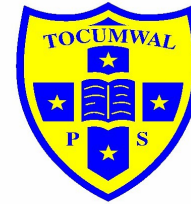




Education &
Communities

Anti-bullying Plan

School Name Tocumwal Public School



Work Together For Good

Reviewed Jan 2021





Bullying:

Preventing and Responding to Student Bullying in Schools Policy (2011)

The NSW Department of Education and Communities rejects all forms of bullying. No student, employee, parent, caregiver or community member should experience bullying within the learning or working environments of the Department.

Bullying

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.

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 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, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions, malicious SMS and email messages, inappropriate use of camera phones.

The term "bullying" has a specific meaning. The school's Anti-bullying Plan sets out **the processes for preventing and responding to student bullying**. The school has a range of policies and practices, including welfare and discipline policies that apply to student behaviour generally.

Schools exist in a society where incidents of bullying behaviour may occur. Preventing and responding to bullying behaviour in learning and working environments is a shared responsibility of all departmental staff, students, parents, caregivers and members of the wider school community.

School staff have a responsibility to:

- respect and support students
- model and promote appropriate behaviour
- 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.

In addition, teachers have a responsibility to:

- provide curriculum and pedagogy that supports students to develop an understanding of bullying and its impact on individuals and the broader community.

Students have a responsibility to:

- behave appropriately, respecting individual differences and diversity
- behave as responsible digital citizens
- follow the school Anti-bullying Plan
- behave as responsible bystanders
- report incidents of bullying according to their school Anti-bullying Plan.

Parents and caregivers have a responsibility to:

- support their 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 their 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.

All members of the school community have a responsibility to:

- model and promote positive relationships that respect and accept individual differences and diversity within the school community
- support the school's Anti-bullying Plan through words and actions
- work collaboratively with the school to resolve incidents of bullying when they occur.

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.

This Anti-bullying Plan was developed in consultation with the Principal, staff and members of the wider school community. The plan will be informally evaluated each year, reporting the effectiveness back to the community through the schools P&C. Every three years the plan will be formally reviewed.

Statement of purpose

Tocumwal Public School aims to provide a safe, secure and disciplined learning environment that is fair to all students; this includes self-acceptance and respect for others and the principles of social justice. Everyone at Tocumwal Public School has the right to experience positive respectful relationships. Students and staff also have the right to learn and teach in a happy and safe environment in which there is no room for bullying behaviours.

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

Protection

Bullying behaviours occur when there is an imbalance of power with deliberate intent to cause harm or distress. These behaviours are repeated or ongoing and can be physical, verbal, social or psychological. There are usually three parties who are involved with bullying behaviours: those doing the bullying, those being bullied and those who are looking on. All three parties have a role to play in stopping incidents of bullying occurring at school.

School Anti-bullying Plan – NSW Department of Education and Communities

The school is not responsible for bullying behaviour which occurs after hours and is unrelated to school. However, if this conduct becomes an issue at school where the safety and learning of students is impacted, the school's Anti-Bullying Plan will apply.

Bullying behaviours

Physical Bullying – Pushing, hitting, kicking, tripping, spitting, throwing objects

Verbal Bullying – name-calling, put-downs, racist or sexist remarks, threats, homophobic or gender based remarks, using emails, SMS or text messages to harass or threaten

Social Bullying – deliberate exclusion, ignoring, hiding, forcing others to act against their will

Psychological Bullying – spreading rumours, hiding others' belongings, giving dirty looks, stalking

Cyber Bullying – using social media, phone, computer and internet technologies to harass or threaten others

Responsibilities of the School Community

Bullying is anti-social. It has no place at Tocumwal Public School. It is the responsibility of every member of the school community to be pro-active in ensuring that bullying behaviour is rejected.

