

Bullying of students – Prevention and Response Procedures

Charlestown Public School

Endorsed by Staff and P&C Association: March 2020

Next Review: March 2022

Policy Statement

At Charlestown Public School (CPS) we value respect and show tolerance of others in a safe and supportive environment. We foster positive relationships through strong welfare programs. As part of our school's Student Wellbeing Procedures, our Anti-Bullying Procedures aim to deal effectively with, and prevent incidences of, bullying.

Bullying is not acceptable in any form. Students and staff have the right to expect that they will be safe at school and spend each day free from the fear of bullying, harassment and intimidation. Teachers, staff, students, parents, carers and members of the wider community have a responsibility to work together to address bullying.

Definition

Bullying at school is a serious matter. Bullying behaviour has three key features. It involves the intentional misuse of power in a relationship. It is ongoing and repeated, and it involves behaviours that can cause harm. It is a complex issue involving repeated incidents where a person is hurt physically or emotionally by another person or by a group of people. Bullying involves the abuse of power in relationships. The assaults may be verbal, physical, social or psychological and may have long term effects. Bullying is difficult to detect as it usually happens out of sight and away from adults. Technology, including the internet and mobile phones, can also be used as instruments for bullying. This is known as Cyberbullying. Cyberbullying involves being cruel to others by sending or posting harmful material or engaging in other forms of social aggression using the internet or other digital technologies.

Forms of Cyberbullying include:

- Flaming: Online fights using electronic messages with angry or vulgar messages
- Harassment: Repeatedly sending nasty, mean and insulting messages
- Denigration: Posting or sending gossip or rumours about a person to damage his/her reputation or friendships
- Outing: Sharing someone's secrets or embarrassing information or images online
- Exclusion: Intentionally and cruelly excluding someone from an online group

- Cyberstalking: Repeated, intense harassment and denigration that includes threats or creates significant fear.

Parents are usually the first to identify that a problem exists. The NSW Department of Education requires all NSW public schools to have an Anti-Bullying Plan which details the strategies implemented to reduce student bullying behaviours.

Statement of Purpose

Students, staff, parents, caregivers and members of the wider Charlestown Public School community have a shared responsibility to:

- Promote positive relationships that respect and accept individual differences and diversity within the whole school community
- Actively work together to resolve incidents of bullying behaviours when they occur.

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

- Students have a responsibility to:
 - Behave appropriately, respecting individual differences and diversity
 - Follow the school rules
 - Respond to incidents of bullying according to the school Anti-Bullying Prevention and Response Procedures
 - Understand how bystanders and upstanders can positively impact on incidents of bullying and respond accordingly.
- Parents and carers have a responsibility to:
 - Support their children in all aspects of their learning
 - Be aware of the school Anti-Bullying Prevention and Response Procedures and assist their children in understanding bullying behaviour
 - Assist their children in developing effective responses to incidents of bullying consistent with the school Anti-Bullying Prevention and Response Procedures and Student Wellbeing Procedures
 - Support their children to deal effectively with bullying through the strategies of the Anti-Bullying Prevention and Response Procedures and Student Wellbeing Procedures
 - Notify the school when incidents of bullying are suspected. Reports of student bullying can be made to any staff member at a school. A teacher or school executive staff (such as the principal, deputy principal or assistant principal, head teacher) at the school will address the reported bullying in a timely manner. If a

student, parent or carer believes a matter is not being dealt with effectively, they can refer the matter to the school's principal (or delegate) for resolution. If the student, parent or carer still has concerns, after referring the matter to the school's principal (or delegate), and would like advice, they can contact the [Learning and Wellbeing Advisor or Officer](#) at the local departmental office. If the matter is then still not resolved they can contact the [Director Educational Leadership](#), at the local departmental office, who must follow the [Complaints Handling Policy](#).

- Discuss the Anti-Bullying contract with their children, sign it and return to school.
- The school has a responsibility to:
 - Create an atmosphere where students care for, and are interested in, each other and emphasise that bullying and/or harassment will not be tolerated
 - Develop an Anti-Bullying Plan and Anti-Bullying Prevention and Response Procedure that clearly identifies both the behaviours that are unacceptable and the strategies for dealing with bullying in the classroom and playground
 - Inform students, parents, carers and the community about the School Wellbeing Procedures and the Anti-Bullying Prevention and Response Procedures
 - Provide students with strategies to respond positively to incidents of bullying behaviour, including responsibilities as bystanders or observers
 - Provide parents, carers and students with clear information on strategies that promote appropriate behaviour, and the consequences for inappropriate behaviour
 - Follow up complaints of bullying, harassment and intimidation.
- Staff have a responsibility to
 - Support the school in maintaining a safe, inclusive and supportive learning environment
 - Model and promote appropriate relationships and behaviours
 - Promote a school culture where bullying is not acceptable
 - Teach students to identify, report and respond to bullying at school and online
 - Manage reports of bullying and escalate matters to the principal (or delegate) when necessary.

