ANTI-BULLYING POLICY
Our Definition

‘Bullying behaviours are about an imbalance of power where there is deliberate intent to cause harm or distress.

These behaviours can be verbal, social, psychological or physical. They impact on the lives of the person/people being bullied, those doing the bullying and those looking on.

Bullying incidents can be isolated or repeated.’

There are numerous definitions developed to describe bullying. For the purpose of this policy the school has adopted this definition.
The students, staff and parents at Sylvania Heights Public School do not accept, and will not tolerate any form of bullying.

We will support any person who is bullied, or who has witnessed any form of bullying.

We will assist any person who demonstrates any type of bullying behaviour to develop positive relationship skills.
What do we aim to achieve?

1. to eliminate bullying type behaviour from Sylvania Heights Public School.
2. to support those who experience bullying.
3. to provide a safe and happy learning environment for all members of the school community.
4. to equip students with skills to deal with bullying behaviour that will support them throughout their life.
5. to create an informed community that works co-operatively to assist children in dealing with bullying behaviour.

We believe students will:

- better understand and recognise all forms of bullying.
- more readily inform teachers of any forms of bullying and receive assistance.
- happily attend school. (attendance records will reflect improved attendance)
- demonstrate conflict resolution and problem solving skills.
- feel safe and happy.
- become more involved in school activities.
- demonstrate an ethos of respect and concern, which is evident in their willingness to assist the person experiencing bullying behaviour.
- experience less episodes of bullying behaviour, if bullying does occur, the duration will be much shorter.

We believe staff will:

- better understand bullying behaviours and feel more confident in their methods of intervention.
- feel supported by systems adopted across the school to eliminate bullying.
- identify and teach, in a systematic form, aspects of curricula that support anti-bullying behaviour.
- confidentially work with parents and students to resolve bullying situations.
- model appropriate behaviour and strategies.

We believe parents will:

- better understand and identify bullying and feel more confident in supporting their children and the school.
- more readily inform the school of bullying incidents.
- understand the processes employed by the school to eliminate bullying.
- fund, where necessary, the purchase of essential resources. Such requests will be made through the P&C.
- enunciate that they believe the school to be a happy and safe learning environment.
- model appropriate behaviour and strategies.
How will we ensure that this policy is effectively Communicated

The school will communicate its policy on anti-bullying in the following ways:

- each family, on request, will receive a copy of the policy.
- each staff member will receive a copy of the policy.
- the policy will be posted on the school web site.
- brochures will be developed to give a concise overview of the policy.
- the policy will be ‘launched’ at both K-6 and P & C level once it is fully endorsed by School Council.
- posters will be clearly displayed in all rooms.
- information re anti-bullying will be regularly provided via the school newsletter.
- information re anti bullying will be provided at ‘meet the teacher nights’ and special seminars.
- procedures will be established to ensure parents are aware of when and how they will be informed of bullying incidents.
- this policy will be made available on the school website

Strategies to support the person demonstrating bullying behaviours

Sylvania Heights Public School students, staff and community will endeavour to work together to assist the person doing the bullying to modify their behaviour. Bullying behaviours may be reduced through the efforts of the whole school community, with each group contributing as follows:

Students

- student onlookers report bullying incidents.
- older students model for and act as mentors to younger students who display bullying behaviours.

Staff

- develop an understanding of the causes of bullying behaviours.
- teach students strategies to manage their behaviour eg. through social skills programs, role plays, etc.
- allocate a specific support person to counsel students, striving to change their behaviour.
- raise all students’ awareness of the different forms of bullying.
- inform parents of programs to assist their child.
- Use communication systems such as behaviour cards; green slips and ESR Welfare to record incidents

Parents / Caregivers

- keep in touch with school staff when a problem is occurring.
- seek help from outside agencies if necessary eg. Community Health.
Supporting the person being bullied

Sylvania Heights Public School acknowledges the effect that bullying has on the victims and will provide them with the appropriate support. We will assist the student/s being bullied by assigning a support teacher or child. The teachers will respond with empathy and sympathy towards the student being bullied and assurances will be given that any further reporting will be followed up and dealt with in the appropriate fashion.

The staff will help the student being bullied understand that reporting is not dobbing and the teacher will monitor the situation. The school will encourage the student to have a wide circle of friends and will give extra support in the playground.

Students may participate in role play situations and peer mediation in order to develop skills in conflict resolution. Suggested reading lists will be made known. Teachers will teach specific strategies to be used by those who are the subject of bullying to try to diffuse and eliminate such situations. The school will inform the parents or caregivers so support can also be given at home.

