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TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	2
DEFINITION	2
BYSTANDERS	3
ANTI-BULLYING STUDENT COMMITMENT	3
AIMS	4
RESPONSIBILITIES	4
PREVENTION	5
RESPONSE TO BULLYING	5
LEGISLATION	8
MONITORING THE POLICY	9
RESOURCES	9



INTRODUCTION

NEGS aims to provide a safe and caring environment for all members of the School community. No student, employee, parent, caregiver or community member should experience bullying within the learning or working environments of the School. The School recognises that bullying of any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders. Bullying or harassment will not be tolerated. A person who is bullied will be supported. All reports will be taken seriously and all allegations of bullying incidents will be investigated. All reports will be dealt with in a confidential manner. The Anti-Bullying Policy outlines the processes for preventing and responding to student bullying in our School.

DEFINITION

The national definition of bullying for Australian schools says:

Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening.

Bullying can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time (for example, through sharing of digital records)

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have immediate, medium and long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders. Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.

Bullying has three main features:

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

Behaviours that do not constitute bullying include (these conflicts still need to be addressed and resolved):

- 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.

Bullying can include but is not limited to:

- Verbal - name calling, cruel teasing, abuse, putdowns, sarcasm, insults, threats.
- Physical - abuse, hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting, physical intimidation or domination.
- Social - ignoring, deliberately and maliciously excluding, ostracising, alienating, making inappropriate or menacing gestures, victimisation, humiliation.
- Psychological - intimidation, spreading malicious rumours, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions, malicious SMS, email and social media messages, inappropriate use of camera phones.
- All forms of harassment including that based on sex, race, disability, homosexuality or transgender.
- Cyberbullying: any of the above can occur with the use of digital devices.



The roles within bullying are:

- as the person being bullied
- as the person bullying someone else
- as a person who witnesses bullying happening or knows about someone being bullied.

* Note: the labels 'bully' and 'victim' are unhelpful and can cause additional problems.

BYSTANDERS

In any bullying situation there are usually bystanders; other people who watch or are nearby at the time the bullying takes place. You can be a bystander in person or online. Depending on how bystanders respond, they can either contribute to the problem or the solution.

A positive bystander to bullying behaviour may:

- Directly intervene, by using words and/or actions that can help someone who is being bullied. This includes saying or writing something supportive to the person being bullied, or saying something to the person doing the bullying to let them know what they are doing is not acceptable.
- Seek help, through support from peers to stand up against bullying or by reporting the bullying to adults.

A passive or negative bystander to bullying behaviour may:

- Ignore when a person is being bullied, passively accept bullying by watching and doing nothing. Passive bystanders provide an audience and the silent acceptance that allows bullies to continue their hurtful behavior.
- Instigate the bullying by prodding the bully to begin.
- Encourage the bullying behaviour by laughing, cheering, or making comments that further stimulate the bully.
- Join in the bullying, harassing or hurting once it has begun.
- Share, like or forward an offensive or derogatory image, post or text message.

Everyone can make an impact on bullying situations, even if they are not a part of it already. You can choose to be a passive or negative bystander and let the harsh and damaging behaviour continue, or you can stand up for the victim and do the right thing.

ANTI-BULLYING STUDENT COMMITMENT

I, _____(name) have read what constitutes bullying and harassment, and understand there are consequences if I choose to engage in bullying behaviour or if I am a negative bystander. I understand that all allegations will be investigated and bullying behaviour will be recorded. If I engage in bullying behaviour, I will be supported to change my behaviour, and I accept the consequences for bullying at NEGS.

_____(signed) Date: _____



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AIMS

The primary aim of the school's response is to restore a positive learning environment for all students. A second aim of the school's response is to avoid escalation of issues or causing more harm.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Schools exist in a society where incidents of bullying behaviour may occur. Students, teachers, parents, caregivers and members of the wider school community have a shared responsibility to create and maintain a safe and happy environment, free from all forms of bullying. All members of the school community contribute to the prevention of bullying by modelling and promoting appropriate behaviour and respectful relationships.

Students have a responsibility to:

- Behave appropriately, respecting individual differences and diversity in accordance with the NEGS Code of Behaviour.
- Be responsible digital citizens.
- Be positive bystanders.
- Positively participate in all strategies that are part of the NEGS Wellbeing program.
- Respond to incidents of bullying according to the NEGS Anti-Bullying policy.

