



Education &
Communities

Westport Campus

Anti-bullying Plan





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.

Westport Campus 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.

The Westport Campus Anti-Bullying Plan has been compiled through a process of consultation across the entire school body, including members of the Senior Executive, teaching staff, non-teaching staff, students, parents, and caregivers. Those involved in the consultative process have had the opportunity to provide feedback and input through staff meetings, P&C meetings, local AECG meetings, and Student Leaders participation. This plan has been developed and will be reviewed in Term 4 - 2019, in accordance with school strategic planning.

Statement of Purpose

Westport Campus believes in the importance of creating a safe, cooperative, and respectful learning environment, where all students have a right to feel secure and free from all forms of bullying and harassment. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for recognising and responding to instances of bullying and harassment, and take steps in actively discouraging such practices in the school community. This comprises a whole-school approach to combatting bullying, centred on zero-tolerance and a shared responsibility for modelling positive relationships and respectful behaviour. The central goal of this plan, therefore, is not only to address bullying and harassment, but to actively prevent it by fostering a safe and caring environment that supports students and staff to grow in character, resilience, and self-esteem.

Protection

Westport Campus takes bullying behaviour seriously, and seeks to act swiftly and comprehensively in addressing reported incidents of bullying and harassment. The Westport Campus Anti-Bullying Plan sets out the processes for preventing and responding to student bullying. Westport Campus also has a range of policies and procedures, including Wellbeing and discipline policies that apply to student behaviour more generally.

Westport Campus subscribes to the DEC guidelines regarding individual and shared responsibility for bullying and harassment. Preventing and responding to bullying behaviour in working and learning environments is the shared responsibility of all departmental staff, students, parents, caregivers, and members of the wider school community.

Strategies

In order to create a positive climate of respectful relationships and to foster an environment where bullying is less likely to occur, Westport Campus has the following strategies in place:

- Teachers are encouraged to adopt classroom management techniques that discourage opportunities for bullying behaviours to initiate.
- The Student Leadership Team (SLT), who promote Westport Campus's Anti-Bullying Plan and model positive social and interpersonal behaviours.
- The inclusion of signage and artwork about the school to promote a bully-free environment.
- Staff maintaining an active presence in classroom, playground, and other activities to ensure adequate supervision.
- The Westport Campus Learning Support Team (LST), who work collaboratively to pinpoint and monitor the Wellbeing of students identified as at-risk of bullying.
- Training staff and students in identifying and responding assertively to bullying behaviours, including the importance of bystander action and responsibility.
- Staff modeling of empathy, tolerance, and acceptance of differences.

- Year Advisors continue to monitor student relationships within this cohort & take a proactive role in helping students resolve any social issues they may be experiencing.

- Whole-school involvement in national initiatives against bullying and harassment (such as Harmony Day and the National Day of Action Against Bullying and Violence).

Police School Liaison Officer Education talks to Year groups on cyber safety and bullying in schools as well as in the community.

Prevention

The following programs are intended to support bullying prevention at Westport Campus:

- PBL (Positive Behaviour for Learning).
- Peer mediation.
- Merit/reward system.
- Student Responsibility System (SRS).
- Student engagement with the Police School Liaison Officer (PSLO) on the issues of healthy relationships, social issues, and the law.
- Access to school counselling.
- School registration and participation in events for the National Day of Action Against Bullying and Violence.
- Access to the School Chaplain (Michelle)
- Student Leadership group and events.
- School participation in community events, such as NAIDOC Week and Harmony Day.
- Year 7 Peer Support program.
- Peer leadership training.
- Connect / Pastoral Care program.
- Year 6 transition program.
- Group workshops (such as the Year 7 “Expect Respect” program).
- Rock and Water student resilience program

As part of taking a collective stand against bullying and adopting a whole-school approach, Westport Campus encourages the use of anti-bullying themes in all Key Learning Areas (KLAs) across all year levels. In addition, the integration of PBL is viewed by Westport Campus as a

vessel for effecting positive change towards healthy relationships and respectful interactions between peers and school staff alike.

Early Intervention

Westport Campus has adopted a number of early intervention strategies 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.