Curriculum and Teaching

Sylvania Heights will work to reduce bullying behaviours through the use of positive teaching strategies and the provision of resources.

School staff will model positive behaviours. Teaching strategies such as the implementation of social skills programs and using group work, across the curriculum, will encourage the development of cooperative skills. Students displaying positive behaviours will be recognized through the use of white cards and individual classroom rewards programs.

Each year all classes will develop their own statement that will explicitly relate to anti bullying.

Teachers will program anti bullying related lessons on a regular basis and will address incidents, as they arise, through personal development strategies. The PD/PE & Health syllabus has established outcomes that particularly relate to skills in dealing with bullying.

Classroom programs will be supported by school “anti bullying” resources. A designated anti bullying resource section will be created to support staff in their planning and teaching.

PD/H/PE Syllabus Outcomes

Early Stage One

Communicating
COES1.1
Expresses feelings needs and wants in appropriate ways

Decision Making
DMES1.2
Identifies some options available when making decisions

Interacting
INES1.3
Relates well to others in work and play situations

Problem Solving
PSES1.5
Seeks help as needed when faced with simple problems

_Growth and Development_
GDES1.9
Identifies how people grow and change

**STAGE 1**

**Knowledge and Understanding** – IRS1.11
- Identifies the ways in which they communicate, co-operate and care for others

**Values and Attitudes** – V1
- Refers to a sense of own worth and belonging

**Skills: Communicating** – COS1.1
- Communicates appropriately in a variety of ways

**Interacting** – INS1.3
- Makes positive contributions in group activities

**Decision Making** – DMS1.2
- Recalls past experiences in making decisions

**STAGES 2 & 3**

**Interpersonal Relationships**

**Stage 2** – IRS2.11
- Describes how relationships with a range of people enhances well-being

**Stage 3** – IRS3.11
- Describes roles and responsibilities in developing and maintaining positive relationships

**Values and Attitudes**

**Stage 2** – V2
- Respects the rights of others to hold different values and attitudes from their own

**Stage 3** – V3
- Enjoys a sense of belonging

**Skills**

**Communicating**
Stage 2 – COS2.1
  • Uses a variety of ways to communicate with and within groups

Stage 3 – COS3.1
  • Communicates confidently in a variety of ways

**Interacting**

Stage 2 – INS2.3
  • Makes positive contributions in group activities

Stage 3 – INS3.3
  • Acts in ways that enhance the contribution of self and others in a range of cooperative situations

**Decision Making**

Stage 2 – DMS2.2
  • Makes decisions as an individual and as a group member

Stage 3 – DMS3.2
  • Makes informed decisions and accepts responsibility for consequences
School Environment

Sylvania Heights Public School and its staff are dedicated to providing its students with a safe and friendly school environment.

The school achieves this by providing and abiding to the current Student Welfare Policy and by having an active Learning Support Team. Sylvania Heights Public School values all of its members and provides various opportunities for students to achieve and to be rewarded for positive behaviour.

The staff maintains a safe and friendly environment by supervising the school playground and the classroom in an orderly and caring manner and through carefully monitoring the students and their relationships. The staff aims to be approachable and caring towards all members of the school community.

Role Modeling

The manner in which teachers, other school staff and community members model social interactions for students is very important. In order to prevent or reduce bullying we will model appropriate behaviours by always treating others with respect.

All members of the school community will be courteous and helpful, inclusive and positive in speaking to and dealing with others. We will be good role models in conflict resolution and anger management. Children will see the positive, friendly interactions among all members of the school community, and will witness apologies when appropriate as well as acknowledgement of the efforts and achievement of others.

We will interact positively and model the social skills that we are trying to achieve with the children, so that they see that these skills are not just school lessons, but part of being a member of an harmoniously functioning community.

What we believe needs to change to support our students

The school will establish, implement and communicate descriptions of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour with a clear statement of consequences, as detailed in the Student Welfare Policy. Methods of maintaining accurate data will be established for all students. These records will also include description of actions taken by the school to support the students involved.

A clear statement, particularly relating to playground behaviour, will be established to ensure a clear understanding exists across the school. The school will balance behaviour programs with systems of acknowledging and reinforcing positive behaviour and good relationship skills.

