Anti-bullying Plan
Lurnea 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 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.

The contents and procedures of this plan will be shared with school community on a regular basis in the following ways:

- Regular updates on the Lurnea Public School website.
- Providing useful tips and information to parents in the school newsletter.
- Inviting parents and carers to school assemblies that have a focus on anti-bullying learning and information.
- Parent – teacher interviews will be conducted where appropriate.
- Anti-bullying pamphlets sent home to parents outlining the core elements of this plan and how our school combats bullying.

Lurnea Public School has employed an Assistant Principal – Student Wellbeing as one of our major National Partnership initiatives. This additional role will assist with the implementation of this plan by:

- Providing proactive support and strategies to all staff, parents and carers.
- Improving links with other agencies and DEC resources to assist students and families where required.

This plan will be reviewed yearly and our parents and carers will be invited to complete surveys and provide feedback on the effectiveness of it.

Statement of purpose

Bullying is an anti social behaviour and it affects everyone (Students, teachers and other staff members). Lurnea Public School has a zero tolerance towards bullying. We aim to create a safe respectful learning environment. We believe that everybody has the right to learn and work in a safe and secure environment where all forms of harassment including gender, race, disability and sexuality are not used to discriminate against an individual or group of people. Our aim is to eradicate all forms of bullying being that of verbal, physical, social and psychological forms which include cyber bullying.

Protection

Bullying is defined as the conscious and unconscious desire to hurt, threaten, frighten or make someone feel uncomfortable, repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves. The types of bullying include:

- Verbal eg name calling, teasing, abuse, put downs, sarcasm, insults and threats.
- Physical eg hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping and spitting.
- Social eg. ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating, making inappropriate gestures.
- Psychological eg. spreading rumours, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions, malicious sms, email and facebook messages, inappropriate use of camera phones.
Cyber bullying eg. Malicious email and facebook messages and derogatory comments towards people and organisations.

Homophobic bullying

Homophobic bullying generally looks like other sorts of bullying, and can include verbal, physical and cyberbullying. Lurnea Public School will follow procedures as outlined in this policy in response to homophobic bullying. However, the fact that young people are particularly reluctant to report incidents is a distinctive aspect of this type of bullying, and highlights the importance of identifying the homophobic nature of it when it occurs.

It is the policy of Lurnea Public School that students' rights and confidentiality around issues of sexuality are respected. We encourage students to disclose homophobic bullying to a staff member, and will ensure that bullying will be taken seriously. No assumptions will be made about the students’ sexual preference, nor should the student feel the need to disclose their sexual preference.

Responding to homophobic language:
The use of homophobic language to suggest that someone or something is inferior is unacceptable. This includes comments such as “That’s so gay”, or “Those shoes are so gay”. It is this school’s policy that:
- Students are aware that homophobic language will not be tolerated in the school
- When an incident occurs students will be informed that homophobic language is offensive and will not be tolerated
- If a student makes homophobic remarks, staff will explain the effects that homophobic bullying has on people
- Persistent use of homophobic language will result in the implementation of the consequences within the school’s Discipline Policy
- Parents may be contacted by the school
- Serious incidents of homophobic bullying may require Police involvement.

Prevention:
Lurnea Public School will take steps to prevent homophobia by:
- Teaching students so that they understand what constitutes homophobic language, and why it is offensive
- Assessing and monitoring the extent of homophobic bullying
- Using inclusive language throughout school curriculum
- Use of curriculum opportunities to promote respect for others
- Provide professional learning and support
- Working with bodies such as the Student Representative Council

Further Bullying Information

At Lurnea Public School Anti-bullying is the responsibility of each and every individual including teachers, students, other staff members and visitors. When an issue of bullying is presented to an individual that person has a duty of care to investigate the case. In the event that a visitor is advised of bullying taking place it is their responsibility to report it to a staff member (Teacher, Assistant Principal, Deputy Principal, Principal). After investigating the case action needs to be taken and a decision needs to be made to discipline or educate the parties involved. All disciplinary actions must follow the school’s Student Management Plan.

