



Education &  
Communities

# Anti-bullying Plan

Deniliquin North Public School



# Deniliquin North Public 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.

The NSW Department of Education 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.

In creating this Anti-Bullying Plan, all members of the school community have been consulted. Student feedback was collected through representative focus groups and class discussions, parents and community members' input was sought and provided, and staff feedback was also collected.

This plan will be reviewed by representatives from the school community: staff, parents/community, and students, every three years.

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## 1. Statement of purpose

The Deniliquin North Public School Anti-Bullying Plan provides clear definitions for understanding bullying behaviour, and the processes for preventing and responding to bullying. The purpose of this plan is to outline the provision of a safe and respectful learning environment for DNPS students, where bullying is not accepted, and clearly explain the schools response if bullying does occur. We recognise that bullying may occur based on sexuality, religion, race, or other factors, and we will respond accordingly.

The DNPS school community believes that a safe and respectful school community, where all students have the opportunity to learn to their potential, is founded on positive relationships, where bullying is not accepted. This Anti-Bullying Plan is founded on the principle that all members of our school community have a responsibility to:

- be aware of what constitutes bullying behaviour
- prevent bullying by promoting positive relationships and anti-bullying messages
- report bullying when it occurs
- respond to bullying according to this plan

Deniliquin North Public School will provide a positive culture where bullying is not accepted. In alignment with our school welfare framework, all members of the school community will have the right to respect from others, the right to learn or teach, and the right to feel safe and secure in the school environment.

At DNPS we take a whole-school approach to anti-bullying, and are focused on developing a supportive school culture that includes effective behaviour management plans and programs, and a positive learning environment that encourages diversity and empowers students to be active in their pursuit of justice for themselves and others.

## Aims of the DNPS Anti-Bullying Plan:

- To reduce incidents of bullying at DNPS by promoting a zero tolerance approach to bullying
- To identify bullying when it occurs, and respond to it effectively
- To ensure that all members of the school community are aware that bullying is unacceptable and to seek support and cooperation from all school community members to ensure that the Anti-Bullying Plan is implemented effectively
- To ensure that the school community is aware of what constitutes bullying behaviour, and the signs and evidence of bullying
- To ensure that the school community is aware of their responsibility to report bullying: by students, parents and staff
- To empower victims and bystanders to speak up and report bullying behaviour
- To outline the positive protections provided by the school to create a safe, respectful learning environment, and develop resilience in students
- To outline the educational and welfare programs that are in place to prevent bullying
- To outline the early intervention prevention programs to support students at risk of involvement in bullying incidents
- To outline the clear processes that are in place for responding to incidents of bullying – student welfare and discipline response
- To outline the behaviour and support programs provided for students who have been involved in bullying incidents

## 2. Protection

### Bullying Behaviour

A person is bullied when one or more other people expose them regularly and over time to negative or harmful actions. Bullies are people who deliberately set out to intimidate, exclude, threaten, and/or hurt others repeatedly with an abuse of power in a relationship.

Bullying is a clear form of harassment. Harassment is behaviour that is intended to disturb or upset, and it is characteristically repetitive. We define repetitive behaviour as behaviour that occurs more than once.

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. Cyberbullying 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.

Cyberbullying refers to bullying through information and communication technologies, using, but not limited to, SMS, pictures, sounds, video, emails, instant messaging, chat, and other forms of social media, such as Facebook, Snapchat, Twitter and Instagram.

Bullying behaviour can be:

- **verbal** – eg name calling, teasing, abuse, put-downs, sarcasm, insults, threats
- **physical** – eg touching, hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting

- **social** – eg ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating, making inappropriate gestures
- **psychological** – eg spreading rumours, dirty looks, hiding, interfering with or damaging possessions, threatening or extorting in relation to money, school work, possessions or safety
- **technological** – eg abuse on social media, malicious SMS, email, or chat messages, taking and sharing photos of others without their permission

The effect of bullying is such that it:

- Devalues, isolates and frightens
- Affects an individual's ability to achieve
- Has negative mental health and wellbeing impacts on individuals engaging in bullying behaviour, individuals who are the subjects of bullying behaviour, and onlookers or bystanders.
- Can lead to anxiety, depression, and suicide

Conflict or fights between equals or single incidents are not defined as bullying. These incidents will be dealt with according to the DNPS Welfare and Discipline Policy.

## Approach to bullying at DNPS

Bullying behaviour is not accepted at Deniliquin North Public School. The school will adopt a four-phase approach to bullying:

### 1. Protection:

DNPS has a clear Anti-Bullying Plan, developed in consultation with staff, students, and parents. All stakeholders have a shared responsibility in protecting students from bullying. DNPS has a whole-school emphasis on developing a positive learning environment, characterised by respect, through the Second Step framework.

