

# **BLAYNEY HIGH SCHOOL**

## **Anti-Bullying Policy**

### **Introduction**

Every person at Blayney High School has the right to experience positive and respectful relationships between all members of the school community. They also have the right to learn and teach in a happy and safe environment. Bullying behaviour is not acceptable at Blayney High School and is contrary to the school's discipline code.

Bullying exists at all levels in our society. The effects of bullying on learning and adjustment at school can be devastating and far reaching for the student involved. At Blayney High School we believe that the whole school community can share the responsibility for combating bullying whenever and wherever it occurs. The importance of reporting bullying at Blayney High School is constantly emphasised through school assemblies, the school newsletter and preventative programs. All reports of bullying are taken seriously and are handled in a sensitive manner.

### **Definition of Bullying**

- Bullying is a deliberate attempt to make someone feel uncomfortable, unhappy or devalued.
- The bully deliberately tries to harm, harass, humiliate or distress a victim in order to gain power. Bullying can be planned and organised or it may be unintentional. Individuals or groups may be involved.

Bullying can involve all forms of harassment based on sex, race, religion, disability or sexual orientation. It can be expressed in different forms including:

- Verbal: eg. Name calling, teasing, abuse, putdowns, sarcasm, insults, threats, harassment, insults against a student and/or his family, etc.
- Physical: e.g. Spitting, mucking around that goes too far, hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, pushing, biting, pulling hair, throwing objects at another person, invading personal space to intimidate, etc.
- Social/Psychological: e.g. Ostracising (group consents to deliberately exclude or ignore), alienating (one or more people excluded), making inappropriate gestures to humiliate, mocking others, spreading stories and rumours, hiding, damaging or stealing possessions, eg. Demanding money, etc.
- Cyber bullying: malicious SMS or email messages, inappropriate use of camera phones, note passing with inappropriate comments or stand-over tactics, threats of assault etc.

The aim of any anti-bullying strategy is to create an environment where bullying is not tolerated. At Blayney High School a twofold approach is used, first with

preventative programs establishing a climate that stops bullying behaviour and then reactive programs to deal with any incidences that may arise.

A number of strategies to combat bullying have been implemented at Blayney High School. Their aim is to involve the whole school community to create an anti-bullying culture across the school.

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

### **Students can expect to:**

- Be treated with dignity and respect
- Know that their concerns will be taken seriously and handled in a sensitive manner
- Be provided with appropriate support (for both the victim and the bully, including counselling)
- See severe cases of bullying result in appropriate disciplinary action..

### **Students have a responsibility to:**

- Treat students and teachers with dignity and respect
- Behave appropriately and respect individual differences
- Refuse to bully and challenge inappropriate behaviour
- Refuse to watch, laugh or join in when someone is being bullied
- Report any bullying incident directed at self or others according to the school Anti bullying Plan
- Help break down the code of secrecy.

### **Staff have a responsibility to:**

- Model appropriate behaviour in word and action
- Closely supervise students in all areas of the school and playground
- Identify signs of bullying and try to prevent repeat offences
- Respond quickly and sensitively to bullying reports and follow up all reported bullying incidents
- Assign consequences for bullying following the school Anti bullying Plan.

## **Parents and caregivers have a responsibility to:**

- Be aware of the school Anti-bullying Plan
- Explore their children's concerns
- Be aware of the signs and symptoms of bullying for example, school avoidance, persistent headaches, stomach aches, damaged clothes, bruises, sleep disturbance, etc
- Contact the school promptly if bullying behaviour is suspected

## **PREVENTATIVE STRATEGIES**

### **Features of this school that deter bullying:**

- School policy outlining firm action and appropriate consequences;
- A school ethos that models co-operation;
- Liaison with other schools to identify high risk students;
- Supervision of all students by all staff;
- Communication - staff, students, parents, other agencies;
- Cross Curriculum Anti-Bullying philosophy - information about bullying being presented in the classroom within the subject contexts; and
- Appreciation - the acceptance of individuals. Appropriate attitudes between staff and students.

### **Programs with Anti-bullying components include:**

- "Transition Program" for Year 6 to 7 students;
- Year 7 "Year Meetings" incorporating an 'anti-bullying' sessions
- Year 7 "Welfare program" Welcome to Blayney High School/Bullying. Heavy focus on the types of bullying, acceptable behaviours and reporting of, including looking out for each other.
- Remediation Programs - social skills, assertiveness training, anger management, communication skills and support for students with learning difficulties;
- Year 7 Health unit on Being Me: "A sense of self"
- Year 8 Health unit on Me, you and everybody else: "Caring and respectful relationships" and "Bullying and harassment"
- Hands Off program to reduce physical contact and "rough house" play between students.