We will

- introduce a playground reward system.
- use playground green slips
- deal with incidents using a common language and approach as outlined in the ‘intervention interview description(see page 17). This supports best practice in restorative justice approach.
- establish a welfare process to support students and teachers.
- train senior students in peer-mediation with a view to the introduction of a program for the playground.
- designate a member of the executive as an anti-bullying officer.
Recognition of Positive Playground Behaviour

We will introduce a method of recognizing, rewarding and reinforcing the behaviours we expect to see each day on the playground. We feel that this is an essential element to counter balance a consequence only approach. We believe that this side of the equation must be heavily weighted as the vast majority of students at Sylvania Heights routinely demonstrate the highest levels of excellent behaviour and social adjustment.

Small tokens will be carried by teachers on duty to distribute to students who display positive behaviour. These tokens will be called ‘tickets’. The tokens are then handed to the class teacher who will maintain a record. The weekly tickets will be entered in a draw for a lucky dip prize to be drawn at K-2 and 3-6 assemblies. By doing this we foster collective responsibility in a positive fashion and generate opportunities for the reinforcement and rewards of positive behaviours.

Anticipated Outcomes

School Culture will reflect its stance on anti-bullying
School spirit will be enhanced
The school will gain in popularity and esteem with the community
Harmonious relationship will thrive between and among students, staff and parents
Students will feel happy and safe at school
Parents and staff will be confident in the school’s approach to bullying

We will gauge our success using the following methods

- analysis of ESR welfare data.
- attendance records.
- re-issue of parent, student and staff surveys.
- anecdotal reports.
- teacher, parent and student observations and reports.
- reduction in the number of reports of isolated students in the playground.
- gauging injuries to students.

* SRC...Student Representative Council
Supporting Positive Playground Behaviour

This information is only an illustration to give students, parents and teachers an example of behaviours and potential responses by the school. This list is by no means definitive. The Principal may use discretionary authority to vary the degree and nature of the school’s response in individual matters.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behaviour</th>
<th>Potential Consequences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Anticipated</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plays in a cooperative manner</td>
<td>Acknowledgement by the duty teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assists fellow students who are upset</td>
<td>Teachers will also distribute a reward in the form of a token to be called a ‘Ticket’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helps keep our environment clean</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plays sensibly</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plays in the correct areas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Follows the directions of the teacher</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helps others to join in games and activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mild Concern</th>
<th>Potential Consequences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teasing</td>
<td>Reprimand (Usually in the form of a ‘Intervention interview’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out of Bounds, in sight</td>
<td>Apology to injured party</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disrupting others</td>
<td>Restitution of a complementary nature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Telling tales to get others into trouble</td>
<td>Counselling from duty teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arguments</td>
<td>Community service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exclusion of others from group games</td>
<td>Green slip</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental damage, eg. Littering, damaging gardens</td>
<td>Behaviour card</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Repeated offences increase mild behaviour to moderate level and will be recorded.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Moderate Concern</th>
<th>Potential Consequences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Swearing or being abusive to others</td>
<td>Green slip with referral to a member of the executive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Out of Bounds-out of sight, e.g. entering classrooms without permission</td>
<td>Counselling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical aggression towards others eg pushing, shoving</td>
<td>Time out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rudeness towards adults</td>
<td>Community service</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unhygienic actions e.g. spitting</td>
<td>Loss of privileges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misuse of toilets</td>
<td>Level Placement(3-6) and record entered on ESR Welfare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Referred for welfare support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Repeated offences increase behaviour to severe level*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Severe Concern</th>
<th>Potential Consequences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fighting- serious acts of violence</td>
<td>Immediate intervention and removal from common areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious disrespect to a teacher</td>
<td>Parents notified immediately</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leaving the school grounds</td>
<td>Suspension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use of an object to threaten others</td>
<td>Level placement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refusal to follow a teacher’s instruction</td>
<td>Police involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possession of an illegal drug or misuse of a legal drug</td>
<td>Recorded on ESR Welfare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Racism, harassment.</td>
<td>Referred to Anti Racism Officer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biting</td>
<td>Referred to student welfare support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This policy will need regular reinforcement. It is anticipated that fine tuning will take place over time. It is suggested that this policy be fully reviewed in 2010
Teachers employ a common approach in talking with children about behavioural matters. The following script is a device to help students focus on the decisions they made and how to make better decisions in the future.

**Intervention Interview**

- What did you do? (Don’t ask why)
- Was that a good choice or a bad choice?
- How did it make (the other person) feel?
- Did you make the situation/problem better or worse?
- What will you do differently next time?
- Do you need help? Who might you ask?
- Are you responsible for your own behaviour?
- What do you have to say to (the other person)?
- What can we do to make things better for everyone?

**Useful prompts for the classroom and playground**

- You have a choice how you use your voice.
- Do you want him/her to get into trouble?
- What does being good look like? Sound like?
- We build people up we don’t knock them down. (like a sandcastle)
- No one has the right to take away your power. So take it back.
- If you need help, tell a person you can trust.