Students are further supported, through welfare programs, to develop resilience and positive mental health and wellbeing.

### 2. Prevention:

DNPS provides programs to recognise the value of diversity, the importance of positive and respectful relationships, the negative impacts of violence and aggression, and the harmful impacts of bullying behaviour. Prevention programs are delivered as part of the curriculum across KLAs and to students through student welfare programs.

### 3. Early intervention:

DNPS implements strategies and programs for students who are identified as being at risk of developing long-term difficulties with social relationships and those students who are identified at or after enrolment as having previously experienced bullying, or engaged in bullying behaviour.

### 4. Response

DNPS has a clear plan to respond to incidents of bullying. The Anti-Bullying Plan empowers the whole school community to recognise and respond appropriately to bullying, harassment and victimisation and behave as responsible bystanders. Welfare and discipline strategies will be implemented as part of this plan.

## **A shared approach to dealing with bullying**

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.

All members of the school community contribute to the prevention of bullying by modelling and promoting appropriate behaviour and respectful relationships.

### **Staff responsibilities:**

- respect and support students
- model and promote appropriate behaviour
- support students to become resilient
- have knowledge of school and departmental policies relating to bullying behaviour
- communicate the school policy and Anti-Bullying Plan to students, including definitions and repercussions of bullying
- respond in a timely manner to incidents of bullying according to the school's Anti-bullying Plan
- ensure open lines of communication between home and school to respond to bullying situations if they arise.

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, including digital safety.
- be aware of where anti-bullying messages are taught in the curriculum
- identify signs of bullying in all school environments

### **Student responsibilities:**

- behave appropriately, respecting individual differences and diversity
- behave as responsible digital citizens – this means interacting with others online in a positive and respectful manner, and ensuring that comments, images, videos and other material shared online respects the privacy and reputation of all
- have a clear understanding of the different forms of bullying. i.e. psychological, cyber and physical
- follow the school Anti-bullying Plan. This includes being aware of the consequences associated with bullying
- behave as responsible bystanders – bystanders are the most powerful participants in bullying incidents. It is imperative that bystanders make it clear to the bully that his/her behaviour is unacceptable, support the target of bullying, and report the bullying incident to the school
- report incidents of bullying according to the school Anti-Bullying Plan.

### **Parent and caregiver responsibilities:**

- support their children to become responsible 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
- support their children to become resilient – confident to report bullying and overcome challenges they face
- 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 the 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

### **Protection from bullying through a positive climate and respectful relationships**

#### **Second Step**

Deniliquin North Public School utilises a school-wide behavioural framework – Second Step - to enhance the school welfare and discipline system. Second Step reduces behavioural problems by explicitly teaching expectations and appropriate behaviours, and redirecting the focus to promote positive behaviour, and thus create and maintain a safe and harmonious, quality teaching and learning environment.

All students at DNPS are expected to be responsible and respectful students at all times.

Students are expected to display positive relationship skills, social responsibility, problem solving and dispute resolution skills in their relationships with others.

All staff have the responsibility to role-model positive relationships with students and other staff through their normal routines. Staff are also responsible for teaching, encouraging and supporting students in developing positive relationship skills.

At Deniliquin North Public School, we develop a safe and respectful learning environment by:

- building a positive school climate that fosters a sense of achievement and belonging for all students
- providing quality teaching, learning, and curriculum
- the use of effective and engaging pedagogy
- staff modelling of a consistent, caring and inclusive attitude towards students and other staff at all times
- communication of clear rules and procedures about behaviour guidelines, bullying, and harassment to staff, students and parents/caregivers
- ensuring that relevant school support services and personnel are available to students, including the classroom teachers, school counselor, and Assistant Principals
- referral of bullying incidents, and prompt and effective response to incidents
- professional development for teachers, particularly teachers new to the school, in the Anti-Bullying Plan and processes
- developing positive and productive staff-student relationships
- rewarding positive student behaviour through our positive levels system
- promoting Second Step in the classroom, playground, assemblies, newsletters, the school website, and on social media.

#### **Building Resilience**

Resilience is how individuals respond to threatening or stressful situations, and is about how we “bounce back” from challenges. In protecting against bullying, building resilience can substantially minimise the effects of bullying, and is crucial in helping students to develop the ability to cope in spite of adversity and achieve positive outcomes.

Resilience is changeable, and can be built upon. Resilience programs are provided for all students through the student welfare programs organised by the Welfare Team. Resilience includes having the confidence to speak up about situations, such as bullying, and building the strength to maintain positive mental health and wellbeing in challenging situations.

