

## Bullying of Students – Prevention and Response Policy

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 Walhallow Public School we value and show tolerance of others in a safe and supportive environment. We foster positive relationships through our strong student welfare programs. Our Anti-Bullying policy aims to deal effectively with and prevent incidences of bullying within the whole school community.

Students attend Walhallow Public School to participate in quality education that will help them to become self-directed, life-long learners who can create a positive future for themselves and the wider community.

Any inappropriate behaviour that gets in the way of teaching and learning at the school and interferes with the well-being of students cannot be accepted.

Students, teachers, parents, caregivers and members of the school community can expect:

- that students will be safe at school, free from bullying, harassment, intimidation and victimisation

- to be involved in the collaborative development of the school Anti – Bullying Plan

- to know what is expected of them and others in relation to the Anti- Bullying Plan

- that all students will be provided with appropriate support when bullying occurs.

Students, teachers, parents, caregivers and members of the school community have a responsibility to:

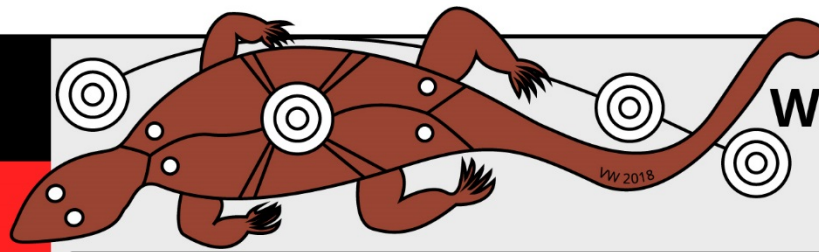
- promote positive relationships that respect and accept individual differences and diversity within the whole school community

- contribute to the development of the Anti- Bullying Policy and support it through words and actions

- actively work together to resolve incidents of bullying

### Protection Definition:

Bullying is repeated verbal, physical social or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or groups 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.



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### **Different Types of Bullying may be:**

#### **Physical:**

- Hitting/punching
- Pushing/shoving
- Kicking
- Throwing objects
- Taking other's belongings/stealing from others
- Damaging other's belongings
- Spitting at others
- Intimidation-making someone do something they don't want to do

#### **Verbal:**

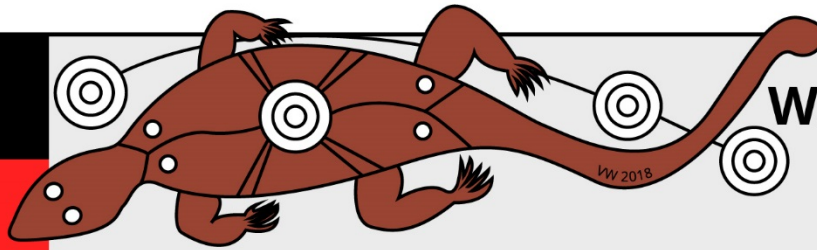
- Threatening
- Name calling/teasing
- Swearing at others
- Ridiculing (making fun of) another person because of their actions, appearance, physical characteristics or cultural backgrounds.

#### **Indirect:**

- Spreading rumours
- Excluding others
- Writing notes
- Choosing not to tell if you see another person being bullied

#### **Cyber Bullying:**

- Sending of abusive texts or emails
- Taking and sharing unflattering or private images
- Posting unkind messages or inappropriate images on social networking sites
- Assuming the identity of the victim online and representing them in a negative manner or manner that may damage their relationship with others
- Repeatedly and for no strategic reasons attacking players in online gaming
- Stealing passwords
- Websites



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### **Staff Responsibilities**

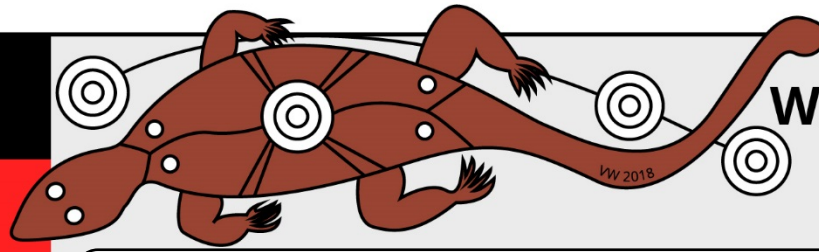
- To model appropriate behaviour at all times
- To monitor and track incidences of bullying and respond in an appropriate and timely manner according to the Anti-Bullying Policy
- To communicate any bullying behaviour to staff
- To implement school programs which promote positive relationships that incorporate strategies to deal with bullying eg, Peer Support, Bounce Back, The Leader in Me
- To communicate bullying incidences with parents when needed

