates.

The strategies the school will use to identify patterns of bullying behaviour.

Patterns of Bullying will be identified by:

- Number of reports.
- Stage in which these reports are linked.
- Identifying students that have had one or more incidents of being bullied or bullying.
- Number of parent referrals.
- Area where these bullying incidents occur.

The school will respond by establishing a team of Stage leaders, Principal, Learning Support Leader and school counsellor to investigate this information and then report back to staff.

Promote and publicise the Anti-bullying Plan.

Lithgow Public School's Anti Bully plan will be introduced to staff, students, and parents through meetings, the school newsletter and signage throughout the school. A copy of the plan will be sent home to all parents and given to staff after the meetings.

The school web site is a public domain available to all community members. The school Anti-Bullying Plan will be uploaded to the website. Copies of the plan will also be available in the foyer area of the school.

The processes our school will use to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of its Anti-bullying Plan.

- The Anti-Bullying Plan will be revisited each term.
- Surveys to staff, parents and students will be completed in Term 3 of each year and the plan updated in Term 4 of each year.
- The new plan will be submitted to the School Education Director and uploaded onto the school web site.
- All parents will receive a copy of the updated plan at the beginning of each new school year.

The school will report annually to the school community

The effectiveness of the Anti Bullying Plan will be reported in the Annual School Report and through the school's newsletter. All data from all surveys will be shared and collated and available for parents on the school's website.

Review of the Anti-bullying Plan with the school community.

The school will hold a review every three years to assess all the social interventions and programs within the school as part of our ongoing school improvement programs. The review will take data from parents, students and staff. Recommendations will be made and modifications to the Anti Bullying plan will be a part of this process.

Additional Information

Police Liaison Officer -

Constable Matt Holden 63328679 ex75679

Kids Helpline -1800551800. This is a free call and offers support to children and parents.

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

Some interesting websites to investigate for support are:

www.moongym.com.au

www.reachoutcentral.com.au

www.beyondblue.com.au

Principal's comment

Lithgow Public School's proactive anti-bullying strategies have been developed over many years based upon best practice data and feedback. The current policy has been developed through consultation with relevant committees and stakeholders including parents, students, staff and community representatives. PBL research and strategies underpin current and developing practices and the staff support and implementation of those strategies.

Staff leading the development of this plan:

Adam Gill & Shelley Kennedy - Assistant Principal

Revised with Assistant Principals from each Stage and senior executive during an executive meeting term 4 2015.

Further alterations made during a Learning Support Team meeting in Term 4 2015. Communicated to all staff through Sentral and staff meeting in Term 4 2015.

School contact information

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