



# Anti-Bullying Policy

Nov 2019

The term “*bullying*” has a specific meaning. This policy sets out expectations for preventing and responding to bullying between children. We have other policies, such as the *Behaviour and Discipline policy*, that apply to the children’s general problematic behaviour.

Families who are not happy about a way that an incident of bullying has been managed, should make a written complaint to the management committee. Our *Complaints Handling Policy and Procedures* sets out a standard procedure for evaluating and responding to a complaint.

For matters involving bullying towards employees or volunteers, refer to the ***Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Policy for employees, contractors and volunteers Policy***.

## What is bullying?

**Bullying** is repeated behaviour that uses superior power to humiliate, intimidate or harass another. It can focus on race, religion, appearance. It can take different and multiple forms.

- *Verbal*: name calling, teasing, abuse, putdowns, sarcasm, insults, threats, verbal abuse, etc.
- *Physical*: hitting, punching, kicking, poking, scratching, tripping, spitting, repeated damage of belongings, etc.
- *Covert/social*: ignoring, ostracising, alienating, inappropriate gestures, lying about someone, playing nasty jokes that lead to the target being humiliated or powerless, deliberately excluding, etc.
- *Psychological*: spreading rumours, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions, threatening, manipulating, etc.
- *Cyber*: using technology such as email, social networking sites to bully verbally, socially or psychologically, and inappropriate use of a camera phone.

**Bullying is NOT** fights between equals, mutual disagreements, not liking someone, single incidents of nastiness or children not getting along well.

A student/s exhibiting bullying behaviour is not like the stereotype of the physically dominant child with self-esteem issues. Research shows children who bully may be popular students who are not intentionally malicious or thoughtless. They may even have good leadership skills.

### Roles in bullying

1. **Ring leader** – uses social power to direct bullying activity.
2. **Associates** – actively join in bullying (may or may not be due to fear of ring leader).
3. **Reinforcers** – give positive feedback to those doing the bullying, through comments, laughter, etc.
4. **Outsiders/bystanders** – appear to condone through remaining silent or watching, perhaps out of fear of the bully.
5. **Defenders /Protector** – try to intervene to stop what is happening, or try to comfort those who experience bullying.

Children may switch between any of the roles in different situations. For example, they may bully in one context and then be the victim of bullying in another, or they may switch to being a bystander, or intervener, or step in as protector.

## Prevention

We aim to create a safe, caring and supportive environment, where children are taught positive social skills, by:

- Teaching and modelling respect, friendliness and care through the curriculum and in our behaviour.
- Listening respectfully to students and providing opportunities for student voice.
- Celebrating our own diversity, and teaching for and about diversity generally.
- Encouraging the children to be assertive and to act as positive role models.
- Acknowledging positive behaviour.

## Action

- Respond to allegations of bullying by providing a safe and private opportunity for the student to be heard;
- Teach which behaviour constitutes bullying and how to act if being bullied or witnessing bullying behaviour;
- Help children who have been bullied to feel safe, and to rebuild their confidence and resilience;
- Hold students to account for their behaviour and the harm they have caused;
- Help these students develop social and emotional skills and knowledge about the effects of their behaviour;
- Support these students as they take steps to repair the harm they have caused;
- Publicise the school's zero tolerance for bullying and ensure families are aware of what to do if they are concerned about bullying, and that they are confident in the school's response to bullying allegations;

## Anti-bullying plan

In 2014, we became a **KidsMatter** school. This Australian initiative provides a framework, resources and support for developing strategies to improve the mental health and wellbeing of our students.

This is an ongoing whole-school approach to providing a healthy and positive environment for students, families and staff. The four core components of the framework are:

1. Positive school community.
2. Social and emotional learning for students.
3. Working with parents and caregivers.
4. Helping children with mental health difficulties.

Updates about our KidsMatter program are reported to Committee. Recommendations from this are integrated into our curriculum and policies.

Anti-bullying messages are embedded into each curriculum area across all classes. The teachers coordinate their delivery to ensure an effective whole-school approach. Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) is achieved through the implementation of the **Positive Relationships PDHPE Teaching Kit K-6**, which contains activities mapped to syllabus outcomes and links with all key learning areas.

Feedback from students and families is collected via annual surveys to continually measure our anti-bullying message. This dictates our program development as we strive for a shared understanding of what constitutes bullying behaviour and how to respond.