### **Parents' Responsibilities**

- To be aware of and 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

### **Students' Responsibilities**

- To behave appropriately at all times
- To show consideration and respect and to support others
- 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 as outlined in programs such as The Leader in Me



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### **Prevention**

It is important that the school community address the underlying causes of bullying relating to school organisational issues, learning and teaching issues and relationship issues

### **Preventative Strategies:**

- Education and promotion of the school's Anti- Bullying Policy
- Use of Restorative Practice Peer Support Program
- Student Welfare programs including the school's core values
- Productive and respectful relationships established between all members of the school community.
- Classroom rules, routines and processes negotiated and applied consistently.
- Adequate supervision of students during breaks on playground and classrooms
- Active intervention when bullying occurs.

### **Strategies to Deal with bullying:**

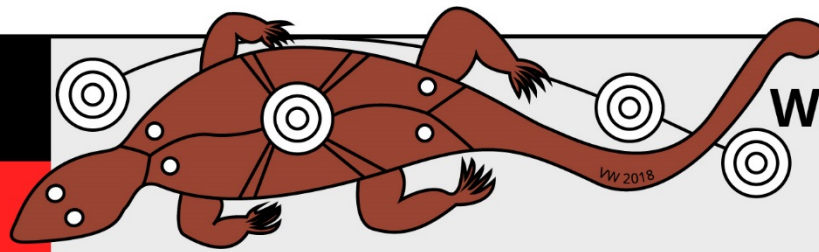
- Reported cases can be dealt with in several ways. It is recognised, however, that each case is different and may require an individual, case by case approach.

In all cases it is important to ensure:

- That victims are believed and made safe
- That the principles of natural justice and due process are followed in regard to students reported for bullying
- Parents and school staff work together

### **Strategies for Students on How to Deal with Bullying Behaviours**

- Try to stay calm. Walk away without looking back
- Talk to someone who can help you. (a teacher or your parent) Tell them what has happened, how you feel and what they can do to help. This is not dobbing!
- Never keep bullying a secret



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### Procedures for Dealing with Bullying Behaviour

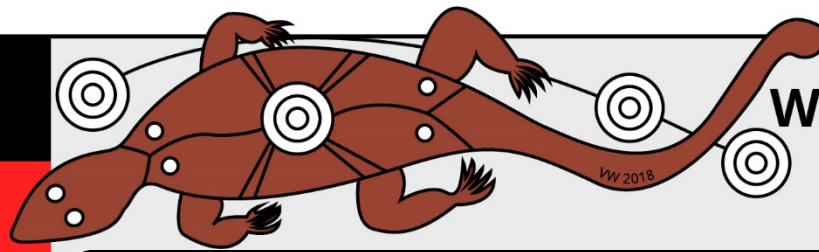
- All students have the right to be heard and listened to
- Class teacher deals with smaller issues in the classroom in line with school Student Welfare Policy and class rules
- Have discussions with the students involved – take appropriate action
- Parents and class teacher work with student to look at underlying problems and seek solutions
- Serious bullying incidents are recorded, and consequences are in line with the School's Discipline Procedures
- Issues are resolved in a calm manner with as much time as necessary given to hearing what each student feels and assisting all students to feel more able to cope
- Students with identified bullying behaviour will take responsibility for their actions.
- Teachers should organize meetings with parents if they're concerned about bullying amongst students
- Principal deals with major bullying incidents and may need to implement the DEC Suspension and Expulsion of Student Procedures
- Include anti-bullying activities in the Peer Support Program each year.

### Procedures for Dealing with Cyber bullying

The school reserves the right to determine whether incidents of cyber bullying relate to the responsibility of the school.