**The Bully Slip Process**

Sylvania Heights Public School enjoys a very low level of reported incidents of bullying. This is an outcome of the anti bullying policy, the welfare policy and procedures and the care provide by teaching staff. Bullying however can and will occur in any school environment. We constantly review our caring programs at school and believe all approaches at time require ‘fine tuning’. As an outcome of the review of the school anti bullying policy we have decided to introduce a ‘Bully slip’ process.

**Objectives:**

- To reduce bullying by providing all student with a means of informing teachers of any bullying incidents.
- To provide further support to students by using data gained from the analysis of bully slip information to refine our approach.
- To make a clear statement to the school community that the school has a positive approach to address bullying incidents at school.

**The process:**

- All students K-6 will have the bullying slip explained in the appropriate fashion.
- Teachers are encouraged to use a simple notification system in their class if they feel appropriate. A teacher may choose to use a simple form which will lead to the teacher and student completing the main form together.
- All students will be given ready access to these forms in their classrooms, the rooms of specialist teachers and the school office.
- Each teacher will establish a box or system within their room for slips to be placed. The contents of the box will be regularly reviewed by the teaching staff.
- Students may also choose to hand their slip to a teacher.
- Reports of bullying will be entered on a slip and processed as described below. This means that any contact made with the school, which describes a bullying incident,
will become part of our data collection. *Each incident of bullying requires a new sheet to be completed.*

- The class teacher will initially determine a response. This means the class teacher will most likely resolve the issue or in serious matters may determine to refer to a member of the school executive.
- The class teacher will make an entry on the student behaviour card that a bully slip exists for all students involved.
- Information for parents will be provided when deemed necessary by the class teacher or member of the school executive
- All slips will be sent to the Deputy Principal who will retain the slips and enter the information into the student welfare database. This information must include action taken. The Deputy Principal will
  - determine whether further action is necessary
  - produce a report at the end of each term as well as an annual report. This information will provide a guide for decision making and refinement of our support for students.

Parents are, as usual, encouraged to inform us of any incidents of bullying to ensure their child is supported at school.
### BULLY BOX NOTE

Your Name: _________________________ Class: ___________ Date: ___________

Have you been bullied? **circle** Yes  No

Are you concerned someone else is being bullied? **Who?**

Class: __________________________

By Who? __________________________ Class: ___________

Where? Please tick

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Playground</th>
<th>Classroom</th>
<th>Cyber:</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

How often does it happen?: please circle

- Once
- Twice
- Sometimes More
- All the Time

Who have you told? **circle** A friend  My Teacher  Another Teacher  My Parent  No One

**What’s Happening?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Physical Bullying</th>
<th>Verbal Bullying</th>
<th>Emotional/Social Bullying</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hitting, punching</td>
<td>teasing/name calling</td>
<td>leaving people out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pinching, tripping</td>
<td>make offensive remarks</td>
<td>spreading rumours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kicking, pushing</td>
<td>making discriminatory remarks</td>
<td>excluding someone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scratching, spitting</td>
<td>insulting someone</td>
<td>ignoring someone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Damaging/stealing property</td>
<td>threatening someone</td>
<td>making fun of someone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Throwing objects at someone</td>
<td>repeated teasing</td>
<td>stopping people from befriending someone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hiding/ taking belongings</td>
<td></td>
<td>intimidating someone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Conveying hurtful or threatening messages</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What would you like to happen?

-  

**Action by**: More than one may be circled

Class teacher  Stage Supervisor  Deputy Principal

Action may also be taken by the Learning Support team; school counsellor and school principal. This will be determined following the initial follow up.

Information entered on school database  Yes (Date )  not necessary

Teacher completing this form: Name  Signature:

Date:
NSW Department of Education and Training

Approach to cybersafety

The NSW Department of Education and Training recognises that technology plays an important role in engaging students in education. However, the Department also acknowledges the inherent risks of young people having access to a range of sites, particularly where such access is not carefully monitored.

It is important to educate young people and teacher/parents on responsible technology use and equip them with the skills to keep safe. Schools and families must work together to ensure that students know that bullying by any means is not acceptable and that young people use technology appropriately and can resolve conflict without violence.

The Department has policies, programs and supports in place to help raise awareness and counter inappropriate use of technology.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is commonly defined as the use of information and communication technologies to support repeated and deliberate hostile behaviour intended to harm others. It is sometimes used as an extension to other forms of bullying, and can result in the target of bullying experiencing social, psychological and academic difficulties.