## **If Bullying Occurs:**

### ***For Students.***

- Tell your parents.
- Tell a teacher you trust immediately. You could also tell your, Year Adviser, School Counsellor, Deputy Principal or the Principal. Your Year Adviser will be notified by either yourself or by one of the above mentioned staff members. One of the teachers who have been trained to deal with bullying incidents may be asked to interview students involved. This person will assist to solve the problem.
- Where the bullying involves a serious assault, you should immediately report the incident to the teacher on duty or the Deputy Principal or the Principal.
- Where the bullying does not stop or where it recurs after a lapse of time it is essential to report the continuation of the problem. **It often takes a number of interventions before bullying behaviour is fully eradicated.**

### ***For Parents/Guardians.***

- Encourage your children to discuss relationships with other students with you. Open discussion will allow them to raise issues should any bullying occur.
- If your child tells you that they are being bullied at school, encourage them to feel confident that they have the right to report the incident and have that report acted on. Help them to collect information that may be helpful to the teachers following up their report. They may feel safer having a friend go with them to make their report.
- Refrain from becoming involved in incidents through direct action or electronic means
- We also encourage students (or parents) to contact the school to report incidents of bullying that may only be evident at home e.g. cyber bullying.

### ***For Staff.***

- By making a disclosure to you regarding bullying a student trusts you to support them in what can be a very difficult situation for them.
- Listen and acknowledge the seriousness of the report. Deal with any breach of the school discipline code at that time.
- Tell the Year Adviser and a Deputy Principal. Inform the student/s of this action. The Year Adviser will then deal with the matter and inform the student about how the matter will be handled.

**For more information on the Department of Education and Training's Anti-Bullying Policy click on the link below:**

<http://www.schools.nsw.edu.au/studentsupport/studentwellbeing/anti-bullyingpolicy.php>

# Managing Bullying

## Ongoing strategies to prevent bullying behaviour

- Inform students about the Anti-bullying Plan through Year Assemblies, Roll Groups and school diaries
  - Inform parents and caregivers about the Anti-bullying Plan through P&C meetings, school newsletter and parent meetings
  - Ensure that all staff are aware of the Anti Bullying Plan
  - Provide students with strategies to respond positively to incidents of bullying behaviour, including responsibilities as bystanders or observers. These strategies to be taught as part of the Personal Development/Health course. Bullying themes will also be explored in literature and drama.
  - Run specific anti-bullying programs which are reinforced through the Welfare programs
  - Display signs in each classroom and around the school that bullying is unacceptable and should be reported.
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## Procedures To Deal With Bullying Incidents

Parents and students should contact the Year Adviser or Deputy Principal if bullying behaviour is occurring.

Serious incidents of bullying should be referred directly to the Deputy Principal.

### **Step One: Teacher Level (Teacher observes that a student is being bullied)**

The teacher will:

- Challenge the inappropriate behaviour and speak to all students involved, collect data and investigate incident
- Issue a caution if appropriate

If the situation is resolved, no further action is required

**If the situation is serious, potentially ongoing or if bullying behaviour persists, the teacher will make a referral on Millennium and forward the student/s to the Year Adviser or Deputy Principal.**

## **Step Two: Year Adviser Level**

When the Year Adviser is informed by a parent, teacher or student of a bullying incident, the Year Adviser will:

- Interview the students involved, investigate the incident and collect data
- Ensure students involved complete a Bullying Incident Report
- Conduct a mediation session
- Record all actions and outcomes of the incident on Millennium

**If the mediation session is unsuccessful or disciplinary consequences are required the Year Advisor will liaise with the Deputy Principal.**

## **Step Three: Deputy Principal Level**

The Deputy Principal will:

- Interview students, investigate incident and collect data
- Take appropriate action against the bully. This may include a caution, detention(s), isolation or referral to the principal for suspension.
- Phone parents / caregivers of the victim and bully and arrange interview as required
- Refer bully and / or victim to the counsellor
- Record all actions and outcomes of the incident on Millennium

## **Step Four: Suspension (Principal discretion)**

If the bullying behaviour persists the student will be suspended by the Principal.

Monitoring, evaluation and reporting

- A record of bullying incidents and resolutions will be kept on Millennium
- Annual surveys of students, teachers and parents/caregivers will be used to evaluate the extent to which the Anti-bullying Plan has been effective
- The Anti-bullying Plan will be reviewed annually by the Student Welfare Committee
- Monitoring information will be used to identify emerging patterns and trends and to modify the Anti-bullying Plan accordingly.