For those students identified at-risk, the school may intervene at an early stage to implement one or more of the following supports:

- Partner with parents/caregivers to support students experiencing difficulties in social relationships.
- Provide classroom-based student wellbeing programs tailored to relevant bullying issues (such as respect, resilience, cyber-safety, stress management).
- Ensure that all staff, students, and parents are made aware of the school’s Anti-Bullying Plan and its availability via the school website.
- Connect students deemed to be at-risk to specialised support services within the school, such as the School Counsellor or School Chaplain.
- Use the school’s Learning Support Team for early identification of students with disabilities, or those at-risk of encountering difficulties in social interactions. The Learning Support Team is responsible for planning and implementing student supports on a case-by-case basis.
- Provide mentoring, guidance and/or support via key-staff, such as the HT Wellbeing, Year Advisor, Deputy Principal, or any other delegate who is trusted by the student.
- Refer to a range of external agencies available to support and mentor victims and/or perpetrators of bullying and harassment, to address personal issues, build self-esteem, develop communication skills, and increase resilience.

Response

It is important to know what to do if you are being bullied. First, it is important to tell a responsible adult who is in a position to help.

This can include a:

- Parent, carer, or other adult relative.
- Year Advisor.
- Teacher, coach, teacher's aide, learning support teacher.
- Head Teacher Wellbeing.
- School Counsellor.
- School Chaplain.
- Principal or Deputy Principal.

In addition to making a complaint in person, Westport Campus offers a facility for students to lodge their written concern in a secure red box outside of the student Wellbeing office, which will be followed up by the School Chaplain in a timely manner.

Westport Campus uses a variety of methods to identify patterns of bullying behaviour. All incidents of bullying reported to staff at Westport Campus will be recorded and tracked on the school's student contact database, SENTRAL (Register of Individual Student Contact). Use of SENTRAL enables access of authorised staff to information and reporting specific to bullying cases, and simple identification of persistent patterns of bullying. Trends identified on SENTRAL will be further investigated at Learning Support Team meetings and raised at staff meetings, as needed. In addition to all staff monitoring SENTRAL to keep abreast of issues, feedback is obtained through student-teacher interaction to follow up on any newly emerging patterns of bullying behaviour. Incidents involving bullying and harassment, once reported, will typically be responded to within a reasonable timeframe of 2-3 school days. It should be noted that establishing concrete timeframes could be difficult in the school environment, due to constant staff and student movement.

This section of the policy deals with the response process involved in following up on bullying and harassment *ex post facto*. Westport Campus believes strongly in the merit of preventative measures against bullying, seeking to cultivate positive relationships and a respectful learning environment so that the need for reactionary intervention is kept to a minimum, and students are empowered to respond assertively to resolve bullying and harassment issues. With that said, all cases of reported bullying and harassment are treated seriously by staff at Westport Campus and will be dealt with by appropriate staff members on a case-by-case basis.

Where a pattern of alleged bullying is verified, the school will seek to mediate to resolve the issue as quickly as practicable, and will only seek to involve relevant parties (for instance, the Year Advisor and HT Wellbeing). For instances where significant bullying has been ascertained, Westport Campus will contact parents/caregivers, and where appropriate, the Child Wellbeing Unit and/or Family and Community Services may be informed. Where serious bullying behaviour is found to be occurring, Westport Campus will notify the Incident Support Hotline (previously known as Safety & Security Unit) and School Education Director, as per DEC guidelines. This includes instances where threats, intimidation, or physical injuries necessitating medical treatment have been inflicted upon student(s)/staff, or where student(s)/staff safety may be compromised. In the most severe cases, the school will contact the police immediately.

In addition to direct staff involvement, Westport Campus also coordinates a peer mediation program. In situations where mild bullying is found to be occurring, peer mediation may be offered in response. Peer mediation is a process that involves two trained students, who act as intermediaries and facilitate a session between the bullying victim and perpetrator, on the proviso that both parties provide their verbal consent to proceed with peer mediation. This provides a safe and controlled setting, where both parties involved are provided with the opportunity to air their grievances. Peer mediation is conducted in accordance a set framework, and under ground rules that must be agreed upon prior to the session starting. This creates an environment where both the bullying victim and perpetrator can provide their version of events, express their feelings without fear of

judgement or threat, and have a neutral party review this and negotiate a mutual agreement to dissolve the issue.

