

## MPS Anti-bullying Guidelines – 2023

### **Our school anti-bullying plan**

The Minnamurra Public School Anti-Bullying Guidelines have been created to provide understanding to staff, students and the community about whole school procedures regarding the wellbeing and safety of students at our school. These guidelines outline 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.

### **Definition**

Bullying has three main features – it:

- involves a misuse of power in a relationship
- is ongoing and repeated, and
- involves behaviours that can cause harm.

Bullying can happen in person or online, and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying can have a lasting impact on everyone involved, including those who witness it. That is why it is important to work together to create safe school communities for everyone.

Some behaviours, while not bullying, are conflicts that still need to be addressed and resolved. Examples include:

- mutual arguments and disagreements (where there is no power imbalance)
- not liking someone or a single act of social rejection
- one-off acts of meanness or spite
- isolated incidents of aggression, intimidation or violence.

### **Statement of Purpose**

The NSW Education Standards Authority's Statement of Equity Principles acknowledges that students come from diverse cultural, linguistic, social, economic, geographic, religious and family backgrounds. A supportive and connected school culture is respectful of diversity. It helps all members of the school community feel connected, welcomed and valued. These include Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, students with disabilities and students with language backgrounds other than English. It also includes students from communities with low socio-economic status, students from rural and remote areas, refugees, those at risk of disengaging from school and students who can be disadvantaged by various forms of gender stereotyping.

A strong focus on building a positive school culture that both respects and values difference is an essential feature of effective anti-bullying strategies.

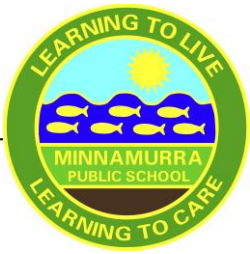
Minnamurra Public School provides a multi-faceted, positive approach to teaching and learning with regards to student wellbeing, safety and protective behaviours. This includes the Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) framework. School staff support by developing inclusive whole-school practices, and by modelling and explicitly teaching pro-social values and expectations.

This positive school culture is a key factor in preventing bullying. Bullying is less likely in a climate that actively promotes positive, caring relationships among students and staff and between the school and home. It is also less likely when aggressive or disrespectful behaviour is not tolerated.

### **Responsibility**

Principals (or their delegate):

- complete and implement the [Anti-bullying Plan](#) for their school
- maintain a positive school climate that includes respectful relationships
- identify patterns of bullying behaviour and initiate school action to respond



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- manage complaints about bullying in accordance with the [Complaints Handling Policy](#).

## Teachers:

- 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.

## 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.

## Non-teaching staff:

- refer any report of bullying to a teacher or school executive staff.

## Students:

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

## Parents and caregivers:

- support their children to become responsible and respectful citizens and to develop responsible on-line 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:

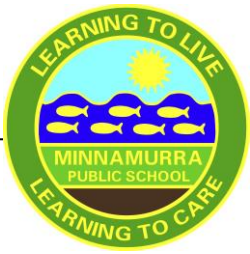
- model and promote positive relationships that respect and accept individual differences and diversity within the school community.
- support the school's Anti-bullying Plan through words and actions.
- work collaboratively with the school to resolve incidents of bullying when they occur.

## Protection

All stakeholders of Minnamurra Public School, parents, students and staff are bound by a zero tolerance of bullying or anti-social behaviour. This includes verbal, physical, relational, and cyber bullying.

Preventive actions the school will take include:

- establishing clear, whole-school behavioural expectations
- utilising the school PBL Team and Learning and Support Team to oversee school safety and wellbeing initiatives planning, teaching and evaluating strategic, positive education programs that empower students to protect themselves and others as well as build self esteem
- responding to, and providing a positive outcome process for, incidents of anti-social or bullying behaviours.



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Families are the first educators of their children and have a key influence on their child's learning and development. Schools also have an important responsibility in teaching and shaping the lives of young people. This is why it is important for families and schools to work together in partnership.

If your child discloses information to you that you consider to be intimidating or anti-social, please contact the school and make an appointment to discuss the issue. Please do not directly approach any other student or their family.

## Prevention

A safe and supportive school is one that promotes, recognizes and acknowledges positive student behaviour and has systems to support student safety. School leaders, teachers and families can all contribute to supporting positive behaviour of students inside and outside the classroom.

Minnamurra Public School has implemented an effective whole-school approach that provides a framework to support positive behaviour for all students, for groups of students or individual students who require more intensive and individualised support.

