



# Yanchep Secondary College

## Guidelines for preventing and managing bullying

### Rationale

Bullying is a learned behaviour which is unacceptable. However, bullying behaviours can be changed. Yanchep Secondary College takes an educative approach to managing and preventing bullying. The school's processes and activities promote the development of the values and behaviours that create and maintain inclusive, safe and supportive education environments.

The outline of our vision for the school community in the school plan is:

Yanchep Secondary College is committed to providing an inclusive learning environment that maximises:

- Student engagement and achievement
- encourages and develops a sense of community and
- prepares students to enter the world who are socially aware and ready to make their mark on the world

Staff, parents and students at this school are committed to treating each other with care and respect and accepting individual differences.

All members of our school community are committed to ensuring a safe and supportive environment where all members have the right to be respected and have a responsibility to respect each other.

### Definitions

Yanchep Secondary College provides a clear definition of bullying to their school community and includes explanations of the concerning behaviours in the school plan:

*Bullying is an ongoing misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that causes physical and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power over one or more persons. Bullying can happen in person or online, and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert).*

Confirming if the behaviours were intentional is not required to implement the strategies for responding effectively. Young people involved in bullying are not always fully aware of the impact of their actions on others. It is more important to act as a result of the effects on the targeted individual immaterial of the determination of intent.

Bullying involves:

- **Verbal bullying:** The repeated use of words to hurt or humiliate another individual or group. Verbal bullying includes using put-downs, name-calling, insulting someone about the way they look or behave, spreading rumours, and homophobic, racist or sexist comments.
- **Social/relational bullying:** Involves repeatedly ostracising others by ignoring someone or keeping them out of conversations, convincing others to dislike or exclude an individual or group, spreading rumours, and sharing information or images that will have a harmful effect on the other person.
- **Physical bullying:** Includes violent actions towards another person which involves hitting, pinching, biting, pushing, pulling, shoving, damaging or stealing someone's belongings, and unwanted touching.
- **Cyberbullying:** Involves the use of technology to bully a person or group with the intent to hurt them socially, psychologically or even physically. Cyberbullying includes abusive texts and emails, hurtful messages, images or videos, imitating, excluding or humiliating others online, nasty online gossip and chat.
- **Bystanders:** Bystanders are those who are aware of, or witnesses to, the bullying situation. A supportive bystander will use words and/or actions to support someone who is being bullied by intervening, getting teacher support or comforting them. All members of a school community need to know how to support those who are being bullied and how to discourage bullying behaviours.

## **Terminology**

The Department of Education promotes the use of affirmative language that supports the values of the Western Australian Curriculum (i.e. Health and Physical Education curriculum).

The terms 'bullies' and 'victims' are not recommended as appropriate terminology to use when identifying, reporting, recording and responding to bullying incidents. It is important that bullying is seen as a behaviour. It is more appropriate to identify and label the unacceptable behaviour such as 'students who are bullied', 'students who bully others' and 'students who engage in bullying behaviour'. This will ensure that the unacceptable behaviours are addressed in a manner that supports the individuals involved to learn and demonstrate more acceptable social behaviours without the impact of enduring labels.

## **Rights and responsibilities of school community members**

Members of the Yanchep Secondary College school community have the right to expect that their school is safe and has supportive learning environments. This expectation comes with a shared responsibility by the whole-school community to prevent and effectively respond to behaviours that have the potential to affect school safety and wellbeing, including bullying.

Yanchep Secondary College is focused on ensuring all members of the school community have explicit knowledge of their responsibilities and support to develop the required skills to fulfil them. It is through each school community member fulfilling their responsibilities that the rights of all are supported. Focusing only on the rights of individuals or groups will not effectively contribute to this same goal.

The whole-school community includes students, staff, parents, caregivers and the wider community who interact within the school context.