Intervention Process in the Event of Bullying

Similar to the “Early Intervention” section of this policy, Westport Campus has processes in place to support any student who has been affected by, engaged in, or witnessed bullying behavior. In the event that a student is noted to be in need of support, Westport Campus will, often in this order, endeavor to:

- Connect the student with their Year Advisor (YA), to discuss the issue and its impact.
- Refer the student on to either the Deputy Principal or HT Wellbeing, if the YA that bullying determine it is occurring.
- Refer the student to the School Chaplain, in order to receive support and guidance with building resilience, self-esteem, and social skills.
- Refer the student to the School Counsellor, if necessary. This provides specialised support to deal with the impact of the student’s exposure to bullying.
- In some cases, the student may be referred to external support services, such as Headspace, who also specialise in helping students cope with bullying and harassment, as well as build stronger resilience, more confidence, and a better self-concept.
- Where patterns of bullying behavior are noticed to be recurring in a specific year level, Westport Campus may choose to run a social Wellbeing program to address the specific problem and remind students of their responsibility to act in a safe, respectful and cooperative way.

In the event that a parent/caregiver reports an incident involving bullying and harassment, the school will endeavor to respond to the issue as soon as possible. Westport Campus will look to implement the strategies above, and ensure the reporter is kept updated with appropriate details regarding the school’s response.

Responding to Risk of Harm

All staff at Westport Campus has a duty to recognise safety, welfare or wellbeing concerns for children and young people that arise from or during the course of their work. It is the responsibility of the Principal, Deputy Principal, School Counsellor, teachers, and other school-based staff to report suspected risk of significant harm to Community Services and help ensure early support and assistance are offered and implemented for children, young people, and their families in need of assistance outside of the statutory system. Please see Appendix 1 for the procedure that all Mandatory Reporters must follow in reporting risk of significant harm as it pertains to cases of suspected or alleged bullying and harassment.

All appeal procedures at Westport Campus are to follow the departmental Complaints Handling Policy, in accordance with Deputy Principal/Principal authority.

In the interests of promoting an anti-bullying culture at Westport Campus, a copy of the Anti-Bullying Plan will be made available to the public via the school’s DEC website. All staff will have access to the Anti-Bullying Plan, and be expected to familiarise themselves with it to inform their practice as teachers.

The Senior Executive, Year Advisors, School Counsellors, and the School Chaplain will review the Anti-Bullying Plan of Westport Campus annually. Data will be collected from SENTRAL and analysed on a yearly basis, and evaluated in light of this policy document and its requirements.

Any findings put forward from this review will be forwarded to members of the Senior Executive and wider school community for feedback and possible amendment. Updated Anti-Bullying Plan will be subjected to constant review.

Additional Information

Police Youth Liaison Officer (YLO) - Senior Constable Wendy Hudson – (02) 6583 0199.

School Liaison Police Officer (SLP) Senior Constable Steven Jeffery – (02) 6165 6599.

<http://www.bullyingnoway.com.au>

<http://www.kidshelp.com.au>

Kids Helpline – 1800 55 1800

Lifeline – 13 11 14

Mental Health Access Line – 1800 01 1511

Department of Family and Community Services – 13 21 11

Headspace – (02) 6588 7300

Principal's comment

Westport Campus understands our duty to protect and educate students about the Wellbeing of themselves and others within the school community. This Plan clearly articulates our responsibilities in ensuring bullying does not occur at Westport Campus and provides guidelines to students and staff in how to deal with bullying in our school.

The following staff members of the school community that are involved in reviewing the Westport Campus's Anti-Bullying Plan:

Mr Ian Ross (Principal)

Mr Duncan Kirkland (Deputy Principal)

Mr Greg Ferrett (Deputy Principal)

Mr Robert Grant (School Counsellor)

Mr Matthew Smith (Head Teacher Wellbeing)

Ms Tammy Frater (Supervisor of Girls)

Ms Michelle Webb (School Chaplain)

Westport Campus continues to seek feedback from both students and parents to further develop this policy.

School Contact Information

Westport Campus

15 Findlay Avenue, Port Macquarie, NSW, 2444

Ph: (02) 6583 6400

Fax: (02) 6584 0335

Email: westport-h.school@det.nsw.edu.au

Web: <http://www.westport-h.schools.nsw.edu.au>



Key: Boxes with a red border indicate a hyperlink to more information



Child Wellbeing & Child Protection - NSW Interagency Guidelines

Appendix 1

RESPONDING TO A CHILD WELLBEING CONCERN OR CHILD PROTECTION REPORT FLOWCHART