Parents and caregivers have a responsibility to:

- Support their child in all aspects of their learning including development of prosocial behaviors.
- Model and promote positive relationships that respect and accept individual differences and diversity within the School community.
- Be aware of the school's Anti-bullying policy and assist their child in understanding what constitutes bullying behaviour.
- Support their child in developing positive responses to allegations and incidents of bullying consistent with this policy.
- Support all students of the school to deal effectively with bullying through the strategies of this policy.
- Report incidents or allegations of bullying behaviour to the School.
- [Work collaboratively with the School](#) to resolve incidents of bullying when they occur.

Teachers have a responsibility to:

- Respect and support students in all aspects of their learning.
- Model behaviour that promotes respectful relationships.
- Respond in an appropriate and timely manner to allegations and incidents of bullying according to this policy.
- Provide curriculum and pedagogy that supports students to develop an understanding of bullying and its effects on others.



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PREVENTION

NEGS implements a range of strategies to prevent bullying and promote positive student relationships, including:

- The Wellbeing program embeds the explicit teaching of personal and social capabilities. This involves students developing skills including recognising and regulating emotions, building self control, developing empathy and understanding relationships, establishing and building positive relationships, making responsible decisions, working effectively in teams, handling challenging situations constructively, enhancing communication, and developing leadership skills.
- High impact events each term, such as Harmony Day and RU OK Day, along with day-to-day structures to support positive social behaviour choices within the school community. The SRC are heavily involved in these activities.
- The School's Wellbeing team meets fortnightly to discuss new ways of monitoring and reducing bullying within the school and evaluates current practice.
- All students read and sign the Anti-bullying student commitment on the first day of the school year or on commencement for new enrolments.
- Supervision of students.
- Staff model appropriate words and behaviours.
- Staff develop strong relationships with students.
- Guest speakers and workshops to target areas of need identified by the Wellbeing team.

RESPONSE TO BULLYING

The school Wellbeing and Behaviour Management policies apply in all cases of inappropriate behaviour, including bullying. At NEGS there are consequences for choosing to bully someone else. Failure by a student to modify their bullying behaviour ultimately leads to suspension and possible expulsion in accordance with School policies.

The School has a range of strategies to deal with different types of conflict and bullying when they arise. In most cases, action taken will proceed initially from a conflict resolution approach.

Reporting and Intervention

Fundamental to our policy is that students and parents will report all incidents of bullying. The School encourages the reporting by the victim or any concerned person, of suspected bullying behaviour, to a responsible adult. This adult could be, but is not limited to, a class teacher, Tutor teacher, boarding staff member, Year Advisor, Health Centre staff or a parent. The responsible adult then has a duty to ensure that the matter is referred to the relevant person within the school.

Specifically:

- Incidents of bullying may be reported to any member of staff.
- Parents should contact the student's Year Advisor, House Mother or the supervising teacher in the first instance.

Procedures for Students

Students who perceive they are being bullied or are witness to someone being bullied will utilise their communication skills and self regulation to:

- Stop – explicitly state in a calm and assertive manner that the behaviour must stop
- Walk – take a couple of steps away then turn and walk to the nearest staff member
- Talk – report the incident to a staff member for action.

In the circumstances that a person being bullied feels unable to do this, then a witness (positive bystander) should implement these steps with them or on their behalf.

Procedures for parent reports of student bullying to the school

The steps to follow are:

- If they have not already done so, ask the parents/carers to talk with the year/class teacher in the first instance.
- If they are still concerned after speaking with the year/class teacher, invite them to make an appointment with you and any relevant teaching staff.
- At the meeting provide a calming, supportive response and appreciate that some parents may express anger and distress about their child's experience.
- Listen carefully and document the account.
- Refer to your school policy to discuss the definition of bullying, expectations of students and staff, responsibilities and implications.
- Inform the parents what you intend to do in regards to their concerns.
- Let the parent/guardian know the name and contact details of the responsible officer for further contact.
- Provide suggestions and information about what parents/carers can do to support their child in the short term.
- Set a date for a follow up review and conclude the meeting.
- Record the incident/student contact in the school's student data management system.
- Collect additional information from students and other personnel as appropriate.
- Notify appropriate school personnel.
- After you have developed a full action plan based on the additional information gathered, conduct the follow up review meeting with parents/caregivers.
- Agree on a contact person for parents/caregivers while the action plan is implemented.
- Follow up with parents/caregivers and students at a designated time in the following weeks or months.

