Anti-bullying Plan
Lalor Park 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.
Lalor Park Public 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.

Statement of purpose

Lalor Park Public School is a school community of excellence and opportunity. Its purpose is to nurture a community of visible learners and empower them to strive for continuous growth. We aim to maximise the social, emotional and academic outcomes for all our students.

We aspire for a safe learning environment at Lalor Park Public School. Every person has the right to experience positive and respectful relationships. They have the right to learn and teach in a happy and safe environment. Bullying behaviour is not acceptable at Lalor Park Public School and is contrary to the school’s discipline code.

Students, teachers, parents, caregivers and members of the wide school community have a shared responsibility to maintain a safe environment, free of all forms of bullying.

The policy applies to all student bullying, including cyberbullying in and outside school hours where there is a clear and close relationship between the school and the conduct of the student.

What is Bullying Behaviour?

- Bullying is a pattern of behaviour by one person or a group towards another, or others, which is intended to hurt, injure, embarrass, upset or cause discomfort. The behaviour is intentional, repeated, selective and uninvited.
- 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.

Types of Bullying Behaviour:

- **Verbal** - including name calling, teasing, abuse, putdowns, sarcasm, insults, threats, racist, sexual and gender remarks
- **Physical** - including hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting, pushing, property damage and hair pulling.
- **Social** - including ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating and making inappropriate gestures.
• **Psychological** - including spreading rumours intentionally, making degrading comments about another’s culture or social background, inappropriate notes or hiding or damaging possessions. All acts that instill a sense of fear and anxiety.

• **Cyberbullying** - bullying through information and communication technologies including malicious SMS and email messages, inappropriate use of camera phones and other IT devices, inappropriate messages, comments or photographs on social media sites (e.g., Facebook)

### Protection

- At Lalor Park Public School, we aim to create an environment where bullying is not tolerated through using a twofold approach. Preventative programs establish a climate that stops bullying behaviour, and reactive programs deal with any incidences that may arise.

- All members of the school community contribute to the prevention of bullying by modelling and promoting appropriate behaviour and respectful relationships.

### Prevention and Early Intervention

Features of Lalor Park Public School that deter bullying:

- School policy outlining firm action and appropriate consequences

- A school ethos that emphasises respect for others and ourselves

- Active supervision of students during lessons, excursions, sporting activities and breaks by staff

- Communication of policy and incidents (when appropriate) with staff, students, parents, other agencies

- Expectation of respectful interactions between staff and students.

Whole school programs and strategies with specific Anti-bullying components include:

- Raise awareness with staff, students and parents

- Surveys to gather information on bullying to direct our strategies

- Formulate an Anti-bullying policy, which clearly states what actions we will take to deal with bullying behaviour. This is distributed annually as well as reviewed annually.

- PBL expectations / values displayed in classrooms and playground

- K-6 social skills program

- K-6 peer support program

- K-6 child protection program

- K-6 anti-bullying program – students taught that it is OK to tell someone about bullying incidents, taught skills that will help build self-esteem and
empower them with strategies to deal with bullying incidents linked through PBL

- SRC involvement – activities supporting the policy eg. Posters
- Anti-bullying posters laminated and displayed around areas of the school
- Regular articles in the newsletter
- Discussion of bullying in assemblies
- Resources (Bullying No Way!, CyberSmart)
- Termly incursions funded by the school

Class school programs and strategies with specific Anti-bullying components include:

- Class expectations (linked to PBEL) negotiated each year with teacher and students
- Regular classroom discussion on bullying incidents (as pertinent to class or specific bullying incidents)

Procedures for Handling Bullying Complaints

Early identification of bullying behaviour is vital if schools are to be most effective in managing bullying. It is important that schools respond in a timely fashion when issues are identified as it is understood that those who are engaged in bullying and are bullied can experience long term effects.

Lalor Park Public School’s positive behaviour for learning system incorporated in the school’s discipline policy outlines clear procedures and systems to prevent bullying or inappropriate behaviour.

When staff are made aware and/or notice bullying the following will occur:

1. Notify Stage Supervisor (Assistant Principal)
2. Follow the Lalor Park Public School Anti-bullying Plan

All students are encouraged to report any incident of bullying.

Any incidents that involve assaults, threats, weapons, illegal drugs and criminal activity will be reported to the School Safety and Response Hotline on 1300 363 778 and the police by the Principal or his/her delegate. Incidents must be reported as soon as possible, but within 24 hours.

Staff must report any concerns about risk of harm to a student, to the Principal or his/her delegate who will then use the appropriate tools to inform decision making, such as the online Mandatory Reporter Guide, professional judgment or specialist advice.

School Anti-bullying Plan – NSW Department of Education and Communities
Advice will be sought from the Child Wellbeing Unit where there is uncertainty about whether concerns amount to risk of significant harm.

Concerns about the safety, welfare or wellbeing of children or young people which constitute a risk of significant harm will be reported to Community Services by the Principal or his/her delegate.

The Principal will contact the Child Wellbeing Unit about the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and young people where:

1. There are concerns about risk of harm, that do not meet the threshold of significant harm but are not trivial.
2. The Mandatory Reporter Guide indicates this should be done.
3. A case has been reported to Community Services and did not meet the risk of significant harm threshold.
4. There is an observable pattern of cumulative harm that does not meet the threshold of significant harm.

What happens if bullying occurs?

Incidents of bullying can be reported to any teacher, Assistant Principal or Principal by children or their parents. All cases reported are acted on and taken seriously.

Strategies When a Bullying Incident is Observed or Reported:

1. The incident is investigated by the teacher to whom it has been reported;
2. The teacher determines whether or not the incident is bullying, according to the agreed definition;

If it is not bullying the incident is dealt with by the teacher in accordance with the Student Welfare Policy. If it is bullying the incident is referred by the class teacher to their direct supervisor (AP and P). The LST team will have an active involvement with the processes conducted.

