# Anti-Bullying Policy
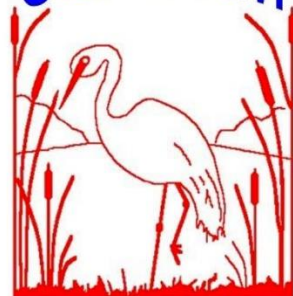
# Our School Anti-Bullying Plan

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

At Seaham Public School we value and show tolerance of others in a safe and supportive environment. We foster positive relationships through our strong Student Welfare programs. As part of our school's Student Welfare Policy, our school Anti-Bullying policy aims to deal effectively with and prevent incidences of bullying within our school.

*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.*

# Definition

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 including Social Media.

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 is ongoing and can be:

- Verbal; name calling, teasing, abuse, putdowns, sarcasm, insults, threats
- Physical; hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting
- Social; ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating, making inappropriate gestures
- Psychological; spreading rumours, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions, malicious SMS and email messages, inappropriate use of camera phones.

# Responsibilities

## Parents and community members

- Support all 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 all 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.



## School Staff

- Respect and support all students involved.
- Model and promote appropriate behavior.
- 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

## Students

- Behave appropriately, respecting individual differences and diversity as outlined in the Anti-bullying Plan.
- Behave as responsible bystanders and digital citizens.
- Report incidents of bullying according to their school Anti-bullying Plan.

# Reporting Bullying

- Students are to report all incidents of bullying to a teacher immediately.
- Parents with concerns about bullying should contact the school immediately.
- All incidents are to be reported, taken seriously and dealt with by teachers, ***Assistant Principals** and the Principal (depending on the severity). These issues will be dealt with immediately or as soon as practically possible. In some cases minor incidents will be documented and dealt with if a pattern of behaviour emerges.
- Teachers will contact the parents of the student being bullied and the student doing the bullying immediately if a pattern of bullying behaviour is evident. All staff will be informed at weekly staff meetings so they can monitor students in all school settings.
- In the case of Cyber-bullying, the police may need to be contacted to make a report.
- From here the situation is managed as outlined in the 'Managing Bullying behaviour' section in this policy.

# Prevention

It is important that the school community address the underlying causes of bullying relating to school organisational issues, learning and teaching issues and relationship issues.

## Prevention strategies

- Stay in sight of peers and adults.
- Try to stay calm - walk away without looking back.
- Try to show you are not upset - practice this.
- Look at the person - try to speak in a strong voice.
- Say something like: 'You might think that, but I don't' or 'Why are you doing this?'
- Put your hand up and say, 'Stop!' in a loud voice.
- Use an 'I' message. Express your feelings in an assertive way. like 'I want you to stop or I don't like it'.
- Go to a safe place - with other children, COLA area, library or near a teacher.
- Talk to someone who can help you (a teacher or your parent). Tell them what has happened, how you feel and what they can do to help. This is not dobbing!
- Never keep bullying a secret.

# Early Intervention

Some students are identified as being at risk of bullying or developing long- term difficulties with social relationships. Some students are also identified as using bullying behaviour.

*Bully 'No Way' survey will be completed by students twice per year to help identify some of these students and problem areas.*

Support for these students will be  provided through:

- Referral to Learning Support Team
- Using social skills programs
- Using Social stories and role play situations
- Develop a plan of action on how to cope with situations
- Find things the students are good at and celebrate the successes
- Promote leadership within the school amongst the students
- Using Peer and Playground  Buddies as Peer Mediators

## Signs that your child may be being bullied:

- Dislike and avoidance of school
- Decline in academic performance and social interaction
- Gets into trouble more often at school
- Wants to be taken to school even though it is close
- Possessions are damaged or missing
- Becoming withdrawn, appearing depressed or anxious, having mood swings, crying for no apparent reason
- Unable to explain bruises or scratches
- Complaints of feeling unwell though parents report no specific illness
- Asks for, or steals, extra money
- Increased social exclusion and peer rejection
- Having less to do with friends
- Has bad dreams
- Sleeps badly
- Wets the bed
- Gets angry with brothers or sisters
- Uses put-down language when speaking about others
- Increased negative self-perception