Children and young people can also be affected by hostile behaviour that does not fit the definition of cyberbullying. For example, a one off insensitive or negative remark or joke online or via text is not cyberbullying by definition. However, the impact can be widespread due to the rapid dissemination and the relative permanency of the message sent.

How cyberbullying works

There are two kinds of cyberbullying, direct attacks (messages sent to your kids directly) and cyberbullying by proxy (using others to help cyberbully the victim, either with or without the accomplice’s knowledge). Because cyberbullying by proxy often gets adults involved in the harassment, it is much more dangerous.

Cyberbullying can be conducted through many different media including:

- the sending of abusive texts or emails (Instant Messaging/Text Messaging Harassment)
- taking and sharing unflattering or private images, including naked or sexual images
- posting unkind messages or inappropriate images on social networking sites
- excluding individuals from online chats or other communication
- assuming the identity of the victim online and representing them in a negative manner or manner that may damage their relationship with others
- repeatedly and for no strategic reasons attacking players in online gaming.
• stealing Passwords
• blogs
• web Sites

Like other forms of bullying such as verbal abuse, social exclusion and physical aggression, cyberbullying has the potential to result in the target of bullying developing social, psychological and educational issues.

While cyberbullying is similar to real life bullying it also differs in the following ways:

• it can be difficult to escape and invasive—it can occur 24/7 and a person can be targeted while at home
• it can involve harmful material being widely and rapidly disseminated to a large audience, for example, rumours and images can be posted on public forums or sent to many people at once
• it can provide the bully with a sense of relative anonymity and distance from the victim, so there is a lack of immediate feedback or consequences.

Identifying and responding to incidents of cyberbullying

Cyberbullying can happen to anyone, not just those generally considered more vulnerable. Confident, outgoing individuals can also be targeted.

Research has identified that girls are more likely to report that they have been victims of cyberbullying than boys, potentially because they engage in a higher level of technology-assisted social communication such as SMSing, emailing and social networking.

One or more of the following signs and changes in behaviour could indicate that a student is being cyberbullied.

• Decline in academic performance and social interaction.
• Dislike and avoidance of school sometimes resulting in higher absenteeism.
• Complaints of feeling unwell though parents report no specific illness.
• Having less to do with friends.
• Increased social exclusion and peer rejection.
• Falling behind in homework.
• Poorer physical health and sleepiness.
• Increased negative self-perception.
• Increased reluctance to participate in regular school activities, including classroom discussions.
• Becoming withdrawn, appearing depressed or anxious, having mood swings, crying for no apparent reason.

The above signs should be considered in light of the student’s usual behaviour.

Some of the signs above may also be indicators of more general social issues, specific mental health issues, or may even reflect developmentally appropriate behaviours for young people.
as they seek to establish their identity. Exploring any significant concerns with students and parents/carers is an important first step towards identifying issues and developing strategies to overcome them.

**Cyberbullying protocol at Sylvania Heights Public School**

The school reserves the right to determine whether incidents of cyberbullying relate to the responsibility of the school.

If determined the school has a role to play we will:

1. Ensure each student is safe and arrange support, including the involvement of student wellbeing. Support from staff should be provided on an ongoing basis with the agreement of the student and parent/carer to assist the student to work through the effects of the cyberbullying and to help them develop and implement effective coping strategies.

2. Contact the student’s parents to alert them to the issue, and ongoing concerns regarding the welfare of the student, and discuss the issue and how best to deal with it.

3. Reassure the student that the school is taking the incident seriously and that the reported bullying will be acted on.
   - Gather basic facts about the suspected cyberbullying and, if possible, identify the students involved.
   - Implement appropriate responses to address the bullying using evidence-based responses such as restorative justice approaches to conflict resolution.

4. Bear in mind that advising students to completely disengage from their online activities is not always helpful as this can also isolate them from supportive friends.

5. Provide the following strategies to the student and parent to assist with managing the issue in the future.
   - Don’t respond to any further messages/postings from the bully and, if possible, block further correspondence from them (block their mobile number or email address).
   - Report any further correspondence from the bully to the parent/carer and an agreed school contact
   - Keep evidence of any bullying to assist with tracking down the bully and potentially reporting the matter to police (screen captures, bully’s screen name, text and images).
   - Report any concerns to the administrator of the service used, including the mobile phone provider (if SMS is involved), website administrator (if social networking or chat services are involved), or internet service provider, as most have measures to assist with tracking and blocking the bully. Some block the bully’s access to their services entirely as bullying is often a breach of website terms of use.