Parents and teachers have a responsibility to build resilience in DNPS students, by providing safe, supportive and nurturing relationships and environments, and encouraging increasingly higher levels of independence, autonomy and initiative. The key skills that young people need to be resilient are:

- Self-esteem
- Social skills
- Self-control
- Problem-solving skills
- Realistic expectations
- Optimistic thinking patterns
- Mindfulness

These skills are covered in Welfare programs at DNPS, but should also be encouraged and developed at home.

Resilience is a significant protective factor in bullying situations – it gives students the confidence to stand up for themselves and others in positive ways, report bullying, and recover from bullying incidents. Resilient young people are also less likely to be bullies.

### 3. Prevention

#### Strategies and programs for bullying prevention

The school will implement strategies to prevent bullying:

- promotion of the safe and respectful message in all aspects of school life: assemblies, newsletters and in classrooms
- professional development for staff relating to bullying, harassment, and proven counter measures
- community awareness and input relating to bullying, its characteristics, and the school's programs and response
- provision of programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving
- classroom teachers clarify the school policy on bullying with students each year
- curriculum includes anti-bullying messages and strategies, embedded in KLAs, through welfare programs, and Second Step lessons
- structured activities available to students at recess and lunch times.

## Anti-Bullying in the curriculum

Deniliquin North Public School provides programs to recognise the value of diversity, the importance of positive and respectful relationships, the negative impacts of violence and aggression, and the harmful impacts of bullying behaviour. Prevention programs are delivered as part of the curriculum across KLAs.

### KLAs:

- Prevention strategies, embracing diversity and promoting positive relationships are addressed through units in the PDHPE programs, mandatory for Years K-6, including:
  - Focus on the importance of connectedness, the impact of bullying and the benefits of seeking help in developing a healthy sense of self
  - Clarification of mental health with a focus on the importance of effective communication in establishing caring and respectful relationships
  - Showcasing harm minimisation and drug use, identifying the consequences of risk behaviours while fostering coping skills and reinforcing the positive effects of physical activity on health.
  - Exploration of issues and the role played by power in a range of relationships, with students developing skills for recognising harassment and abuse, and accessing relevant health and support services.
  - Investigation of the factors which influence health and self-esteem decisions while recognising the need for resiliency skills to meet social challenges.

- Case studies and problem situations to prepare an advocacy strategy that affirms diversity, with students formulating protective strategies.
- The PDHPE Day for Daniel program focuses on fostering understanding and recognition of relationships, resilience and being an individual within facets of personal, social and community identity.
- Social and emotional learning is covered in the English and Drama curriculum through study of texts and characters
- Recognition of cultural diversity and acceptance showcased in Visual Arts through multicultural studies of architecture and Aboriginal art.
- The promotion of empathy and understanding towards the Multifaceted history of Australia, including Aboriginal Australia. In Studies of Religion, the curriculum focusses on tolerance and the understanding of different religions culminating in the importance of positive and respectful relationships.

### Welfare programs for anti-bullying and positive relationships:

A range of anti-bullying initiatives are embedded into the Second Step Framework.

### All year groups:

- Harmony Day develops intercultural understanding
- Reconciliation Day with an annual focus.
- Day for Daniel emphasises the need for strong relationships and the importance of keeping safe through relationships.
- Public recognition, awards and rewards for positive behaviour.



## 4. Early Intervention

Early intervention is critical to responding effectively to bullying. At DNPS we will regularly communicate to staff, students and parents/caregivers the importance of reporting bullying incidents involving themselves and/or others.

In addition, students at-risk of developing difficulties with building relationships, students who have previously been bullied, and students who have engaged in bullying behaviours, will be supported to build positive relationships and resilience, and avoid bullying in the future.

These students will be referred to the Stage Supervisor and/or the School Counsellor for support, and may be referred to one or more of the following early intervention programs:

- **Peer Mediation** – allows students to solve minor peer-related issues with the assistance of trained senior student mediators.
- **Working with counsellor/WHIN** - students can be referred by class teachers or parents relating to issues such as return from suspension, school, home, medical or disability. Counsellors will offer support and guidance until necessary.
- **Working with School Chaplain** – working with students to develop healthy relationships and self esteem.
- **Lessons on social skills** - Social skills are taught across KLAs in various lessons through teacher demonstration of socially accepted behaviour.
- **Assistant Principal Learning and Support** - APLS offers regional support. APLS comes to DNPS once we have exhausted all possible strategies to assist with rectifying behavioural and or learning needs.