Processes at Lalor Park Public School

1. **Interview with bullies.** This is done alone, one by one, starting with the student seen as the group leader. This is a non-adversarial interview designed to emphasise the concern of the person who is being hurt or elicit some empathy and to come to some agreement as to what the person might do to help the victim. During the meeting the teacher remains calm, empathetic, never angry or indignant and respect is shown for the bully as a person.

2. **Interview with the victim.** This is done in a supportive manner and the aim is to explore ways in which the victim can behave to minimise the chances of the bullying being repeated. This may involve the victim...
being shown assertive behaviour or reducing behaviour which may be provoking the bullies.

3. **Follow-up with bullies and victims.** It is essential that daily follow-up takes place. This involves asking the bullies individually how they have followed through what they agreed to do to help the victim, and asking the victim how they are progressing and whether or not there have been any further incidents. The follow-up is initially carried out daily, then tapered off if all is going well.

4. **If the bullying behaviour does not stop** as a result of this intervention, then the usual sanctions of the Student Welfare Policy will be implemented. There will be a need to keep working with the victim at this time to support them and make sure that they continue to problem solve to try to make sure that there is not something else they can do to prevent the bullying from re-occurring.

**Communicating Bullying Plan and Procedures**

It is important that at least once each year, the whole school community is reminded of the school's Anti-Bullying Policy. This will be done through the school fortnightly newsletter. It is important to reemphasise at this time that it is all right for students to tell if they are being bullied.

Professional learning regarding these procedures needs to be done every two years or when there is a significant change in staff in any one year. At this time an evaluation of the Anti-Bullying Plan will take place. At these times it may be necessary to survey the students, staff and parents to see how widespread the bullying is at our school.

**Appeals/Complaints**

All appeals and complaints about the management of a reported incident of bullying will be referred to the Principal who will use the *Complaints Handling Policy* as required in all learning and working environments of the Department of Education and Communities.

The NSW Department of Education and Training (DET) seeks to resolve difficulties, grievances and complaints in a prompt, impartial and just manner.

- It is best to discuss your concerns with your child's teacher first. Make an appropriate time to meet with them or phone the school and ask for an appointment with the teacher.
- If you are not happy with the result, or if you do not feel it is appropriate to talk to them, phone and make an appointment to discuss your concerns with the principal.
- You may bring a friend or relative to be your support. If you need an interpreter, we can arrange that - just ask beforehand.
• If your complaint is about the principal you will need to contact the school education director in your area. Ask the school office staff at your school for their name and number.
• If your complaint cannot be resolved in an informal way, we may ask you to put it in writing. It is important that you include specific details of the situation and tell us what you would like to happen as a result of your complaint. We can help you to put your complaint in writing, if you require it.
• Alternatively a complaint form may also be used. Complete the form and send it to the principal, or the school education director in your area.

Appeals can be made to the school education director about the imposition of a suspension from a particular school.

The school education director may delegate the management of an appeal to an appropriate officer such as the student services officer.

In all cases, however, the school education director must make the determination.

The school education director will:
• deal with the appeal within 20 school days of its lodgement

• ensure that communication lines are maintained with the person(s) making the appeal and that they are kept aware of the progress of the appeal
• review all relevant material
• ensure that appropriate material has been made available to the student and his or her parents
• discuss relevant issues with the person(s) making the appeal and any other parties, as appropriate
• advise all the parties of the decision and the specific reasons for reaching the decision.

Evaluation

• The Principal will seek feedback through the immediate and wider school community regarding bullying issues and implementation of the school Anti-Bullying Plan.
• The Assistant Principals will monitor and review frequency and seriousness of bullying notifications through accessing RISC data on a five weekly basis.
• LST Team meeting reports (including counsellor feedback)
• The school Anti-Bullying Plan development team will be responsible for annually reviewing the Anti-Bullying plan and making recommendations to amend it with the aim of reducing instances of bullying.

Additional Resources and Contacts
John BOLLARD - School/Youth Liaison, Quakers Hill LAC, 02 9678.8999

Cybersmart - Cybersmart provides activities, resources and practical advice to help young kids, kids, teens and parents safely enjoy the online world. http://www.cybersmart.gov.au/

Kids Help Line - Kids Help Line is Australia's only free, confidential and anonymous, 24 hour telephone and online counselling service specifically for young people aged between 5 and 18. The 24 hour, toll free telephone number is 1800 55 1800. www.kidshelp.com.au

Mindmatters - Mindmatters is a program to support Australian secondary schools in promoting and protecting the social and emotional wellbeing of members of school communities. http://online.curriculum.edu.au/mindmatters/index.htm

Racism. No Way! - Racism. No Way! is designed to assist school communities develop an understanding of the nature of racism. It provides practical information and strategies to help address racism in the learning environment. www.racismnoway.com.au

Reach Out! - Reach Out! is a web-based service that assists young people to help themselves through tough times. The aim of the service is to create opportunities for young people to help themselves and to help others.

www.reachout.com.au

Bullying among young children: A guide for parents by the Australian Attorney General's Department - to obtain a copy call 1800 708 77

Principal’s comment

Lalor Park Public School will strive to provide, for all members of the school community, a safe and supportive environment which is free from all forms of bullying.

This plan is endorsed by the Lalor Park school community and has the full and ongoing support of all teaching staff, parents and community members.

This plan was reviewed and updated Term 3, 2015 by the following team:

Joanne Gardiner – Principal

*****

School contact information

Lalor Park Public School

Heffron Road

Lalor Park NSW 2147