Teacher Responsibilities

All teachers are expected to:

- Model appropriate behaviour and act as role models for students in what they say and what they do in every class and in the playground
- Respect and support students in all aspects of their learning

- Ensure classes are safe places – free from ridicule and harassment and where possessions are not interfered with by others
- Be vigilant in the monitoring of bullying incidents and intervene in an appropriate and timely manner according to the Anti-Bullying Procedures (attached)
- Participate in an annual review of bullying, the Anti-Bullying Plan and discussion of strategies to deal with bullying

Student Responsibilities

All students are expected to:

- Behave appropriately, respecting individual differences and diversity
- Prevent bullying from happening wherever possible
- Report any instances of bullying they have witnessed at school to a parent, carer or teacher as soon as possible

All students are encouraged to:

- Stand up for the victim in an appropriate manner without fear of reprisal
- Understand the anti-social nature of bullying
- Actively participate in anti-bullying initiatives

Parent Responsibilities

All parents are encouraged to:

- Watch for signs of distress in their children
 - Change of eating habits
 - Torn clothing, unexplained bruises, cuts or scratches

The Anti-Bullying Plan – NSW Department of Education and Communities

- Nightmares, frequent headaches, stomach aches or pains
- Lost or damaged books or possessions
- Unwillingness to go to school, requests to be driven
- Unhappiness, symptoms of depression and/or anxiety
- Threats of suicide or self-harm
- A change of friendship groups in a short period of time

- Support their children by:

- Reading through the anti-bullying brochure with their child to help them understand bullying behaviours
- Listen to their child and investigate carefully
- Encourage their child to report bullying behaviours to their teachers
- Encourage their child to be assertive and say **NO** to bullying behaviours
- Encourage positive friendships
- Monitor their child's use of the internet.
- Monitor their child's access to age appropriate social media and their posts.

- Contact the Teacher or Principal to report incidents of bullying concerning their child, including repeat bullying
- Discourage bullying behaviours

Prevention

Tocumwal Public School aims to teach all staff and students about appropriate behaviours through anti-bullying programs targeted at whole school, year group, small group and individual levels.

Whole School Initiatives

- To raise awareness of bullying and bullying behaviours by issuing information to every family via the newsletter and school website each year.

- To regularly remind students at assembly about bullying behaviours and the consequences of such behaviours
- Monitoring of bullying behaviours
- Utilising the skills of the School Counsellor to work with small groups and individuals on building resilience and strategies.
- Kids Helpline VC for all year groups
- Annual Youth Liaison Police Officer Cyber Safety talks to individual year groups.

Anti-Bullying in Curriculum Areas

- Tocumwal Public School is currently implementing Blueearth, which systemically promotes anti-bullying behaviours.
- Subjects such as PD/H/PE through positive relationships program content, English through analysing texts and HSIE through cultural differences, discuss and teach anti-bullying behaviour.

Early Intervention

To ensure early intervention the school will continue to raise awareness and educate students and staff on anti-bullying behaviours.

The school encourages students, parents and staff to report any behaviours that indicate bullying and make them aware of how to do so appropriately so that situations can be diffused accordingly.

The school will continue to give ongoing support to students and their families who are experiencing or have experienced bullying.

The School Counsellor and Teachers along with the Principal and Learning Support Team will work together to monitor and support students who are perpetrators or victims of bullying.

Monitoring of related issues during staff meetings.

Other Community Help Services can be accessed by students, parents or staff to assist with support for students. These include:

- Kids Helpline – 1800 551 800 or www.kidshelpline.com.au
- Bullying No Way – www.bullyingnoway.com.au
- Local GPs and counseling services; Centacare, Intereach, Vinnies Services.

Response

Newsletter articles and website reminders that bullying at Tocumwal Public School is not tolerated.

The Anti-bullying Policy will be published annually in the school newsletters which are emailed (or printed) for all families.

Each year, all staff are reminded of their responsibilities regarding responding to bullying and the counseling staff of the school are offered professional learning in both counseling and mental health first aid.

Reports of bullying can be given directly to a member of staff or the Principal.

Supporting Students Affected by Bullying

When any student has been affected by, engaged in or witnessed bullying behavior the school will implement the following strategies;

Parents/carers will be notified via a phone call. The school will work closely with the family to ensure their child is and feels safe at school.

The students will continue to participate in whole school, year level or small group activities to assist in building positive relationships, be engaged in school and resilience.

