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.

Statement of purpose

At Millfield Public School 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 Welfare and Discipline Policy, our Anti-Bullying Policy aims to deal effectively with and prevent incidences of bullying. Part of this strategy also aims at building resilience in students so that simple issues can be dealt with or ignored before building into a major issue.

Protection

Bullying is defined as deliberately hurting, threatening or intimidating another person. What is bullying for one person may not be the same for another.

Bullying may take one of the following forms, or a combination.

**Physical:**

*Repeated or targeted incidences of:*

- Pushing/shoving
- Hitting/punching
- Kicking
- Throwing objects
- Taking others belongings/stealing from others
- Damaging others belongings

- Spitting at others
- Intimidation – making someone do something against their will.
- Tripping, pinching.
- Others form’s of inappropriate physical contact.

**Verbal:**

*Repeated or targeted incidences of:*

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

**Social:**

*Repeated or targeted incidences of:*

- Spreading rumours
- Excluding others
- Ignoring others
- Alienation
- Writing notes

**Cyber:**

*Repeated or targeted incidences of:*

- SMS messages/email
- Camera Phones
- Social Networking
- Websites

Prevention
Millfield Public School aims to decrease the incidence of bullying behaviours through a range of strategies.

These include:
- Raising the school community’s awareness of bullying
- Outlining the responsibilities of students, parents and staff in reducing bullying.
- Empowering students with strategies for resolving conflict in a non-threatening way.
- Promoting a culture of positive behaviour and citizenship through the implementation of Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL).

The following strategies are integral parts of our overall Student Welfare Program. Our Anti-Bullying initiatives should be viewed within the context and not seen as a ‘stand alone’ policy.
- School Positive Behaviour for Learning signage
- Promotion of School Values – Safety, Respect and Responsibility
- Planning Room for students demonstrating undesirable behaviours
- Time out/Buddy class
- Resilience training (Rock and Water Program)
- Suspension Policy
- School Discipline Policy
- Positive Behaviour rewards
- Individual Student Behaviour Plans
- Modification Programs
- School Counsellor Visits
- Non Violent Crisis Intervention Training for Staff
- Learning Support Team
- Weekly student welfare discussion at staff forum
- Student behaviour data collection and review

As a staff and school community we have a responsibility to take positive and consistent actions to deal effectively with bullying.

Staff responsibilities:
- To model appropriate behaviour at all times.

Parent responsibilities:
- To support the school’s Anti-Bullying Policy
- To take an active role in their child’s school life and watch for signs that their child may be being bullied.
- To encourage their child to adopt learnt strategies to deal with bullying
- To instruct their child to “tell” if they are bullied.
- To inform the school if any bullying is suspected

It is not appropriate for parents to take issues into their own hands. Millfield Public School always conducts thorough investigations of reported incidents to ensure both parties are given equal chance to explain the situation. Under no circumstances are parents to confront other students who they suspect have been bullying their child.

Student responsibilities:
- To show respect, consideration and support of others in line with the school’s welfare and behaviour policy
- To “tell” if they are being bullied or if they see someone being bullied – both at school and on the way to and from school
- To attempt to use learnt strategies to deal with bullying incidents

Response

School

When a bullying incident is reported or observed, the school will:
1. Have discussions with the students involved to determine the actions and/or consequences needed.
2. Take appropriate action e.g. detention, time-out in the classroom, Blue/Red face
3. Report to parents of major bullying incidences
4. Possible suspension

Incidents of bullying will be monitored on an ongoing basis. Students who have been identified as demonstrating behaviours classed as bullying participate in a range of strategies to promote more positive behaviours.

Student Welfare Programs will be evaluated annually to ensure they remain best practice.

Parents will be updated on bullying incidents where appropriate, although specifics of other students including the plans or consequences for those may not be given to protect student privacy.

**Parents**

*Parents are always welcome to discuss any concerns with the school.*

**If you suspect your child is being bullied.**

*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

**Suggested Strategies**

**Strategies for students on how to deal with bullying behaviours:**
- 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 e.g. “I want you to stop” or “Please don’t do that, I don’t like it”
- Walk away quietly without looking back.
- Go to a safe place e.g. 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.
- Parents should also contact the school or child’s teacher to discuss their concerns or to find out more information about the incident.

**Are you worried that your child may be bullying others**

**Signs that your child may be bullying others:**
- Aggressive behaviour – both inside and outside the home (teasing, threatening, hurt ing 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.

**Suggested strategies**

Tell your child that you have noticed that they have not been themselves and is there anything you can do to help.

Talk to your child’s teacher to see if they have noticed similar concerns or have any strategies that may help your child.

**Incidents involving assaults, threats, intimidation or harassment of students or staff by parents will referred to police under the procedures consistent with DN10/00225 – Reporting incidents involving assaults, threats, intimidation or harassment and the Incident Reporting Policy.**

The School’s Anti-Bullying Plan and Welfare policies are communicated through the school’s Website or by asking for a hard copy from the school office.

The effectiveness of the school’s Anti-Bullying plan will be reported as part of the school’s Annual Review which is available by accessing the Annual School Report on the school website. The school will review this plan on a 3 year cycle, involving staff and the school’s P&C.

Parents who are not satisfied with the resolution of bullying issues should follow the DEC Complaint Handling Procedures that can be found on the DEC website.

**Additional Information**

**Bullying No Way!**  
www.bullyingnoway.com.au

**Mindmatters**  

**Kidsmatter**  
http://www.kidsmatter.edu.au/

**National Coalition Against Bullying**  
www.ncab.org.au
Refer to the Support Materials  
Checklist for further information about useful resources and websites

**Principal’s comment**

Millfield Public School endeavors to ensure all students feel safe and supported in the school environment. Our school implements a wide range of strategies such as those listed in this document to promote positive behaviour at all times. Please feel free to contact me with any concerns regarding your child while at Millfield Public School.

Scott Anderson - Principal

**School contact information**

Millfield Public School  
105 Wollombi Road, Millfield 2325  
Ph: 49981331  
Email: Millfield-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au  
Web: www.millfield-p.schools.nsw.edu.au

**To be Reviewed 2016**