## Procedures for responding to bullying:

### Early Intervention

Early intervention strategies and programs that currently exist at Tutable Falls Community School ensure support for students who are identified as being at risk of developing difficulties with social relationships and those students who are identified as having previously experienced bullying or engaged in bullying behaviour. The staff engages in ongoing discussions to monitor bullying behaviour in the school and to evaluate the effectiveness of strategies implemented to promote positive social behaviour choice.

### Strategies to deal with bullying

The school ***Behaviour and Discipline Policy*** applies in all cases of inappropriate behaviour, including bullying. Failure by a student to modify their bullying behaviour ultimately leads to suspension in accordance with policy. In all cases of suspension, parents are advised of their appeal rights. In extreme cases, there may be meetings regarding expulsion if there are no changes in bullying behaviour and students are at risk.

The school has a range of strategies to deal with different types of conflict and bullying when they arise.

### Reporting and Intervention:

Fundamental to our policy is that students and parents will report all incidents of bullying. Specifically:

- Incidents of bullying may be reported to any member of staff.
- Parents should contact the school's Coordinator.

### Procedures for Students

Students who perceive they are being bullied or are witness to someone being bullied will tell the alleged perpetrator to stop if they feel safe to do so. They will also report to the nearest teacher on duty.

In the circumstances that a person being bullied feels unable to report the incident, then a witness should implement these steps with them or on their behalf, taking the person being bullied with them to a teacher.

### Procedures for Teachers

Teachers will respond to all episodes of bullying in order to send a clear message that it is unacceptable. Different responses may be appropriate depending on the nature and degree of bullying. The Bullying test will be used initially to determine if the incident is primarily bullying and, if so, the broad nature of the response.

#### **Step 1:** The Bullying Test - teacher asks 'Does the incident involve. . .'

- Repeated teasing or aggressive words or actions?
- Which are unprovoked?
- And intended to hurt, harm or frighten?

If the answer is yes to all three questions, then it is bullying and is treated as bullying behaviour. If it's not a bullying incident, it could be:

- **Conflict** – may require conflict resolution
- **Discipline** – may require disciplinary action
- **Learning** – may require learning support
- **Welfare** – may require investigation or personal support or referral.

If the answer is no, then the incident is treated as a behaviour incident, following the school discipline procedures (See ***Behaviour and Discipline Policy***).

## **Step 2: The Level Test – At what level is the bullying incident?**

Teachers will decide if the incident is a low or high level incident using the following guidelines:

### **Low level**

- The victim is not typically teased or harassed;
- and / or student/s harassing is/are not a repeat offender/s;
- and / or bullying behaviour appears less harmful.

### **High Level**

- The victim is often harassed;
- and / or student/s harassing often engages in such behaviour;
- and / or bullying behaviour is causing significant distress or harm.

## **Step 3: The Response**

If the incident is Low level, the teacher will:

- Spell it Out - what the behaviour is (bullying) and what's wrong with it;
- Signal - what will happen next time (ie: indicate consequences as per "High Level" Referring Process);
- Report - complete incident report.
- Support - the bullied student.

The teacher will also determine other strategies such as:

- Speak to the whole class;
- Talk to student/s exhibiting bullying behaviour after class;
- Warn and / or reprimand student/s exhibiting bullying behaviour;
- Present lesson related to the issue;
- Gather information from other teachers at a staff meeting;
- Discuss with the staff.

If the incident is High level the teacher will:

- Respond - reprimand the behaviour and what's wrong with it;
- Report - complete incident report.
- Refer - student/s exhibiting bullying behaviour and / or victim to a meeting with the Coordinator and notification to Committee.

The teacher will also:

- Discuss the issue with staff to refine anti-bullying strategy in that class;
- Refer to the Coordinator to have conversations with parent/carer for a counsellor referral if there appears to be psychological issues for the student/s exhibiting bullying behaviour;
- Report immediately to the Coordinator if violence is involved (in accordance with the Discipline Policy).

## **Incident Reports**

Written reports of low-level incidents of bullying will be made in the Incident Register. If it is a playground incident, refer to staff meeting to follow up.

Written incident reports will be made for all high level bullying incidents.