If determined the school has a role to play, we will:

- Ensure each student is safe and arrange support, including the involvement of student wellbeing.
- Support from staff should be provided on an ongoing basis with the agreement of the student and parent to assist the student to work through the effects of the cyber bullying and to help them develop and implement effective coping strategies.
- Student's parents contacted to alert them to the issue, and ongoing concerns regarding the welfare of the student, and discuss the issue and how best to deal with it.
  - Reassure the student that the school is taking the incident seriously and that the reported bullying will be acted on.
- Gather basic facts about the suspected cyber bullying and, if possible, identify the students involved.
- Implement appropriate responses to address the bullying using evidence-based responses such as restorative justice approaches to conflict resolution.
- Provide the following strategies to the student and parent to assist with managing the issue in the future.
- Don't respond to any further messages/postings from the bully and, if possible, block further correspondence from them (block their mobile number or email address).
- Report any further correspondence from the bully to the parent and an agreed school contact



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- Keep evidence of any bullying to assist with tracking down the bully and potentially reporting the matter to police (screen captures, bully's screen name, text and images).

### **Early Intervention**

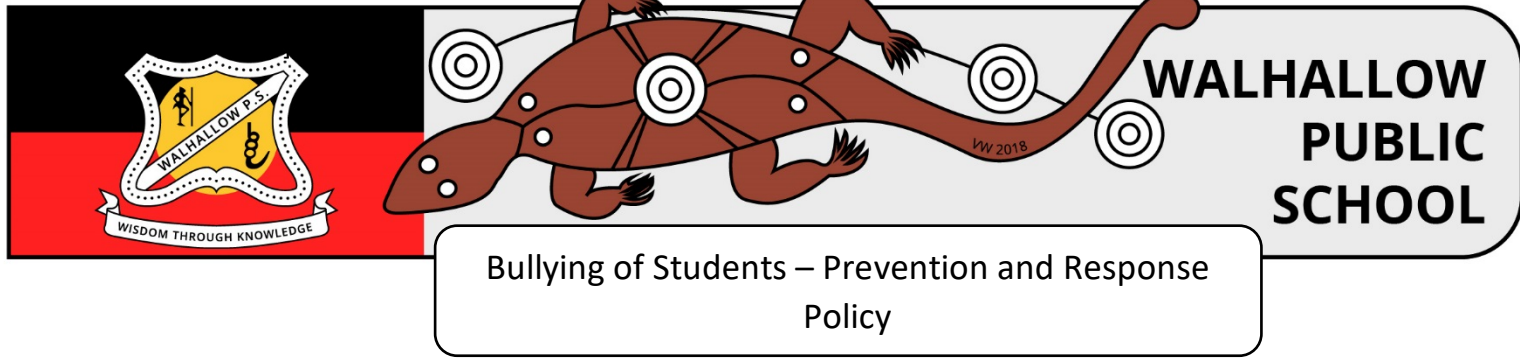
Some students are identified as being at risk of bullying or developing long-term difficulties with social relationships. Some students are also identified as using bullying behaviour.

These are some ways we will deal with this:

- Using social skills programs
- Using Social stories and role play situations
- Develop a plan of action on how to cope with situations
- Promote leadership within the school amongst the students
- Students are to report all incidents of bullying to a teacher immediately
- Parents with concerns about bullying should contact the school immediately
- All bullying incidents are to be reported, taken seriously and dealt with by teachers and Principal (depending on the severity). These issues will be dealt with immediately or as soon as practically possible.
- Teachers and staff will contact the parents of the student being bullied and the student doing the bullying immediately it is discovered. All staff to be informed so they can monitor students in the playground.
- In the case of cyber-bullying, the police may need to be contacted to make a report.
- Students will be supported by the school counsellor if upset by being bullied or experiencing ongoing bullying of a peer.
- The Anti-Bullying Policy will be available on the school website and regular information will be posted in the school's newsletter.
- If there is a need to contact support agencies, then the principal will contact the Child Well Being Unit. The school counsellor will also research support.

### **Signs that a child may be being bullied:**

- Dislike and avoidance of school
- Decline in academic performance and social interaction
- Gets into trouble more often at school
- Possessions are damaged or missing
- Becoming withdrawn, appearing depressed or anxious, having mood swings, crying for no apparent reason
- Unable to explain bruises or scratches
- Complaints of feeling unwell though parents report no specific illness
- Increased social exclusion and peer rejection



The Anti-Bullying Plan and policy will be available through the school website and communicated through the school newsletter. The school will evaluate the Anti-Bullying Plan and policy bi-annually. Reports will be made at P&C meetings.

Principal's comment -

The procedures outlined in this plan will assist students, teachers and parents in identifying, reporting and preventing bullying behaviour. By working together, we can ensure that Walhallow Public School is a place where children can learn and interact in a positive, peaceful manner. The school's core values clearly support a culture of support and trust and no tolerance of bullying behaviour.