Managing Bullying

- Identifying bullying behaviours
 - Staff attend professional learning sessions to understand the behaviours that are unacceptable and how to deal with bullying

- Staff, students and parents are informed of the definition of bullying and how to identify unacceptable, bullying behaviour
- Executives regularly monitor playground and classroom behaviour records to identify possible bullying incidents and patterns of offence
- Strategies to deal with bullying behaviours
 - Address incidents of bullying quickly and effectively, on notification, using the school's discipline policy
 - Report incidents to a teacher as soon as possible
 - Promote 'bullying – no way' attitude through newsletters, assemblies, class lessons, etc
 - Teach social skills program/lessons K-6, emphasising that bullying is not acceptable
 - Follow flow chart on Page 12 of the CPS Student Wellbeing Procedures
 - Involve school counsellor via learning support team referral where appropriate
 - Review and improve use of playground and activities regularly
 - Ensure senior students 'buddying' kindergarten students are appropriately selected and trained to model appropriate behaviour
 - Encourage Student Executive input on bullying issues
 - The school to provide information sessions for parents
 - Source and provide appropriate teaching resources
 - Do not respond to bullying by reciprocating/mimicking bullying behaviours
- Procedures to report bullying
 - Students and parents are encouraged to report incidents of bullying to a teacher or assistant principal immediately
 - Staff, parents and carers work together on reported incidents.

Monitoring and Evaluating

- Review the procedures yearly to ensure everyone is aware of and committed to the processes and Anti-Bullying Plan and that they reflect the current needs and practices of the school.
- Collect and analyse data on the nature and extent of bullying and harassment in the school, eg surveys, classroom and playground records, suspension data, etc. Analysis by executive staff term by term. This will assist in the assessment of the effectiveness of the policy to address issues of bullying and harassment and in the promotion of a safe and secure environment.
- Revise the procedures, if necessary, after a review.

Resources

- Student Welfare Policy (NSW Department of Education and Training, 1996)
- Values in NSW Public Schools
- www.bullyingnoway.com.au
- www.det.nsw.edu.au/antibullying
- Child Protection Education: Curriculum materials to support teaching and learning in Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (1997-1998).
- Strategies for Safer Schools
- [Responding to Suggestions, Complaints and Allegations](#) (PD/2002/0051/V001)
- Revised Resources for Teaching Against Violence (NSW Department of Education and Training, 1995)
- Anti-Bullying: Best Practice in Schools (NSW Department of Education and Training, 2010)
- The Playground: Best Practice in Primary Schools (NSW Department of Education and Training, 1999)
- Countering Discrimination: Support materials for Schools (NSW Department of Education and Training, 2000)
- A Fair Go for All (NSW Department of Education and Training, 1996)
- Strategies for Safer Schools (NSW Department of Education and Training, 1995-1996)
- Code of Conduct (2015)

Strategies for students on how to deal with bullying behaviours:

- Report the incident to an adult immediately
- Stay in sight of peers and adults
- Try to stay calm. Practise keeping calm and walking away
- Try to show you are not upset. Practise 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?”
- Use an “I” message. Express your feelings in an assertive way, eg “I want you to stop” or “Please don’t do that, I don’t like it” or “I don’t like what you say/do. Please stop.”
- Walk away quietly without looking back
- Go to a safe place, eg with other children; near a teacher
- Talk to someone who can help you. Tell them what has happened, how you feel and what they can do to help. This is not “dobbing”!

- Use humour if appropriate.

Strategies for students on how to deal with Cyberbullying behaviours:

- Report all forms of Cyberbullying to parents or adults
- Click out of program
- Don't reply to it
- Don't delete the email, text message or posts.

Most people have experienced some kind of bullying at some time, so do not be ashamed to speak up. It is ok to tell.

Signs that your child may be being bullied:

- Dislikes school
- Lowered school performance
- Gets into trouble more often at school
- Wants to be taken to school even though it is close
- Takes the long way home or walking instead of catching the bus
- Possessions are damaged or missing
- Seems unhappy or depressed – cries easily and for no apparent reason
- Unable to explain bruises and scratches
- Complains of stomach ache to avoid school
- Asks for, or steals extra money
- Doesn't seem to have any friends
- Has bad dreams
- Sleeps badly
- Wets the bed
- Gets angry with brothers and sisters
- Sudden mood swings and outbursts of temper
- Uses put-down language when speaking about others.

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 everyone is out to get him/her
- Unhappiness
- Loses temper frequently
- Quietness or depression

- School work is suffering
- 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.

Bullying takes many forms. The following behaviours are examples of bullying:

Physical:

- Pushing/ shoving/hitting/ punching/kicking/spitting
- Throwing objects
- Taking others belongings/ stealing from others
- Damaging others belongings
- Intimidation – making someone do something against their will
- Group manipulation (Yes, you are in the group - no, you're not).

Verbal:

- Threatening
- Name calling/ teasing
- Swearing at others
- Ridicule (making fun) of another person because of their actions, appearance, physical characteristics or cultural background.

Indirect:

- Spreading rumours
- Excluding others
- Writing notes
- SMS messages/ email (Cyberbullying).