



# Belair Public School Anti-Bullying Implementation Strategy

## Bullying behaviour has three key features:

1. It involves the intentional misuse of *power* in a relationship.
2. It is ongoing and repeated.
3. It involves behaviours that can cause *harm*.

Bullying behaviour can be:

- **verbal** e.g. name calling, teasing, abuse, putdowns, sarcasm, insults, threats;
- **physical** e.g. hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting;
- **covert** e.g. ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating, making inappropriate gestures;
- **cyber bullying** is an intentional, repeated behaviour by an individual or group to cause distress or undue pressure to others using technology e.g. email, chatroom, SMS / texting, social networks, video clips, phone calls.

## Statement of Commitment

Belair Public School is committed to working with its community towards a goal of keeping all students safe in an environment free from bullying. The school recognises the power of partnerships in developing a culture where:

- proactive anti-bullying strategies are visible across the school
- bullying is understood and recognised
- students are empowered to be proactive if they encounter bullying
- student voice is valued as a means to identify and monitor the effectiveness of anti-bullying strategies.
- an open, problem solving approach is undertaken when bullying is identified
- all members of the school community feel comfortable to raise concerns of suspected bullying in the knowledge that all concerns will be taken seriously
- a range of evidence based responses are implemented where appropriate to address incidents of bullying

## Anti-bullying strategies

### Proactive strategies

- Whole School Approach with school wide policies
- Promoting a culture of reporting bullying
- Promoting a culture of *upstander* behaviour amongst students and empowering students with language and actions to be an upstander
- Anti-bullying content in the classroom- teachers explicitly teach knowledge and strategies on a five week cycle.
- Social and emotional learning- this includes explicit instruction on resilience and empathy as well as general school programs.
- Teacher professional development
- Identifying, monitoring and supporting students at risk of being the subject of bullying
- Systematic Implementation and evaluation
- Parent education on supporting all students to promote positive social outcomes

## **Communication strategies**

- Newsletter scenarios
- Provision of language for parents to talk to students about bullying
- Engagement of parents in developing and evaluating implementation strategies- conversation with parents following school interventions to support students; Annual school survey.
- Regular focus group meetings with students at risk of being subjects of or contributors to bullying (one per term) to get 'the word on the ground'
- Regular assembly communication about identifying and reporting bullying and upstander behaviour including recognition of upstander behaviour.
- Visible messages around our school

## **Notification options of suspected bullying**

- Formal notification proforma based on definition
- Peer concern nomination- can be anonymous using the Upstander Box
- Informal parent/carer nomination (phone call/conversation)
- Teacher nomination
- Notification form available on the school app
- Recording of all nominations through Sentral student record management system
- Triage approach once notification is received
- Specific focus on students at risk or potentially being targeted with no actual evidence.

## **Responsive strategies once bullying has been identified**

- Case management team involving classroom teacher, assistant principal and senior exec.
- Restorative Practices- works on repairing harm done to relationships over the need to assign blame and give punishment. In a restorative approach, students responsible for bullying are required to attend a meeting along with the student being bullied. The bullied student is invited to describe what has been happening and how they have been affected, while the student responsible for bullying is invited to describe what they were thinking at the time and what they think now. The student responsible for bullying is then asked what should be done next, with the expectation that they will act 'restoratively' with an apology and some act of reparation.
- Support group method- The method is seen as particularly relevant to cases in which a number of students are involved in bullying another student. It begins with an interview with the student being bullied, in which the student is offered support and asked to describe what has been happening and how they have been affected. The student is assured that nobody will be punished, and is asked to name the students responsible for bullying them. A meeting is then held with the students responsible for bullying, together with a number of other students expected to act as supporters of the student being bullied. The practitioner shares what the bullied student has described about their distress, emphasises the responsibility of those present to improve the situation, and requires each student to indicate what they will do to help
- Method of shared concern- It begins with a series of one-to-one interviews with the students suspected of bullying, in which the practitioner shares a concern about the student being bullied without making any accusations of the interviewee, seeks some acknowledgement that the bullied student is experiencing distress, and asks how the interviewee can help improve the situation. Once there has been an improvement in the situation, a meeting is held between all the students responsible for the bullying to enable them to plan how they will resolve the situation and reduce the

distress of the student they have bullied. An individual meeting with the bullied student is then held to offer support and explore the situation from that student's point of view. Finally, a meeting is held with all the students concerned, when the students responsible for the bullying offer their proposed solution to the student who has been bullied

- Sanctions (generally used when other measures have not been successful)- can include verbal reprimands, meetings with parents, temporary removals from class, withdrawal of privileges, detentions, short-term suspension, and permanent expulsion

### **Five week cycle of anti-bullying learning/activities**

Theme or messages to cycle through

Class lessons

Assembly role plays

Peer support style meetings

Social engagement- playground eight activities led by anti-bullying leaders.

Triage approach based on our definition

1. No real indication of bullying- possibly other issues needing a response.
2. Needs to be monitored and minor intervention -Family contact- documented in Sentral.
3. Actual bullying identified and- Anti-bullying staff support team established (teacher, AP & senior exec) Formal meeting with family.

### **Reporting, Documentation and monitoring**

The school monitors and tracks incidents through the Sentral student management system. Bullying incident in the system attached to a behavior notification – 4 categories established Physical, verbal, covert, cyber bullying and 3 level choices based on triage system Monitoring of frequency, types and level of referrals.

Formal evaluation of all aspects of the strategy annually.

### **Responsibilities**

Students have a responsibility to:

- Treat each other in a respectful manner
- Keep an eye on their classmates and report any concerns
- Take anti-bullying learning seriously and engage in role play and other activities
- Be an upstander and call out bullying behaviour

Teachers and staff have a responsibility to:

- Model and promote appropriate behaviour in all dealings with students, staff and community
- Know their students and investigate changes that could indicate bullying issues
- Listen to any concerns raised by students or parents and respond appropriately
- Understand the content and intent of the school policy implementation strategy and implement in classrooms and across the school
- Work in partnership with parents to resolve concerns

Parents and community have a responsibility to:

- Model and promote appropriate behaviour in all dealings with students, staff and community
- Discuss with students anti-bullying messages shared by the school
- Communicate early with the school of concerns about their child
- Work in partnership with staff and other community members to resolve concerns

## Glossary:

Harm- Harm can take the form of physical harm, emotional or psychological harm, or social harm (ie exclusion)

Power- A power imbalance can be age, size, cognitive capacity, personality or group behaviour.

Upstander- being an upstander is when people don't take a passive role if they encounter bullying. An upstander can take direct action to disrupt the bullying behavior or they can support through indirect means such as befriending a person subjected to bullying or telling a teacher.

Bystander- taking a passive role if they encounter bullying. Bystanders contribute to the problem and may even join in.

Action-oriented - Doing something that does not support the bullying behaviour can be a really small intervention with big results! Three words - "That is bullying" - can cause others to recognize the problem.