## Accessing help and support

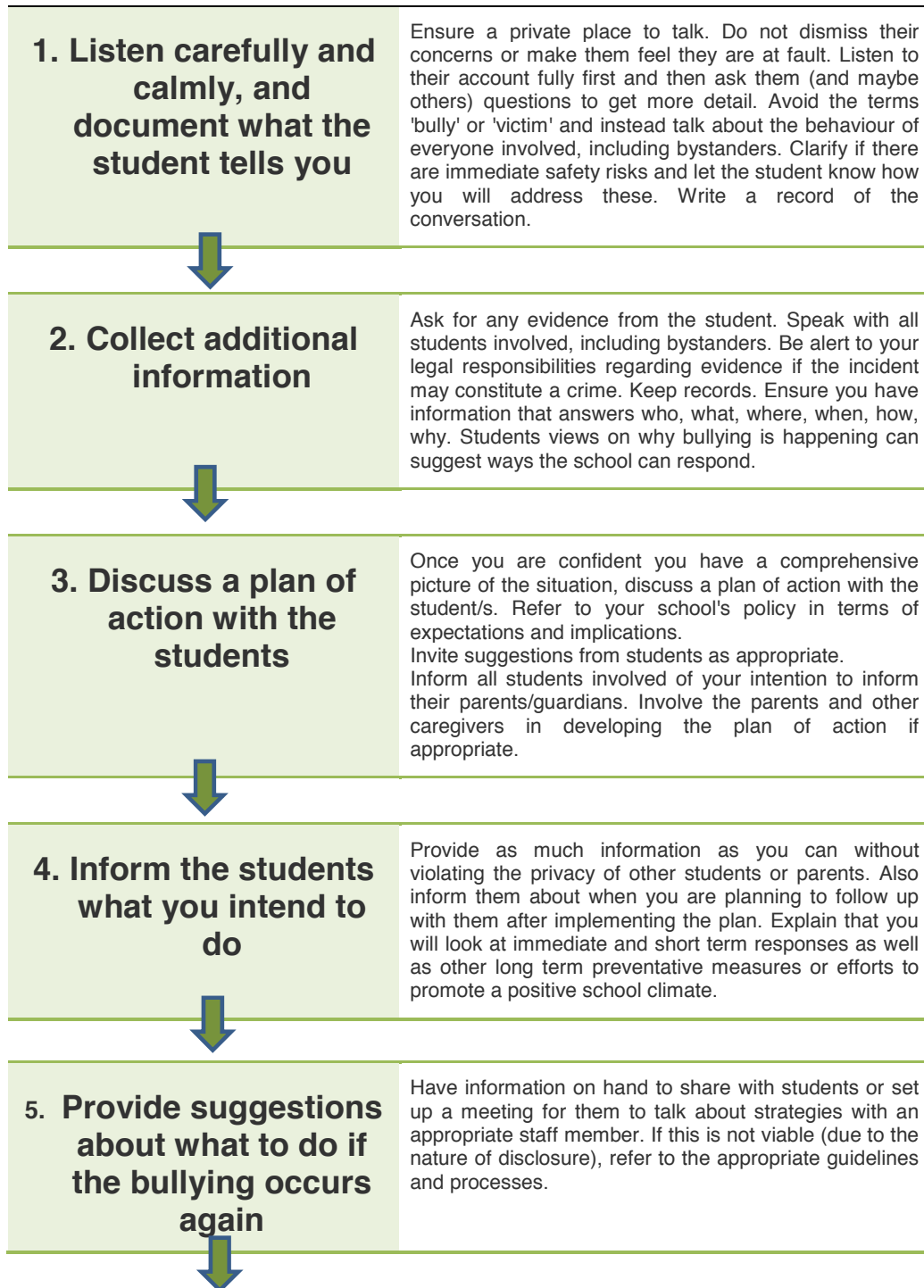
The Anti-bullying Policy recognises the right of all students to access help and support.