If the student is distressed by the bullying, ensure they are provided with options for psychological support including school counselling and the DET Well Being Unit

The school will follow its established approach to incidents of bullying as outlined in the school Anti-Bullying Policy.
### Technologies used for cyberbullying

The following information is provided as a support to students and families

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technology</th>
<th>Cyberbullying activities</th>
<th>Strategies for addressing this behaviour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Chat rooms message boards on the internet | • Sending or posting nasty or threatening messages which may be anonymous.  
• A group picking on or excluding individuals.  
• Misusing personal information gained by pretending to be someone’s ‘friend’ to spread rumours, secrets and to gain power over others. | • Block communications with offensive individuals.  
• Don’t respond to messages.  
• Keep a record of inappropriate postings, including time, date, user names for reporting.  
• Report misuse of personal information to the chat room or message board site host.  
• Report any incidence of bullying or upsetting hostile behaviour (including exclusion) to parents, school or a trusted adult or the Kids Helpline [www.kidshelp.com.au](http://www.kidshelp.com.au) or phone 1800 551 800. |
| Emails and text messages via computer or mobile phone | • Sending nasty or threatening messages or emails.  
• Forwarding offensive content including jokes, videos, images and sound.  
• Sending computer viruses.  
• Accessing someone else’s account to forward personal emails or delete them.  
• Constantly calling or texting a person and making derogatory and/or rude remarks and/or threatening and hostile remarks.  
• Taking and sharing unflattering images with other mobiles or uploading onto the internet.  
• Using text or voice chat to harass or scare someone.  
• Sending a hostile attachment.  
• Using someone else’s account to forward rude or unpleasant messages via their contacts list.  
• ‘Ganging up’—a group deciding to pick on or exclude | • Block communications with offensive individuals.  
• Don’t respond to messages.  
• In the case of an SMS report misuse of the mobile phone to the phone company if known.  
• Keep inappropriate messages, including time, date, email addresses and mobile phone numbers for reporting.  
• If necessary create a new email address and only share it with close friends and family.  
• Report any incidence of bullying or upsetting hostile behaviour (including exclusion) to parents, school or a trusted adult or the Kids Helpline [www.kidshelp.com.au](http://www.kidshelp.com.au). |
| Instant Messaging (IM) on the internet | | |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technology</th>
<th>Cyberbullying activities</th>
<th>Strategies for addressing this behaviour</th>
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</table>
| Webcam     | - Making and sending inappropriate pictures and content.  
           | - Persuading or threatening young people to act in inappropriate ways.  
           | - Using inappropriate recordings to manipulate young people. | - Block communication with people who make you feel uncomfortable. Turn off your webcam—claim it is broken if necessary.  
           | - Report any incidence of bullying or upsetting hostile behaviour (including exclusion) to parents, school or a trusted adult or the Kids Helpline [www.kidshelp.com.au](http://www.kidshelp.com.au) or phone 1800 551 800. |
| Social networking sites on the internet | - Posting nasty and abusive comments.  
           | - Posting images, videos or sound that may embarrass or frighten a person.  
           | - Groups excluding a person from a network.  
           | - Creating a fake profile to bully, harass or create trouble for a person.  
           | - Accessing another person’s account details and using their page to post negative materials, send unpleasant messages or make private information public. | - Ask the host site to remove any images, videos, etc, that are concerning.  
           | - Report inappropriate use of passwords, identity, etc, to the host site.  
           | - Keep a record of the actions of the offending parties, including the information posted, times, dates, any information about their username, etc.  
           | - Report any incidence of bullying or upsetting hostile behaviour (including exclusion) to parents, school or a trusted adult or the Kids Helpline [www.kidshelp.com.au](http://www.kidshelp.com.au) or phone 1800 551 800. |
| Video hosting sites on the internet eg, YouTube | - Posting embarrassing or humiliating video clips. | - Ask the host site to remove the content.  
           | - Keep a record of the content and the ID of the person responsible for posting for reporting purposes.  
           | - Report any incidence of bullying or upsetting hostile behaviour (including exclusion) to parents, school or a trusted adult or the Kids Helpline [www.kidshelp.com.au](http://www.kidshelp.com.au) or phone 1800 551 800. |
| Virtual worlds on the internet  
Gaming sites on the internet | - Interacting negatively with someone else’s avatar.  
           | - Pretending to be someone else’s avatar.  
           | - Name calling and making abusive comments. | - Avoid interaction with the negative individual/group.  
<pre><code>       | - Report the issue to the game/virtual world site administrator. |
</code></pre>
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| Playing games with people in your local area using handheld consoles       | • Picking on other users e.g. by repeatedly killing their characters or demeaning their lack of skill.  
• Denying access to a team game.                                             | • Change avatar or character name if necessary.                                                      |
|                                                                            |                                                                                         | • Keep a record of the other player’s avatars/ usernames, their actions and the dates/times of their inappropriate behaviour for reporting purposes.  |
|                                                                            |                                                                                         | • Report any incidence of bullying or upsetting hostile behaviour (including exclusion) to parents, school or a trusted adult or the Kids Helpline [www.kidshelp.com.au](http://www.kidshelp.com.au) or phone 1800 551 800. |
Advice for Parents
Why children do not tell