## Signs that your child may be bullying others:

- Aggressive behaviour – both inside and outside the home  (teasing, threatening, hurting others)
- Difficult to manage
- Oversensitive – feels that everyone is out to get him/her
- Unhappiness
- Loses temper often
- Quietness or depression
- Decline in academic performance
- Disturbing stories about the child – from other students, their friends or other adults
- Sensing that other parents (whose children have contact with your child) are avoiding you, or hinting at things you don't know

# Managing Bullying Behaviour

- All students have the right to be heard and listened to.
- Class teacher deals with smaller issues in the classroom in line with the school's Behaviour Management Plan and individual class rules
- Class teacher refers matter to executive (Assistant Principal) if behaviour continues and bullying is suspected
- Teacher on playground duty deals with smaller issues in the playground – if more serious in nature the duty teacher records on the behavior monitoring sheet and passes on to Principal who documents and deals with the incident.
- Have discussions with the students involved – take appropriate action
- Parents contacted if the documented behaviour matches the definition of bullying
- Class teacher works with student to look at underlying problems and seek solutions
- Students who demonstrate bullying behaviour will need to take responsibility for their behaviour
- School Counsellor, Learning Support Team and Principal involved in individual programs if required
- Serious bullying incidents are recorded and consequences are in line with the School's Discipline Procedures. (see Seaham Student Welfare Policy)
- Issues are resolved in a calm manner with as much time as necessary given to hearing what each student feels and providing time and assistance to help students cope better
- Implement the Method of shared concern.

## Cyber Bullying

The school reserves the right to determine whether incidents of cyber bullying relate to the responsibility of the school. If determined the school has a role to play we will ensure each student is safe and arrange necessary support appropriate to each situation.

- Support from staff will be provided on an ongoing basis with the agreement of the student and parent to assist the student to work through the effects of the cyber bullying and to help them develop and implement effective coping strategies
- The student's parents will be contacted to alert them to the issue, any ongoing concerns regarding the welfare of the student, and discuss the issue and how best to deal with it
- 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 cyber bullying and, if possible, identify the students involved
- Implement appropriate responses to address the bullying as outlined in 'Managing Bullying Behaviour'
- Provide strategies to the student and their parent to assist with managing the issue like; not responding to any further messages/postings from the bully and, if possible, blocking further correspondence from them (block their mobile number or email address)
- 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)

- Request students and families keep school informed of any further cyber bullying attempt

If the student is distressed by bullying, the school will ensure the student is provided with options for psychological support including school counselling and the DEC Well Being Unit. The school will follow its established approach to incidents of bullying and student welfare.

# Additional Information

antibullying.nsw.gov.au

www.Bullying.NoWay

**Kids Helpline:** 1800 551 800

**Port Stephens Police:** Crime Prevention unit (02) 4983 7428

# School contact information

Seaham Public School

Still St, Seaham, 2324

Phone: (02) 49 886234

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Website: Home - Seaham Public School

# Principal's comment

The care, safety and welfare of each student is our upmost priority at Seaham Public School. As a school community we are committed to fostering a positive school environment in which every child is known and supported.

All members of our learning community have a right to learn, teach and interact in an environment based on respectful relationships.

We also have the responsibility to act to prevent bullying by taking appropriate actions as a student, staff member and parent in our school community.

Craig Partridge

Seaham Public School Principal

**\*Assistant Principals**

Infants (K - 2)   Mrs Oldfield

Primary (3 - 6)  Mr Eagleton

Anti Racism Contact Officer (ARCO) Mrs Bowman

*Parents can make contact with their relevant Assistant Principal through class dojo or by appointment or phone through the front office.*

*Concerns regarding racism will be forwarded to Mrs Bowman who will support the process.*

This policy is reviewed each year by the school policy team.

Next review: Term 3 2023