Students have a responsibility to take a stand against bullying. If they witness any form of bullying they should act in the following manner: stand up for the person who is being bullied, attempt to diffuse the situation and they must inform a teacher of the incident. Parents and caregivers need to be aware and alert to the different types of bullying. If they witness any form of bullying they must report the incident to a staff member. It is the responsibility of the staff member to investigate.

The issue of bullying is an ongoing process and continuous education for staff, students and the wider community needs to be undertaken.

Lurnea Public School has the mantra of being safe, respectful learners. This whole school approach towards anti bullying is vital in creating a positive climate of respectful relationships.
Prevention

Social skill programs have been developed and distributed to class teachers. It is the responsibility of the class teacher to explicitly teach the skills in the program. Students need to not only see, understand and display the appropriate social skills, they need to understand that their action and behaviour need to reflect social norms as shown in the program.

An allocated time will be set aside during weekly assemblies to highlight issues surrounding bullying and anti social behaviour. During these assemblies strategies and preventative measures are explicitly taught to assist with the education of bullying.

Other strategies include:

- Anti-bullying will be learnt through a unit of work during one whole term of the year.
- During drama programs teachers should allocate time for role playing situations involving bullying, identifying bullying and dealing with bullying.
- Peer Support and Student Representative Council initiatives to promote a whole school student voice against bullying.
- Playground resources and programs to promote student engagement in positive activities during the lunch and afternoon tea breaks.
- Promoting clearly stated and consistent consequences for students who engage in bullying.

Early Intervention

Students that have been identified as being at risk of developing long-term difficulties with social relationships and those students who are identified as having previously experienced bullying or engaged in bullying behaviour may be placed in the Chill Out Room program. In the Chill Out Room those students who are at risk are taught social skills in a small group/low risk environment.

Response

The philosophy of Lurnea Public School is to ensure that our whole school community is well informed of our stance on bullying and that we send a clear message that bullying of any form will not be tolerated. Our responses include:

- Information about bullying is disseminated in the school newsletter and school website.
- It is continually stressed that it is not sensible to suffer from bullying in silence.
- Build resilience of students against bullying through anti-bullying lessons.
- Parents are requested to let teachers know if they become aware that a child is being bullied.
- All cases must be reported and investigated.
- All parties are brought together to resolve the issue.
- Bullying should be dealt with within specific social skills lessons.
- Counselling is undertaken if required.
- Follow up after bullying incidents have been resolved.
Lurnea Public School - Anti Bullying Procedures

1) Bullying incident reported to teacher on a classroom or playground behaviour card. These cards are archived annually.

2) Investigating teacher or Assistant Principal interviews students concerned (formal student statements may be recorded and archived according to the seriousness of the incident(s).

3) DEC Policy consulted by school staff and advice sought from the Principal. Student Management Procedures applied to offending students.

4) Strategic counselling and interventions to support students to accept their behaviour.

5) Record the incident on RISC (Record of Incident and Student Contact).

6) Set the consequences for continued bullying in line with negotiated PBIS strategies as endorsed by the school P&C.

7) Behaviour to be monitored as outlined in the school PBIS levels.

8) Provide proactive support and strategic intervention for students who have been bullied (Teacher and Executive Managed).

9) If specific bullying behaviours continue, parents/carers to be contacted and an individual behaviour plan to be developed in consultation with all stakeholders (Executive Managed).

10) Persistent bullying after the aforementioned interventions may result in a suspension. However, concurrent referrals for additional support and services would continue through consultation with the school Learning Support Team. (Executive Managed)
**Strategies for Dealing with Bullying**

Lurnea Public School has a responsibility to:

- Explicitly teach and model the desired behaviours to socialise and aim to prevent bullying.
- Annually review and teach the skill each child needs to develop their self-esteem and confidence to empower them to take responsibility for themselves and to respect themselves and others.
- Openly talk about bullying – what it is, where it can occur, how it affects us and what we can do about it.

**Students have the responsibility to:**

- Behave appropriately, respecting individual differences and diversity and not to bully others.
- Follow school rules and report incidents of bullying to the classroom teacher or the playground duty teacher.

