



Education &  
Communities

# Anti-bullying Plan

Ruse 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.**

**The Anti-Bullying Plan – NSW Department of Education and Communities**

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.

This plan has been developed in consultation with the local school community, with representation from staff, students and their families. The Anti-bullying Plan has grown from an identified need to support the wellbeing and effective learning of students in our school and to enhance the positive sense of community, tolerance and harmony of our school. This plan is designed to be read in conjunction with our Student Welfare program.

The Anti-bullying Plan demonstrates an ongoing commitment to ensuring student rights are protected and will be evaluated and reviewed periodically.

## Statement of purpose

At Ruse Public School we value respect and show tolerance of others in a safe and supportive environment. We foster positive relationships through strong welfare programs. As part of our school's Welfare and Discipline Policy, our Anti-bullying Plan aims to deal effectively with and prevent incidences of bullying.

Students, teachers, parents, caregivers and members of the wider school community have a shared responsibility to:

- Promote positive relationships that respect and accept individual differences and diversity within the whole school community
- Actively work together to resolve incidents of bullying behaviours when they occur.

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

## Protection

Ruse Public School recognises that bullying takes many forms. It can be verbal, physical, social or psychological. Bullying can be difficult to detect as it usually happens out of sight and away from adults. Parents are usually the first to identify that a problem exists.

By definition:

*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. Cyberbullying is bullying through information and communication technologies such as social networking sites or email.*

**Conflict or fights between equals or single incidents are not defined as bullying.**

Our school considers the following behaviours as examples of bullying:

### **Physical:**

- Pushing/ shoving
- Hitting/ punching
- Kicking
- Throwing objects
- Taking other's belongings/ stealing from others
- Damaging other's belongings
- Spitting at others
- Intimidation – making someone do something against their will.

**Verbal:**

- Threatening
- Name calling/ teasing
- Swearing at others
- Ridicule (making fun) of another person because of their actions, appearance, physical characteristics or cultural background
- Humiliating another person causing embarrassment and emotional distress.

**Psychological:**

- Spreading rumours
- Excluding others
- Writing notes
- Cyberbullying, including but not limited to, SMS messages/ email/ instant messaging such as MSN, Facebook

Ruse Public School takes a proactive approach to addressing bullying before it happens. This is managed through prevention, early intervention, and response, as addressed in this Anti-bullying Plan.

## Prevention

Each group within the school community has a specific role in preventing and dealing with bullying.

**The school** has a responsibility to:

- Foster a climate of mutual respect and tolerance for all community members, recognising and appreciating difference and diversity
- Develop an anti-bullying plan that clearly identifies both the behaviours that are unacceptable and the strategies for dealing with bullying in the classroom and playground
- Inform students, parents, carers and the community about the school discipline policy and the Anti-bullying Plan

- Respond to incidents of bullying that have been reported to the school quickly and effectively
- Provide students with strategies to respond positively to incidents of bullying behaviour, including responsibilities as bystanders or observers
- Provide parents, carers and students with clear information on strategies that promote appropriate behaviour, and the consequences for inappropriate behaviour
- Develop and implement early intervention support for those students who are identified at or after enrolment as having previously experienced bullying or engaged in bullying behaviour

**Students** have a responsibility to:

- Behave appropriately, respecting individual differences and diversity
- Behave as responsible digital citizens
- Respond to incidents of bullying according to the school Anti-bullying Plan
- Understand how bystanders can positively impact on incidents of bullying and respond accordingly

**Parents and carers** have a responsibility to:

- Be aware of the school's Anti-bullying Plan and assist their children in understanding bullying behaviour
- Assist their children in developing positive responses to incidents of bullying consistent with the school's Anti-bullying Plan and Discipline Policy
- support their children to become responsible citizens and to develop responsible on-line behaviour
- Support their children to deal effectively with bullying through the strategies of the Anti-bullying Plan and discipline policy
- Notify the school when incidents of bullying are suspected

**Teachers** have a responsibility to:

- Respect and support students in all aspects of their learning
- Model appropriate behaviour
- Develop social and emotional well-being through self-awareness , self-management and relationship skills
- Build an understanding of what bullying looks like, feels like and sounds like for all students
- Respond in an appropriate and timely manner to incidents of bullying according to the school's Anti-bullying Plan and Discipline Policy