## Rights and responsibilities of school community members

<b>MEMBERS</b>	<b>RIGHTS</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITIES</b>
<b>All students, teachers, parents, wider school community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• are safe and supported in the school environment</li> <li>• are included</li> <li>• are treated with respect</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• participate and contribute to school positive behaviour programs</li> <li>• build positive relationships</li> <li>• demonstrate respect and tolerance towards others</li> </ul>
<b>School leadership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is supported in developing the school's plan to prevent and effectively manage bullying</li> <li>• is supported in implementing the strategies and programs under the school's plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provides leadership in resourcing the school's plan</li> <li>• ensures the school community is informed of the plan</li> <li>• implements the plan</li> <li>• supports staff to implement the strategies and programs under the plan</li> </ul>
<b>Staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• feel safe and supported in the workplace</li> <li>• are informed of the school's plan on bullying</li> <li>• have access to professional learning in preventing and effectively managing bullying</li> <li>• have access to curriculum resources suitable for supporting students in building positive relationships, resiliency, safety and bullying prevention (including social/ emotional learning)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promote and model positive relationships</li> <li>• participate in developing the school plan</li> <li>• identify and respond to bullying incidents</li> <li>• deliver the strategies and programs to students in responding to bullying effectively</li> <li>• promote effective bystander behaviour</li> <li>• promote social problem-solving</li> <li>• use appropriate terminology when referring to bullying and the students involved</li> </ul>
<b>Students</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have access to curriculum that supports the building of resiliency and social skills</li> <li>• are informed of the school's plan on bullying</li> <li>• are provided with supports to stop bullying</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understand and value the concepts of inclusion and tolerance</li> <li>• identify and respond effectively to bullying</li> <li>• are aware of themselves as bystanders</li> <li>• seek help for themselves and others as needed</li> </ul>
<b>Parents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• are treated with respect</li> <li>• are confident their children are provided with a safe and supportive school environment</li> <li>• are provided with access to information on the prevention and management of bullying</li> <li>• are informed of the school's plan and opportunities to participate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• support and encourage children to treat others with respect and tolerance</li> <li>• act in accordance with the school plan if they observe/ know about bullying</li> <li>• encourage children to report bullying incidents</li> <li>• work effectively with the school in responding to bullying</li> </ul>
<b>Wider community: including other professionals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• are strategically included in prevention and bullying management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide support and input into the school's approach to preventing and managing bullying</li> </ul>

## School strategies to prevent and manage bullying

The Yanchep Secondary College policy relating to student wellbeing and safety is the foundation for effective practices to counter bullying. All Schools are required to outline clear procedures, strategies and programs for preventing and responding to bullying. Schools can adopt a number of strategies and approaches (i.e. whole-school prevention and targeted early intervention and intervention for bullying incidents) to foster a positive school climate and a safe environment for everyone. Bullying. No Way! has developed a decision-making tool called Steps to Examine Programs and Approaches in Schools (STEPS) to guide schools to select appropriate and evidence-based bullying prevention programs and approaches.

Ongoing and collaborative planning, monitoring and reviewing of the school's processes, strategies and programs will ensure that schools are ready to respond effectively. This includes:

- setting a timeline for review and updating;
- using appropriate assessment tools to identify bullying issues and the school's progress towards achievement targets (snap-shot measures);
- collaborating and linking with all key stakeholders of the school community;
- using existing data to monitor changes over time (longitudinal measures);
- making adjustments to the selected strategies and programs based on the data;
- reviewing available resources (including human resources) to ensure that the approaches and strategies are suitable, accessible and sustainable; and
- communicating any changes to the whole-school community.

## Whole-school prevention strategies

Whole-school practices and approaches include:

- promote a whole-school student support approach with shared leadership;
- promote collaborative relationships between the school, parents and the wider community on developing and implementing school-based strategies and programs with students;
- develop a positive whole-school plan based on the teaching and recognition of respectful and prosocial behaviour;
- develop active, trusting relationships within the whole school community;
- establish a skilled resourced student support team;
- provide professional learning for staff and parents in identifying, preventing and addressing bullying;
- implement a whole-school social competency development curriculum;
- utilise frameworks from Mind Matters, Kids Matter Primary, Friendly Schools and *Bullying. No Way!*;
- implement developmental, evidence-based social emotional learning programs such as *Friendly Schools Plus*, *Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS™)*, and *Aussie Optimism* to develop shared understanding of:
  - o what behaviours constitute bullying;
  - o the impact of bullying;
  - o safe and supportive bystander responses; o positive social problem solving skills;
  - o promote a school culture that seeks to be proactive and restore relationships affected by persistent or unresolved conflict;
  - o promote positive staff role modelling; and
  - o ensure the plans or policies are monitored, reviewed and refined regularly and collaboratively.