Children often hide the fact that they are being bullied for a number of reasons:

- they do not want to look weak
- they do not want to tell tales
- they think it will make things worse.

As a first step, it is usually best to encourage the child to talk through it as far as he or she wants to, so you get the basic facts straight. Try to keep an open mind, remembering you are hearing only one side of the story. Ask questions gently, help the child reflect on what has been done so far and help the child work out what might be done. It is important to find out what happened, who was involved, when and where the incident took place. Ask if anybody else saw what happened and, if so, who? It is a good idea to write down what you find out.

What can you do if your child is being bullied?

Children need to:
- feel believed and listened to
- develop trust in how parents will handle it
- talk more openly about what has happened
- gain some control over what is happening
- learn things they can do to protect themselves
- regain self-confidence.

It helps if parents:
- involve the children in making decisions about what to do
- listen to what children say
- tell them they understand.

It does not help if parents:
- get angry or upset
- feel guilty or ashamed
- make the children think it is not important
- blame the children
- blame the school
- accuse people without knowing the facts
- look for scapegoats
- demand to know all the details at once
- look for easy solutions.

Approaching the school about bullying

- Make an appointment.
- Present the information calmly.
• Make it clear that you and the school are partners.
• Tell the school what you and your child would like to do.
• Ask about the school’s policy on bullying.
• Remember that the school will need time.
• Make a note and follow-up.

What are the signs?

Bullying may be very hard to see. Victims may already be having trouble getting on with other children or with teachers. They are often picked on by bullies for this reason. Bullying usually happens out of sight, away from teachers or other adults. The people who are most likely to know what is going on are other children. Children who are being bullied often don’t like to tell anyone because they feel weak or ashamed, or are frightened that it will only make things worse. They also feel it is wrong to dob in or tell tales on other children. If they tell anyone, it is most likely they will tell their parents or their friends before they will tell a teacher.

Some tell-tale signs are:

• bruises, scratches or cuts that your child can’t really explain
• torn or damaged clothing
• damaged or missing belongings
• headaches, stomach aches and other pains that the child can’t put a finger on
• unexplained tears or depression
• unusual outbursts of temper
• not wanting to go to school
• not wanting to play with friends
• wanting changes in the way he or she travels to and from school
• school work falls off in quality
• wanting extra money without giving a reason.

There are some important next steps to consider.

• Never try to sort out the bullies yourself. This rarely works and often makes matters worse.
• Once you have a clear picture of the situation, and some idea about how you and the child would prefer to handle it, contact the school.
• Make an appointment to see the principal or the class teacher or whoever you think would be best to see. Don’t barge in. Sometimes, the school counsellor might be a good person to start with.
• Present the information you have as calmly as possible.
• Do it in a way that makes it clear to the school that you see yourself and the school as partners in trying to fix this problem. Tell the school what you and your child would like to do, and ask them for ideas as well.
• Ask about the school’s policy on bullying. Most, if not all, schools have a policy on responding to bullying. Your school will be as concerned as you to deal with the problem.
• The school will need time to investigate the matter and to talk to teachers, other students and even other parents if that’s the best thing to do. Remember the school staff may not have seen the incidents and it is not always easy to judge if it is bullying or just a bit of harmless fun which has gone too far.
• Make a note of what the school says it will do, and arrange to make a follow-up call to see what has been done.

Helping your child cope

Invite school friends home to strengthen the relationships begun at school. Talk to your child about some of the things that have happened and discuss some ways of dealing with them, such as:

• pretending not to hear hurtful comments
• using silent self-talk such as, That’s their problem, not mine, or, I’m OK,
• reinforce self-confidence
• developing greater self-assertiveness, so as to be able to face the bully without becoming scared, upset, abusive or violent; and
• believing that it is OK to tell someone when bullying happens – that it is not dobbing.