## Early Intervention

Students who are identified as being 'at risk' of developing long term difficulties with social relationships and those students who are identified at or after enrolment as having previously experienced bullying or engaged in bullying behaviour, benefit from specific targeted programs such as :

- Consultation with pre-school and previous school settings to determine specific needs
- Development of Individual Education Programs (IEP) with a focus on social skills
- Case conferences and consultation that include all stakeholders and relevant outside agencies
- Explicit teaching of social skills within the context of the classroom
- Extra-curricular programs (such as Structured Play) that cater for the practice of social skills
- An inclusive whole school welfare program that recognises and celebrates academic and social achievement
- Utilising School Learning Support Officers (SLSOs) to assist in the consolidation of social skills

- Active supervision by all staff to address issues before they escalate (ie monitoring of playground behaviours that may develop into repeated incidences)

## Response

Identifying bullying behaviours

- Teachers attend professional learning sessions to understand the behaviours that are unacceptable and how to deal with bullying
- Staff, students and parents are informed of the definition of bullying and how to identify unacceptable, bullying behaviour
- Executive teachers regularly monitor playground and classroom behaviour records to identify possible bullying incidents and patterns of offence
- The school will track incidences of bullying behaviour through the Register of Individual Student Contact (RISC) program and monitor patterns of behaviour

Strategies for the school to deal with bullying behaviours

- Address incidents of bullying quickly and effectively, on notification, using the school's Discipline Policy
- Cases of extreme bullying incidents involving assaults, threats, intimidation or harassment will involve police notification
- The Child Wellbeing Unit or Community Services may be contacted where appropriate as per the Department of Education and Communities guidelines
- Promote 'Bullying – no way' attitude through newsletters, assemblies and class lessons
- Teach social skills and cyberbullying programs/lessons K-6, emphasising that bullying is not acceptable

- Involve school counselor via learning support team referral where appropriate for all students who have been affected by, engaged in or who have witnessed bullying behaviour
- Review and improve use of playground and activities regularly
- Encourage Student Representative Council input on bullying issues
- Executive teachers provide information sessions for parents
- Source and provide appropriate teaching resources

#### Strategies for students on how to deal with bullying behaviours

- Stay in sight of peers and adults
- Try to stay calm. Practise keeping calm and walking away
- Try to show you are not upset. Practise this
- Look at the person. Try to speak in a strong voice. Say something like “You might think that but I don’t” or “Why are you doing this?”
- Use an “I” message. Express your feelings in an assertive way e.g. “I want you to stop” or “Please don’t do that, I don’t like it !”
- Walk away quietly without looking back
- Go to a safe place e.g. with other children; near a teacher
- Talk to someone who can help you. Tell them what has happened, how you feel and what they can do to help. This is not ‘dobbing’!
- Use humour if appropriate
- Most people have experienced some kind of bullying at some time, so do not be ashamed to SPEAK UP. It is OK to TELL!

#### Procedures to report bullying

- Students, parents and carers are encouraged to report suspected incidents of bullying to a peer mediator, teacher, assistant principal or the principal immediately

#### For Parents and Caregivers

- Unless we are observant and watch for signs of bullying, we may never know that our children are involved
- Avenues for appeal will be managed in conjunction with the Department of Education and Communities Complaints Handling Policy

## Monitoring and Evaluation

The school Anti-bullying Plan will be monitored by the school community and periodically evaluated through the use of surveys, parent and student forums, and internal school data sets.

This Anti-bullying Plan will be reviewed every three years in line with the Department of Education and Communities guidelines. It will be evaluated by the wider school community through the use of surveys, parent and student forums and internal school data sets.

## Additional Information

Contact information for:

Police Youth Liaison Officer (YLO)

- Anthony Goldyn (02) 4620 1199

School Liaison Police Officer (SLP)

- Senior Constable Derrick Rivers (02) 4620 1199

Kids Helpline

- 1800 55 1800 (toll free)
- <http://www.kidshelp.com.au/kids/>

## Anti-Bullying Websites

- <http://www.bullyingnoway.com.au/>
- [http://www.enoughisenough.org.au/bullying\\_program/](http://www.enoughisenough.org.au/bullying_program/)

## Principal's comment

Annette O'Neill - Principal

Megan Clarke – Assistant Principal

Christopher Baker – Classroom Teacher

## School contact information

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