A key feature of positive behaviour support in relation to anti-bullying is the explicit teaching and reinforcement of positive behavioural expectations and actions across all school contexts and to all members of the school community.

Minnamurra P.S whole school approaches include:

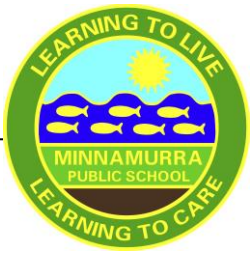
- Student Learning and Support Team
- Positive Behaviour for Learning framework
- NSW Department of Education Personal Development Curriculum
- Our community supported Kindness Awards
- Aboriginal Education
- Life Education Van
- Anti-bullying plan professional learning for staff
- Parent/teacher interviews
- Involvement of Police Youth Liaison Officers

Individual and small group approaches include:

- Student leadership guidelines
- School Counsellor referrals
- Alternate play programs
- Individual Risk Assessments and Behaviour Support Plans

## Early Intervention

Early intervention and targeted support are essential elements in building and maintaining a safe environment. Identifying 'at risk' students is the first step to developing strategies and processes that provide ongoing support to these students and their families.



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Minnamurra Public School has developed a positive approach to student wellbeing. Early intervention at Minnamurra Public School includes creating and implementing skill development for students identified as being at risk of long-term difficulties with social relationships, and students who previously experienced bullying or engaged in bullying behaviour.

Staff professional learning builds the capacity of educators to identify opportunities for early intervention. It also helps staff respond effectively with appropriate approaches and strategies. Interventions include follow up support and monitoring of individual students and families who would benefit from additional support.

**We teach bystanders to be upstanders. Bystanders contribute to the problem. Upstanders can stop the problem.**

Bullying often happens in the presence of witnesses (or bystanders) who can play a key role in influencing bullying behaviour. Four distinct bystander roles have been identified:

- Reinforcer** - encourages the bullying by laughing and cheering
- Assistant** - actively supports the bullying by doing things such as blocking exits
- Outsider** - silent observation that could be interpreted as approval
- Defender** - active support for the person being bullied, also called upstander.

Research shows that others speaking out or taking action can stop bullying behaviour. Becoming an upstander is about moving from silence to action - doing something that prevents or reduces the observed bullying or coming to the aid of another child who is the recipient of bullying behaviour.

If it is safe to do so, students can become upstanders by:

- speaking out and telling the bully to stop
- distracting the bully by refocusing attention away from the person being bullied
- reporting to a teacher who can help.

## **Response**

Preventing and responding to bullying behaviour is a shared responsibility between all staff, students, parents, caregivers and the wider society. All members of the school community contribute to the prevention of bullying by modelling appropriate behaviour and respectful relationships.

Partnerships with families and community organisations can help to create a consistent and supportive approach to student safety and wellbeing.

## **What will happen when a report of bullying is made by any member of the school community?**

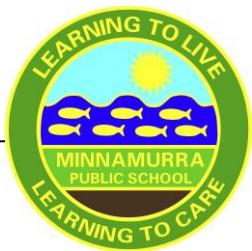
**Timeframe: approximately 48 hour turnaround**

### **1. Acknowledgement of the report**

Acknowledgement of the report will happen as soon as possible. This can be done in person, by telephone, email or in writing. This information is documented on the school system.

The school will talk privately with the reporter about the issue. The conversation will be about the person exhibiting bullying behaviour and the recipient of bullying behaviour. If criminal activity is discussed, the school will contact the police. We will then:

- listen carefully to the issues
- keep the matter as confidential as possible by only sharing information with those who need to know about the complaint issues
- let the reporter know that they will be kept up to date with progress and help is available



## **2. Assessment**

The report will be documented and then presented to the reporter to clarify and confirm the details are correct. The nature of the report is agreed upon. The reporter's expected and desired outcome of the report is clarified.

A plan of action is developed with the reporter and the family. This could include supporting them to:

- not retaliate or respond to the person who bullied them
- monitor relationships carefully in all environments
- engage in check-in systems
- engage with their safety network
- block the person who engaged in the bullying or 'unfriend them' to stop the bullying
- change privacy and security settings on their social media accounts
- report all bullying

## **3. Gather information**

To allow a proper assessment of the report as quickly as possible, the information gathered could include;

- copies of school student records
- copies of previous reports
- information and/or accounts from students, staff, school community
- further information from reporters
- screenshots of relevant material
- records of URLs or web addresses of the material

Relevant school personnel are notified of the matter. This could be the school principal or school executive/teacher. The information collected is provided.