Bounds of Privacy Legislation

When an incident of bullying has been reported to the school, regular updates may be provided to parents/caregivers via contact over the phone or an arranged meeting to discuss the management of reported bullying incidents, within the bounds of privacy legislation when necessary. Parents/care givers and students will be asked to contact the school if the bullying continues.

The discussion will only include details of their child affected by the situation and how the school is assisting to provide a safe environment for them. This ensures the confidentiality of other students and staff members is maintained.

Reporting to Police

Should an incident involve the physical assault of a student or member of staff, intimidation, harassment or involve physical threats of violence, the matter will be referred to the police via the schools Incident Report and Support Hotline.

Contact with the NSW Child Wellbeing Unit or Community Services

Where there is a threat of significant harm to a student, the Principal will consult the Mandatory Reporters Guide and the matter will be dealt with in accordance with DET Child Protection procedures.

Complaints Handling Policy

Should a parent believe the school has not acted in the best interests of their child in the resolution of bullying incidents, they may wish to express their concern. The following is a guideline for doing so.

It is best to discuss your concerns with your child's teacher first. Make an appropriate time to meet with them or phone the school and ask for an appointment with the teacher.

If you are not happy with the result, or if you do not feel it is appropriate to talk to them, phone and make an appointment to discuss your concerns with the principal.

If your complaint is about the principal you will need to contact the Director, Public Schools at Deniliquin. Ask the school office staff for their name and number.

If your complaint cannot be resolved in an informal way, the Director **may** ask you to put it in writing. It is important that you include specific details of the situation and tell the Director what you would like to happen as a result of your complaint. Help is available to put your complaint in writing, if required.

The complaint will then be investigated within a time frame of 48 hours and an attempt to resolve the issue informally following the Department of Education's Complaints Handling Policy.

Failure to resolve the complaint may see the Director, Public Schools conducting his own investigation and conducting a resolution meeting if necessary.

Identifying Patterns of Bullying

The school has a reporting process where staff can centrally report incidents of bullying. The teachers and Principal regularly monitor to gather data around bullying which they can then identify patterns of bullying.

The identified students may then be referred to the Learning Support Team where a case manager will be assigned to support or assist the student. Alternatively, a student identified as bullying may also be monitored both in class and in the playground according to the school welfare and discipline policy.

Publicising the Anti-Bullying Plan

This plan will be made available to the wider school community annually in the school newsletter.

It will be posted and updated on the schools website.

Students and staff will be reminded of the anti-bullying protocols via year meetings and staff meetings respectively throughout the year.

Evaluating the Anti-Bullying Plan

This plan will be evaluated on an ongoing basis as it is being implemented.

Information will be collected from collated journal entries and Learning Support Team minutes as well as student data from welfare staff; Student Support Officer and School Counsellor, which will identify the effectiveness of the plan.

A formal review of this policy will take place every three years and will involve parents, teachers and students.

Reporting the Effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Plan

A report on the Anti-bullying Plan will be given by the Principal to the P&C meeting in Term 3 of each year.

School Community Review

This policy will be reviewed formally by the community in Term 3 every third year as an agenda item in P&C and whole staff meetings. Any identified adjustments to the policy will be made by the Principal following these meetings.

Additional Information

Support Services Contact Information

Kids Helpline – 1800 551 800 or www.kidshelpline.com.au
Bullying No Way – www.bullyingnoway.com.au
Finley Centacare- 1300 619 379
Finley Community Health- 0358831133
Finley Intereach Hub- 03 5890 6200
Vinnies Services, Deniliquin- 0358817411
Accessline- 1800 800 944

Principal's comment

This plan was developed by the team listed below and was publicised in November, 2017. It is published on the school's website.

Anti-Bullying Plan Team

Darren White Principal
Nicole Laker Assistant Principal
Karen Andrews, SchoolCounsellor
Staff at Tocumwal Public School

School contact information

Tocumwal Public School
22 Morris Street
Tocumwal NSW 2714
Ph: 03 58742128
Fax: 03 58742281