Procedures for Teachers

The steps to follow when a student reports bullying (including online bullying) are:

- Listen carefully and calmly, and document what the student tells you. (Clarify if there are immediate safety risks and let the student know how you will address these).
- Collect additional information.
- Discuss a plan of action with the students.
- Inform the student what you intend to do.
- Provide suggestions on what to do if the bullying occurs again.
- Set a date for follow up review/s.



- Record the incident/student contact in the school's student data management system (Engage).
- Notify appropriate staff members.
- Contact the parent/guardian informing them of the incident and your course of action.
- Make sure to follow up with students over the next several weeks and months.

Teachers will respond to all episodes of bullying in order to send a clear message that it is unacceptable. Different responses may be appropriate depending on the nature and degree of bullying. The bullying test will be used initially to determine if the incident is primarily bullying and, if so, the broad nature of the response.

Step 1: The Bullying Test - teacher asks 'Does the incident involve. . .'

- Repeated teasing or aggressive words or actions?
- Which are unprovoked?
- And intended to hurt, harm or frighten?

If the answer is yes to all three questions, then it is bullying. If it's not a bullying incident, it could be:

- Conflict – may require conflict resolution
- Discipline – may require disciplinary action
- Learning – may require learning support
- Wellbeing – may require investigation or personal support or referral.

If the answer is no, then the incident must be problem solved with the students involved, which may involve mediation.

Step 2: The Level Test – At what level is the bullying incident?

Teachers will decide if the incident is a low or high level incident using the following guidelines:

Low level

- The victim is not typically teased or harassed
- and/or the bully is not a repeat offender
- and/or bullying behaviour appears less harmful.

High Level

- The victim is often harassed
- and/or bully often engages in such behaviour
- and/or bullying behaviour is causing significant distress or harm.

Step 3: The Response

If the incident is Low level, the teacher will use the following strategy:

- Spell it Out - what the behaviour is (bullying) and what's wrong with it
- Signal - what will happen next time (ie: indicate consequences)
- Support - the bullied student

The teacher will also determine other strategies such as:

- Speak to the whole class



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- Talk to bully/bullies after class
- Warn and/or reprimand bullies
- Present a lesson related to the issue in consultation with Wellbeing committee
- Gather information from other teachers at a relevant meeting
- Discuss with the Tutor teacher, Year Advisor or other relevant staff.
- Monitoring
- Parent contact

If the incident is High level the teacher will:

- Respond - reprimand the behaviour and state what is wrong with it
- Report - complete an incident report on Engage
- Refer - bully and/or victim for additional support

The teacher will also:

- Discuss the issue with HoD, Year Advisor or other wellbeing staff to refine anti-bullying strategy in that class
- Refer to the Health Centre if there appears to be psychological issues for the bully
- Report immediately to the Deputy Principal if violence is involved (in accordance with the School Behaviour Management Policy).

Incident Reports

Written reports of all incidents of bullying will be entered on Engage.

Accessing help and support

The Anti-bullying Policy recognises the right of all students to access help and support.

Support can be gained from:

- Procedures outlined in the Student Wellbeing and Behaviour Management policies, and other documents related to the implementation of this policy.
- Tutor teacher
- Year Advisor
- Health Centre
- Deputy Principal
- The 'Bullying. No Way!' website <https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/>

LEGISLATION

Commonwealth legislation relevant to bullying, harassment, discrimination and violence include:

- Disability Discrimination Act 1992
- Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) Act 1986
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975
- Racial Hatred Act 1995
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984.



MONITORING THE DOCUMENT

This policy is reviewed bi-annually by the Deputy Principal. Any edits or additions are approved by the Executive.

RESOURCES

The following resources were used in the development of this policy and the School's strategies to prevent and respond to bullying.

- [Bullying. No Way!](#)
- [Eyes on Bullying Toolkit](#)
- Working Together: A toolkit for effective school based action against bullying