It is important that children understand the difference between dobbing in and reporting something that is serious. Bullying is serious. People get hurt, and some are harmed for a long time. Children have said that being bullied is almost the worst thing that can happen to them.

Factors that may contribute towards a child becoming a bully

Too little supervision of children and adolescents. Without supervision, children do not get the message that aggressive behaviour is wrong.

Bullying pays off. Many children learn at a very young age that when they bully their brother, sister or parents they get what they want. Often parents are too busy or too tired to fight with the child so they just give in. Each time parents give in when the child is aggressive they give the child the message that bullying pays off.

Do as I say, not as I do. When parents fight and one parent intimidates the other and wins, the child gets the message that intimidation gets you what you want.

Harsh, physical punishment. Although spanking a child may stop the child’s behaviour, spanking that is too harsh, too frequent or too physical teaches a child that it is OK to hit other people. In particular, this teaches a child that it is OK for bigger people (parents) to hit little people (children). Bullies usually pick on younger, smaller or weaker children. They model, in their physical attacks, what may have happened to them personally in the home. The worst thing that can be done is to physically punish a bully for bullying behaviour.

Peer group that supports bullying behaviour. Many parents do not know what their children are doing with the peer group. Their child may be playing with other children who bully. In order for the child to fit in, the child must bully like the peers.

Getting more negative than positive messages. Children who develop bullying behaviour feel that the world around them (home, school, neighbourhood) is more negative than positive.
These children are criticised more than they are praised. They expect the world to be negative with them so they attack first. By picking on others, they feel more important and powerful.

*Poor self-concept.* Children who get more criticism than praise may develop a poor self-concept. These children believe that the only way to be accepted is to pick on others.

*Expecting hostility.* Because of the criticism and the poor self-concept, bullies expect their parents, teachers and peers to pick on them, blame them or otherwise humiliate them. Therefore, they attack before they are attacked, even when in reality they were not about to be attacked. They assume hostility when none exists. In many ways, the bully’s philosophy is, the best defence is offence.


The school has adopted an approach fostered through professional learning in the area of restorative justice. A major aspect of this approach is to have a commonality of language to guide students towards positive decision making. This approach is written in more detail in the school welfare policy. Basically we ask all teachers to use the same language when addressing an issue. The school advocates the use of similar language by parents.

**Myths about bullying**

**MYTH 1:** You can spot a bully by their looks. They are usually bigger than the rest of the kids and often dress shabbily.

**FACT:** Bullies have no particular looks. They come in all shapes and sizes. Both girls and boys can be bullies – bullies are found in all economic, social and racial groups.

**MYTH 2:** Some children ask to be bullied. They are born victims.

**FACT:** Some children are more prone to being bullied. It is often due to things they cannot change about themselves eg, appearance, ethnicity, disabilities. This difference is just an excuse for the bully to justify what they do. No-one chooses to be hurt by others.

**MYTH 3:** Bullies usually feel inadequate and have a low self esteem. Most bullies are unpopular or are poor students.

**FACT:** A high percentage of bullies are relatively popular, have a high estimation of themselves and often have good verbal skills and achieve average grades. Studies show that bullying builds self esteem, children who bully are not loners.

**MYTH 4:** I was bullied at school and it did not do me any harm.

**FACT:** This is often said aggressively as if the person is still ashamed. They may have forgotten the pain they suffered.

**MYTH 5:** Children just have to learn to stand up for themselves.

**FACT:** Children who tell about bullying have usually reached the end of their tether. If they could have dealt with the bullying they would have. Asking for support is not weakness but a recognition that they cannot cope with the situation on their own.

**MYTH 6:** The best approach is to tell the child to hit back – harder.
**FACT:** Bullies are often bigger than their victims so the victim could get seriously hurt by hitting back. Hitting back reinforces the idea that violence and aggression are acceptable.

**MYTH 7:** Bullying is character-building.
**FACT:** The sort of character it builds is not the sort of character most parents want for their children. Bullying can damage victim’s self esteem and can make them reserved and distrustful.

**MYTH 8:** Sticks and stones may break your bones but words can never hurt you.
**FACT:** Bruises left by blows fade and heal but the scars left by name-calling can last for ever. An 84 year old man wrote: “I can remember every word those friends said. I have been hearing their bullying jeers all my life”.

**MYTH 9:** That’s not bullying! It is just fun.
**FACT:** Teasing is one thing but when it gets out of hand it can turn into vicious taunting. Once teasing begins to hurt the victim it is no longer “just a bit of fun” and should be stopped

**MYTH 10:** Once a bully, always a bully.
**FACT:** Bullying is a learned behaviour that can be unlearned.