Discussions of a planned approach to work through the matter, including the responsibilities of the teacher, the school executive, the student and their parents or carers then occurs.

## **4. Resolve**

The school will communicate the progress of the report. Stakeholders will be informed if a delay is anticipated.

Information of the outcome of the report will then be provided to those concerned.

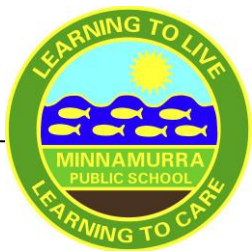
## **5. Record keeping and actions**

- Contacts with the reporter, management and the outcome of the report and actions taken are recorded on the school system. Steps are taken to follow up outcomes and to implement programs, plans and procedures to prevent further bullying behaviour.
- Parents or carers/staff are contacted about the incident and a discussion of a planned approach occurs.
- Assistance is given to the student or their family to contact social media platforms to have content removed if this has not already been done.
- The school responds to others involved in the bullying. Consideration is given to what actions and support needs to be provided to all parties involved in the bullying. Documentation of the chosen approach will be completed. Accurate records can assist in identifying patterns of behaviour and effective support strategies.
- Students/staff/community are encouraged to report any future incidents if they occur.
- Follow up meetings are scheduled with all students and staff over the following weeks and months.
- Prevention of further bullying can require a sustained effort, particularly if situations are long standing.

## **6. Follow up**

Minnamurra Public School welcomes parent/carer collaboration to work together to address any concerns regarding bullying or anti-social behaviour. Minnamurra Public School will respond to incidents and maintain a positive climate of respectful relationships by utilising the following principles:

1. All families and schools want the best for their children.



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2. All children have the right to the opportunity to reach their full potential.
3. Families are the first and continuing educators of their children.
4. Effective schools provide a nurturing and supportive learning environment.
5. Families and schools value quality teaching and respect teachers' professional expertise.
6. Families and schools value the diversity of families and use this as a resource for building partnerships and communities.
7. Family-school partnerships are based on mutual responsibility, respect and trust.
8. Leadership is critical to building, maintaining and renewing partnerships.
9. Family-school partnerships improve student motivation and learning.
10. Family-school partnerships strengthen the connections between schools and their communities.
11. Partnerships can involve all organisations that support families and schools.

Any response to an identified incident by a student, teacher, parent/carer or community member at Minnamurra Public School will be treated with the highest integrity and confidence. Staff will be required to investigate, without prejudice, and provide feedback to students and/or family members within a reasonable timeframe. This may be instantaneous, or require up to several days.

Staff may refer to and use supporting NSW Department of Education Legislation and/or support faculties including, but not limited to:

- ☐ Complaints Handling Policy
- ☐ Work Health and Safety Policy
- ☐ Legal Issues Bulletins
- ☐ The Child Wellbeing Unit
- ☐ Family and Community Services
- ☐ Safety and Security Directorate
- ☐ Media and Legal Directorate
- ☐ Lake Illawarra Police
- ☐ Inclosed Lands Protection Act (1901)
- ☐ Student Discipline in Government Schools - Suspension and Expulsion Policy

## Principal's comment

School leaders work to establish approaches and procedures that promote a positive school climate in which bullying is less likely to occur.

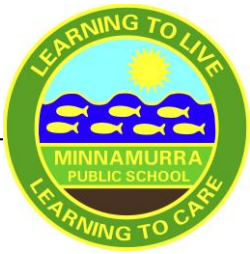
The Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians (2008) states, 'Schools play a vital role in promoting the intellectual, physical, social, emotional, moral, spiritual and aesthetic development and wellbeing of young Australians, and in ensuring the nation's ongoing economic prosperity and social cohesion. Schools share this responsibility with students, parents, carers, families, the community, business and other education and training providers.'

Wellbeing contributes significantly to the learning and life outcomes of children and young people. Wellbeing is associated with better student outcomes from academic achievement to better mental health, and making responsible life choices.

Leadership commitment is integral to the safety and wellbeing of the school community. School leaders work to establish approaches and procedures that ensure a safe and supportive learning community.

Effective leaders promote a positive school culture where bullying is less likely to occur through:

- creating clear expectations of desirable school relationships and appropriate behaviour
- using data to inform decision making
- having high expectations of students, both academically and socially



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- collaborating with school community members to implement immediate and fair consequences for both appropriate and inappropriate behaviour
- providing support for students so they can develop positive relationships and manage conflict
- regular monitoring and review of anti-bullying approaches and strategies
- promptly following up when bullying behaviour does occur.