Other Early Intervention strategies are implemented at Deniliquin North Public School, particularly for Year 6 students to ensure a seamless

transition from primary school in to high school. These strategies are implemented by the Class Teacher.

## 5. Response

### Teacher response

All staff must be committed to a common response to bullying when it does happen.

- Immediate intervention is crucial
- Clear procedures will be followed when a case of bullying is discovered

The school will provide support for the individual teacher so that they are able to maintain a safe classroom environment. The discipline policy and structures are mechanisms to support and maintain safe supportive classrooms.

Teaching staff have a responsibility to address incidents of bullying. Classrooms must be a safe, supportive environments where negative behaviour is recognised, publically condemned, and dealt with.

At DNPS, teachers will:

- Watch for signs of distress, isolation and suspected incidents of bullying
- Look for reasons for this
- Not see bullying as “just” play-fighting, name-calling, a bit of fun, or just part of growing up
- Point out bullying behaviours
- Complete a notification of bullying incidents

### Student response

Anti-bullying prevention education for all students, and regular communication of our Anti-Bullying Plan, teaches students to identify bullying, harassment, and victimisation behaviours, and report these incidents – both students who have been bullied and students who witness bullying.

Additionally, students, through learning activities organised by the prefects, and embedded in the curriculum, understand the importance of speaking up in support of students who they witness being bullied.

### Parent/Caregiver response

Ongoing consultation with the community regarding our response to bullying, harassment and victimisation, and the communication of our Anti-Bullying Plan, means that parents and caregivers are aware of what bullying is, and report if when it occurs.

### Reporting bullying

Bullying may be reported:

- In person by a student to a teacher
- By a parent via phone, email, or interview

All incidents of bullying that have been reported will be recorded on data sheets. The report will include the type of bullying, number of incidents and the action taken by the appropriate staff. This information will form the basis of data collection for the review of bullying in the school by the Executive Team.

The Assistant Principal chairs a fortnightly meeting with the Learning Support Team that includes: Principal, Assistant Principal responsible for Student Welfare, Counsellors, Learning Support Team representatives and staff. At these meetings reports of each year group are tabled that include but are not exclusive to bullying. The minutes from these meetings are reported to the School Executive once a fortnight and a copy of the minutes is stored on the school Intranet for staff access. Members of the school Executive should ensure that their staff have access to the Welfare minutes.

When the need arises the Assistant Principal responsible for Student Welfare, Principal, or Assistant Principals will place a notification for staff regarding particular types of bullying or individuals who may need support in dealing via email. At times it may also be necessary for the Principal and Assistant Principals to raise awareness of bullying behaviours and the importance of reporting bullying by addressing student assemblies or placing an item in the school newsletter. On occasion the school will seek support of the police and other outside agencies in addressing bullying issues.

The annual evaluation of welfare programs will also include data, review and recommendations for improvements to anti-bullying practices, which are reported in the Annual School Report under the achievements and future directions for Welfare.

## Teacher response to bullying

When bullying occurs at DNPS, the following steps will be followed by teachers. (Steps need not necessarily occur in this order as the initial response may begin at step 2 or 3).

### Step 1: Personally handle the situation

- The event or report of the event to be taken seriously

- Record event and advise students of this
- Advise students that they are engaging in bullying behaviour, and to cease this behaviour
- Collect written reports from bully(ies), bystander(s)/witness(es), and victim(s) to pass on to AP Welfare
- Talk to students individually about the incident
- Refer physical assault directly to Assistant Principal
- Consider mediation as an option (peer or teacher mediation)

### Step 2: Refer to Assistant Principal Welfare

- If bullying is occurring, create a new notification and notify Assistant Principal Welfare and Principal
- Assistant Principal Welfare will maintain a bullying register
- Assistant Principal Welfare and executive team will work together to resolve the situation
- Assistant Principal Welfare to organise behaviour contracts and contact parents if necessary
- Bullies work with Teachers to identify how to change their behaviour
- Counsellor may be referred to for programs to teach communication, social and emotional learning, and empower both victim and student demonstrating bullying behaviour
- If both parties agree, teacher or Peer Mediation can occur, organised by Assistant Principal Welfare

### Step 3: Refer to Principal

In the case of persistent or extreme bullying, the Assistant Principal Welfare will refer to the Principal. Using the recorded history, the Principal will then determine actions to be taken by the school.

These actions may include:

- Contacting parents of the bully(ies) and victim(s)
- Arranging for parent and/or student interviews
- Organising behaviour cards or behaviour contracts
- Referring students for counselling

Persistent long-term bullying is grounds for suspension/exclusion and the Executive will make decisions regarding this.