Preventative classroom strategies can include:

- develop supportive and inclusive classroom environments;
- implement teaching and classroom management strategies that teach and encourage positive behaviours, and address negative behaviours effectively;
- implement teaching and learning programs to develop positive communication, empathy, tolerance, assertiveness, social and coping skills;
- promote the use of cooperative learning strategies;
- encourage and support help-seeking and positive bystander behaviour;
- utilise social problem-solving approaches to resolve peer-based conflicts; and
- Implementing strategies from resources such as Cyber Savvy and the Office of the eSafety Commissioner to promote cyber safety and positive digital citizenship.

Playground strategies to be considered could include:

- coordinate a highly visible and active approach to playground supervision;
- implement identification of and supervision adjustments to high-risk situations and settings;
- offer a range of organised activities during break times that encourage positive peer relations and networks;
- provide developmentally appropriate unstructured playground activities and equipment for all students;
- recognise and reinforce positive playground and pro-social behaviour; and
- develop and communicate whole-school processes for responding to playground issues.

### **Targeted early intervention strategies**

Effective schools identify and respond to bullying behaviours early. Early identification and effective responses reduce the associated risks and potential long-term harms caused by bullying.

Targeted early intervention strategies include:

- raise awareness and plan around specific forms of bullying, such as cyberbullying and racism;
- identify and target early signs of problematic peer relationship issues within the school community;
- identify individuals and groups at risk that require targeted programs;
- teach effective bystander behaviour to targeted groups or for specific situations;
- teach pro-social behaviour to identified students and groups;
- provide high supervision areas for students with higher support needs;
- provide effective options for individual students experiencing safety issues (such as buddy systems, alternative play areas and transition routines);
- provide access to specialist/pastoral care staff and case management processes for students at risk of being targeted or those who demonstrate bullying behaviour; and
- promote the inclusion of parents of students at risk in identifying and addressing bullying behaviours that may be occurring within the community.

## Intervention for bullying incidents

Schools provide clearly articulated procedures for responding to incidents of bullying:

- staff are provided with the support and training to confidently manage bullying situations as they occur;
- staff, students and parents have processes for reporting incidents of bullying or when they become aware that a student needs support because of bullying;
- intervention practices that resolve conflicts, restore relationships, and promote tolerance and social problem-solving are used for responding to bullying incidents;
- there are processes for recording and monitoring bullying incidents and interventions;
- students who are being bullied are provided with supports to promote recovery and resilience; and
- case management of students involved in persistent bullying is implemented.

Intervention approaches include:

- the method of shared concern;
- group support approach (formerly referred to as the 'no blame approach');
- social problem-solving approaches;
- community conferences;
- small group and individual conferences;
- motivational interviewing;
- cooperation circles;
- Bullying First-Aid - teacher response/interview; and
- Co-LATE Model - teacher interview process from Friendly Schools Plus.

School psychologists can assist schools in implementing whole-school approaches in preventing and managing bullying.

NOTE: Refer to the Student Behaviour policy and procedures in situations which have resulted in significant harm or where violence has occurred.

## Resources

The following websites represent examples of some of the online resources available that may inform schools in planning whole-school prevention and management approaches. Many have links to other valuable resources.

- <https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/> – Safe and Supportive School Communities (SSSC) Project; Queensland Department of Education, Training and Employment on behalf of the Australian Education Authorities (2018)
- <https://www.esafety.gov.au/> – Office of the eSafety Commissioner; Australian Government
- <http://cybersavvy.com.au/> – Cyber Savvy; Telethon Kids Institute
- <https://studentwellbeinghub.edu.au/> – The Student Wellbeing Hub; Federal Government Department of Education and Training (2017)
- [www.friendlyschools.com.au](http://www.friendlyschools.com.au) – Friendly Schools Plus (2012); Child Health Promotion Research Centre, Edith Cowen University
- <https://www.kidsmatter.edu.au/> – KidsMatter; Australian Government Department of Health
- <https://www.mindmatters.edu.au/> – MindMatters; Australian Government Department of Health
- <http://thinkuknow.org.au/> – ThinkUKnow Australia; Australian Federal Police (AFP)