Anti-bullying Policy

Purpose: To protect students from bullying and foster a school culture where bullying is unacceptable

Definition: Bullying is repeated repression - physical, verbal or psychological - of a less powerful individual by a more powerful individual or group.

Cyber bullying is when someone is tormented, threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed, or otherwise targeted using the Internet, interactive and digital technologies or mobile phones. Cyberbullying poses unique challenges because it is more likely to occur outside the school environment.

To deal holistically and effectively with problems of bullying the partnership between parents and the school is vital to support all students involved, whether they are victims, bystanders or offenders.

All forms of bullying, whether it be physical, verbal or cyber are not tolerated at any level at Wellington Point State High School.

Teachers, students, parents, caregivers and members of the wider community have a responsibility to work together to address bullying.

Examples of 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, hiding or damaging possessions, malicious SMS and email messages, inappropriate use of camera phones

STUDENTS

• Students should engage in appropriate behaviour in accordance with school expectations and policies including respect for others
• Students will be made aware that bullying is unacceptable behaviour
• Students will engage in lessons and programs aimed at building positive friendships, challenging stereotypes and encouraging assertive behaviour
• Students should attempt to use learnt strategies to deal with bullying and ask for help

• Prefects and student leaders will participate actively in identifying and reducing incidents of bullying and acting as role models
• Students will participate in peer mediation if necessary
• Students should report incidences of bullying

STAFF

• Staff should be active in identifying and eliminating bullying behaviour whilst on playground supervision, in the classroom and generally when students are involved in school activities and programs
• Teachers should monitor, identify, and report suspected victims of bullying or perpetrators for early intervention and monitoring
• Teachers should support and participate in welfare and other programs to assist in the elimination of bullying
• Staff will participate in any training on anti-bullying and apply learned strategies to combat bullying
• Every member of staff has a responsibility to be vigilant with regard to instances of bullying and to take action
• If the initial actions by a staff member do not stop the bullying records and referrals should be made as per the school's responsible behaviour plan with year coordinators having a role in mediation, supporting the victim and as a point of contact, monitoring and further referral if necessary.

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES

• Parents should support their children in all aspects of their child's learning
• Parents should be aware of and support school policies and procedures in particular the school's   responsible behaviour plan for students and the anti-bullying policy
• Parents should support their child to develop confidence and positive relationships and encourage them to use learnt strategies to deal with bullying
• Parents should encourage and support their child to report instances of bullying and to co-operate with school staff in the investigation of allegations or instances of bullying
• Parents should monitor that their child is using technology appropriately, in particular, mobile phones and the internet
• Parents have responsibility for student behaviour when they are not within the school environment and should take all appropriate steps to reduce the risk of bullying incidents including cyberbullying occurring at these times. Parents should be aware of and take appropriate steps to respond to instances of bullying such as cyberbullying that occur outside the school environment.
• Parents should be aware of some possible responses to instances of cyberbullying etc. e.g. contact with their mobile phone service provider or individual Internet Service Providers and of places where they can get information such as Net Alert at www.netalert .gov.au and http://www.police.qld.gov.au/programs/personalSafety/childProtection/?

SCHOOL RESPONSE

• All students, parents and staff upon entry to the school are provided with information about the anti bullying policy
• A clear school policy on Responsible Behaviour Management
• Use of curriculum to promote co-operation, positive relationships and conflict resolution skills
• To ensure all school internet and email services are safe and suitable for students, filters are used when students are using the internet from school network. Any emails containing inappropriate text is blocked from being dispatched or received.

• All students and parents sign a Computer Use Agreement which outlines protocols and procedures for the use of schools' electronic communication facilities and covers the use of school computers and other electronic devices, including internet access, email protocols, electronic records access, security of information.
• School's mobile phone policy outlines the procedures for responsible use of mobile phones and mobile phone camera phones etc. by students on school premises and on school related activities.
• As part of the school's welfare program students are given information about general internet safety awareness.
• Parents are provided with information to support them in reducing and responding to instances of bullying and keeping their children safe with respect to technologies.
• Playground supervision
• Recognition of positive student behaviours
• Promote positive interaction through intergrade activities and student leadership programs eg peer support, lunchtime activities
• Student support programs including: year co-ordinators, welfare program and teachers, school guidance officer, school chaplain, school health nurse
• Peer mediation

As a regular part of school review processes relevant information on the nature and extent of bullying, harassment and victimisation, including data that highlights patterns and trends, such as suspension data and school opinion survey responses are gathered and analysed. This includes evaluating the extent to which the school's Anti-bullying Planhas been effective in addressing bullying , harassment and victimisation and promoting a safe and secure environment.

GENERAL SCHOOL PROCEDURES FOR RESPONDING TO INCIDENTS OF BULLYING

• Monitor and record bullying incidents
• Apply consequences for students who are serious or persistent offenders
• Inform parents of any student who is involved in persistent and/or serious bullying incidents
• Support victims of bullying to eliminate the likelihood of their being bullied again
• Work with parents and victims of bullying to develop confidence and strategies to avoid being bullied
• Regularly review and update resources and procedures for addressing bullying

Level 1 Staff who observe an incident of bullying (observed or reported) have the initial responsibility for taking positive action using different practices such as assertiveness, restorative questioning and one-to-one discussion, parent contact etc.. However, when the instance of bullying is severe or when the student continues to engage in bullying behaviour or to be a victim of bullying a referral needs to be made so that there can be follow-up action. (It is important that staff at this level investigate to establish whether this is a one off incident or part of a pattern etc. and that appropriate records are kept to identify any patterns in the future)

Level 2 Depending on the nature of the bullying the referral maybe to a year coordinator or a deputy principal who may offer the teacher additional support and advice or may choose to follow up with both the bully and the student who is bullying and possibly bystanders. Contact will likely be made with parents to help resolve the matter.

Level 3. When efforts do not produce significant changes to a student's bullying behaviour, then a more intensive intervention is required. This may involve referral to the school's welfare team and possibly support from outside agencies as well as seeking support from parents . At this stage actions could involve the use of a behavioural contract, 1:1 social and emotional mentoring (resilience, conflict resolution, empathy training), restorative meetings, restorative conferences etc. In the case of bullies who have a demonstrated pattern of behaviour or those who are not cooperating in changing their behaviours sanctioned will be considered.

Level 4 Students whose severe bullying behaviour resist school efforts may represent a significant threat to the safety and wellbeing of another student or students and sanctions including suspension and exclusion will be considered.