## **Bullying interventions at DNPS**

At Deniliquin North Public School we strive to consistently deal with bullying incidents as outlined in the Teacher Responses to Bullying section of this document. The implementation of these procedures is supervised by the Principal, the Assistant Principal Welfare, and Stage Leaders, in conjunction with the Welfare and Discipline Policy.

- Once identified, each bully, victim and witness, will be spoken with, and all incidents or allegations of bullying will be fully investigated and documented
- Both bullies and victims will be offered counselling and support
- If student bullying persists, parents will be contacted and consequences implemented, consistent with the school's Welfare and Discipline Policy
- Consequences for students will be individually-based, and may involve:
  - Exclusion from class

- Exclusion from playground
- School suspension
- Withdrawal of privileges
- Ongoing counselling from appropriate agency for both victim and bully

- Reinforcement of positive behaviours
- Class/Year meetings
- Support structures
- Ongoing monitoring of identified bullies
- Rewards for positive behaviour

## **Supporting students who have been affected by, witness to, or engaged in, bullying**

All students affected by bullying are offered mentoring or counselling.

Counsellors are available at the school for students.

Students are reminded of these provisions and are offered mentoring by the Assistant Principal Welfare.

Suitable students may also be selected to provide peer mentoring.

### **Communication with parents and carers**

The Principal, Assistant Principals, Assistant Principal Welfare and/or Teachers will make contact with parents as required.

### **Incidents involving assault, threats, intimidation, or harassment**

Staff are to report these types of incidents to the Assistant Principal Welfare. Assistant Principal Welfare will assess the situation and refer to the Principal where a decision will be made of the appropriate action to be taken. In incidents involving assaults, threats, intimidation or harassment, the school follows the guidelines as per the Student Suspension and Expulsion policy of the Department of Education. Reports are made to the Police Youth Liaison Officer, Local Area Command and School Safety and Security when required.

### **Reporting to the Child Wellbeing Unit or Community Services**

Staff are to report concerns of child wellbeing to the Principal, Assistant Principal responsible for the year group, and/or counsellor. The Principal in consultation with the Assistant Principal and/or Counsellor will assess the situation and a decision will be made on the appropriate action to be taken.

### **Complaints handling policy**

Deniliquin North Public School implements the Department of Education Complaints Handling Procedures. The Principal deals with formal complaints by following the procedures outlined in the policy at [www.dec.nsw.gov.au/about-us/how-we-operate/how-we-handle-complaints](http://www.dec.nsw.gov.au/about-us/how-we-operate/how-we-handle-complaints).

### **Identifying patterns of bullying**

The review of data and reports from the Welfare Team will identify the incidents of bullying and the year groups that they are taking place in. The teacher response section of this document outlines how these will be dealt with along with the annual review and future recommendations made by the Welfare Team.

### **Communicating the Anti-Bullying Plan**

The Anti-Bullying Plan will be distributed to all staff members and the Parents and Citizens. The plan will be placed on the school website and parents will be informed of its location by the Principal's report in the school newsletter. Students will be informed of the plan by teachers responsible for their year group.

### **Monitoring and evaluating the Anti-Bullying Plan**

This plan will be presented to the school community for consultation and review on an annual basis. Each year the Welfare Team will review the data collected on bullying and will make recommendations to the senior executive on future improvements. By reviewing the types and number of incidents of bullying in a calendar year for each school year group an analysis and conclusion will be made. If there has been a decrease in bullying the programs and practices that led to the decrease will be identifiable and provide valuable feedback for future practices.



### **Annual reporting on the Anti-Bullying Plan**

Each year the executive team will review the data collected on bullying and will make recommendations to the executive on future improvements. This will form part of the school evaluation process and will be communicated to the school community through the Annual School Report, as well as being integrated into the School Plan.

### **Review of the Anti-Bullying Plan**

The Anti-Bullying data will be reviewed annually by the executive team and their recommendations will be provided to the executive for inclusion in the school evaluation of the School Plan. The Anti-Bullying Plan is evaluated every three years. This process involves members from the school community inclusive of staff, parents and students.

### **Additional Information**

Beyond Blue: 1300 22 46 36

Kids Helpline: 1800 55 1800

Headspace: 8785 3200

### **Principal's comment**

It is extremely important for all people who have an influence on our students' lives to be aware of the types of harassment and bullying that they can be confronted with. It is our aim to provide our school community with the necessary knowledge about harassment and bullying, and the strategies that can be used to assist in dealing with such behaviours. Through a consistent approach at school and in the student's home environment, we can make a difference for all students. Everyone has a right to an education, and at Deniliquin North Public School we aim to provide this in a safe and respectful environment.

### **Anti-Bullying Team**

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