**Teachers have a responsibility to:**

- Respect and support students in all aspects of their learning.
- Model appropriate behaviour at all times.
- Empower students to recognise bullying by explicitly teaching social skills programs and incorporating anti-bullying strategies into all aspects of school life.
- Responds in an appropriate and timely manner to incidents of bullying according to the Anti-Bullying Procedures. All incidents are to be recorded on the child’s behaviour card and RISC.
- To investigate, record and report incidents of bullying to the assistant principal, Deputy Principal, Principal.

**Executive Responsibilities:**

- To interview suspected victim(s) and/ or suspected bully(s) and record information onto behaviour cards and RISC.
- Discuss with the class teacher the action to be taken.
- Report to parent(s) when bullying has occurred and the measures taken.
- In extreme cases; work with the Assistant Principal – Student Wellbeing and / or the Principal to resolve bullying issues.

**In consultation with the Assistant Principal – Student Wellbeing and the school Learning Support Team seek additional support for students and families through DEC Access Request and liaising with external agencies.**

**Responsibility of Parents:**

- To watch for signs of distress in their child. E.g. Sudden unwillingness to attend school, a pattern of headaches, missing equipment, bruising etc.
- To take an active interest in their Childs schooling and friends.
- To advise their child to report any suspected incidents of bullying to their teacher.
- Encourage their child not to retaliate.

**Spreading The Word On Anti-Bullying**

- Advise the community that the Anti-Bullying action plan is available on the school website and paper copies available from the office.
- Important parts of the Anti-Bullying action plan should be put into the newsletter. E.g. Procedures, responsibilities and strategies.
- Anti-Bullying action to be posted onto school website for parents and community members to access.
- Anti-Bullying action plan to be printed out and multiple copies held at the office for community members to take.
- Anti-Bullying action plan to be distributed to all staff.
- Regular Teacher Professional Learning about bullying and the Anti-Bullying action plan.
Child Wellbeing Unit

If you are concerned about a child or young person you must;

1) Report your concerns to the principal.

Principals:

- The mandatory reporter guide can assist you to determine what to do. It can be found at [www.keepthemsafe.nsw.gov.au](http://www.keepthemsafe.nsw.gov.au)
- If there is a suspected risk of significant harm call the child protection help line on 133627.
- For other suspected risk of harm concerns, or if you are uncertain about the risk threshold, contact the child wellbeing unit on (02) 92699400.

Identifying Patterns of Bullying

In the event that a pattern of bullying is occurring either whole school or individualised the following steps need to be taken;

- Identify the pattern of bullying occurring.
- Identify those suspected of being involved.
- Investigate the history
- Investigate the incident(s)
- If a serious offence of bullying occurs E.g. Assault, threats, harassment and intimidation refer incident to executive staff where appropriate action reflecting the discipline policy should be followed. In extreme cases police should be notified immediately.
- Increase education to students and staff about issues arising and include preventative measures.

Monitoring Anti-Bullying

- **Teachers should monitor their classes behavior cards/RISC and scan for repeated episodes of bullying. Students who are repeat offenders should be referred to executive staff and an individual behavior plan to be made up and monitored.**
- **Bullying offenses should be recorded on RISC and should be monitored by executive staff.**
- **Each term analyse statistics on RISC to determine the effectiveness of this plan. Statistics should be taken and analysed from term to term.**
- **These results will be posted on the school’s website, newsletter and through assembly announcements.**

Review

This document was edited in February 2012. This document needs to be reviewed and amended at least every three years. The next review is due in February of 2015.
Principal's comment

This plan is a culmination of strategies and procedures that are in place at our school already and should only reinforce the proactive approach our staff and community take in relation to bullying. It is critical that we continue to be proactive and send a consistent message that no forms of bullying will be tolerated in our school. Every action possible in line with this plan and DEC policy should be taken to ensure that all students involved in bullying incidents, including the bully and the victim are educated and provided with the support they need. Cyber bullying and Homophobic bullying are new additions to our anti-bullying plan and need to be taken seriously if we are going to teach our children to be responsible and respected citizens in the future. As the Principal of Lurnea Public School I expect our children to feel safe and respected in their learning environment and have the opportunity to succeed. All members of our school community should share this expectation and play their role in making sure it happens. If anyone would like more information concerning this plan or would like to discuss any issues surrounding bullying or the welfare of our students please make the time to come and talk to me or one of my staff members.

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