Support can be gained from:

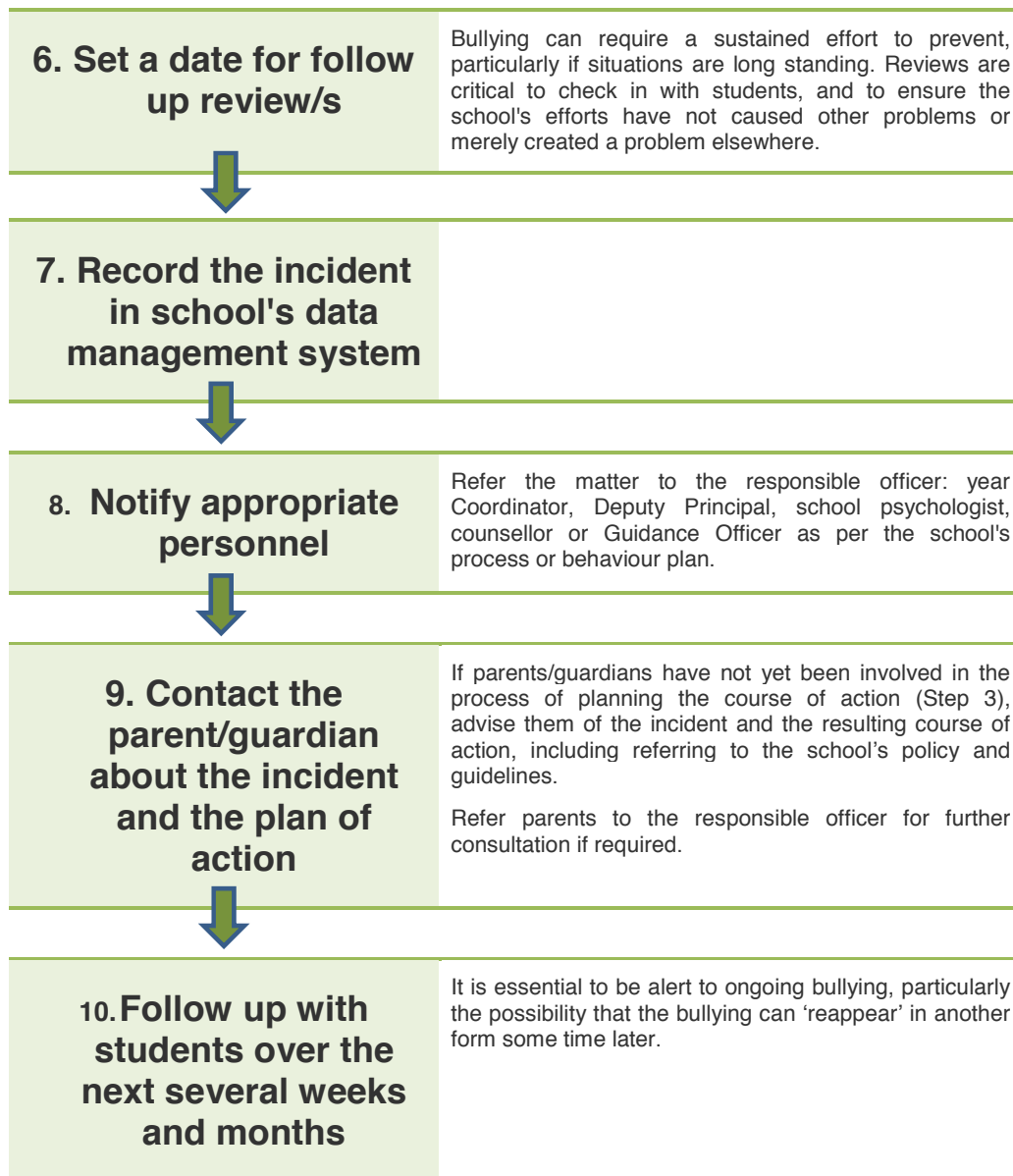
- Procedures outlined in the Behaviour and Discipline Policy
- A mentor from either students, staff or the community
- Printed resources available from the library
- The School's Kids Matter books and resources

The Bullying No Way website - <https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/>

## School response flow chart: student bullying



[www.bullyingnoway.gov.au](http://www.bullyingnoway.gov.au)



**NOTES:** Principals should ensure that all staff are aware of the procedures to follow when responding to incidents of student bullying, and that these are regularly reviewed and updated if necessary. Training for staff and the support of the school principal for teachers in dealing with bullying incidents improves staff capacity and readiness to respond well.

In the first instance, schools should consult their jurisdiction's policy and guidelines for how to respond to reports of bullying. This response flow chart provides a general guide for those who do not have jurisdictional guidelines. Your school or jurisdictional procedure may vary from above.

[www.bullyingnoway.gov.au](http://www.bullyingnoway.gov.au)