

PICNIC POINT PUBLIC SCHOOL

ANTI BULLYING POLICY



“Strive to Excel”

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Rationale:

At **Picnic Point Public School** we aim to ensure a safe and happy learning environment for all members of the school community. We recognise that bullying does occur and we work to promote a culture which rejects bullying and provides support to any members of the school community who are bullied. Bullying behaviour is anti-social and unacceptable. Procedures are outlined in this policy for reporting bullying and responding to incidents.

The school also aims to work with students, teachers and the community to raise awareness, encourage reporting, prevent bullying and to promote the values of tolerance and respect as well as the valuing of difference and diversity.

This policy applies to all members of the school community which includes students, teaching and non-teaching staff, parents/caregivers and visitors to the school.

All members of the school community have responsibility to support and promote these objectives. They also have the right to be involved in ongoing collaboration to develop strategies to support the Anti-Bullying Plan.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying involves a person being hurt, distressed, pressured or victimised by **repeated** intentional attacks by another individual or group. Bullies abuse less powerful individuals by intimidation, harassment and/or exclusion. Bullying is **ongoing in nature** and the bully is encouraged by another's pain, distress, fear and humiliation.

Examples of bullying may include emotional, social, verbal and/or physical incidents, all of which will cause distress. Examples of bullying include

Physical: hitting; punching; pushing; scratching; tripping; kicking; spitting

Verbal: name calling; teasing; putdowns; sarcasm; constant criticism

Non Verbal: passing notes; writing on desks; rude gestures; SMS; email; chat room

Psychological: ignoring; mimicking; spreading rumours; defaming; dirty looks; intimidation

Cyberbullying: See Cyber Bullying Policy

Social/Emotional:

Emotional: excluding; encouraging others to ignore or exclude

Extortion: threatening to take someone's possessions, food or money

Property: stealing; hiding; damaging or breaking possessions

Rights & Responsibilities:

Members of the school community

Rights:

- be safe at school, free from fear of bullying, harassment and intimidation;
- to know that my concerns will be responded to;
- be provided with appropriate support.

Responsibilities:

- refrain from engaging in bullying behaviours;
- report bullying of self and/or others;
- assist in implementing the school's anti bullying plan.

Shared Responsibilities

School

- Provide access to the anti-bullying policy and school code of conduct to all members of the school community via school website.
- Involve staff, parents and external support agencies in developing and revising consistent procedures across the school for responding to and documenting bullying.
- Program explicit teaching activities in classes, across all stages which promote values associated with anti-bullying.
- Provide support and guidance to targets of bullying.
- Provide intervention with individuals who bully others.
- Respond to complaints or suggestions about procedures for specific handling of matters according to DET complaints procedures.

Teacher

- Model anti-bullying attitudes and behaviour.
- Encourage the teaching of tolerance, respect and valuing of difference and diversity through school Learner Qualities and Key Learning Areas.
- Listen to and respond to reports of bullying.
- Provide support and refer to agencies as needed.
- Implement the school Code of Conduct, Discipline and Anti Bullying Policy.

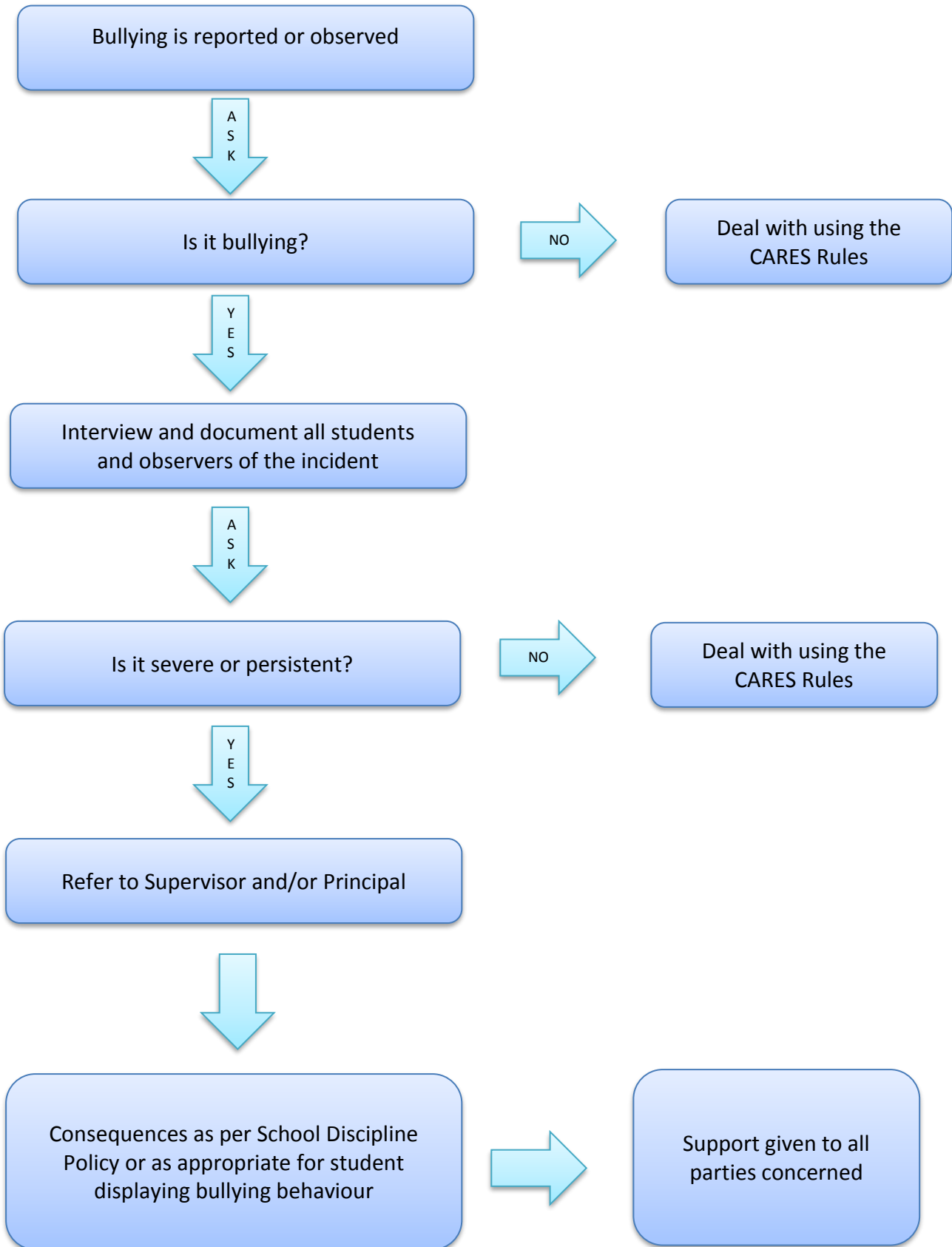
Parent

- Support and encourage the values of tolerance and respect in all contexts in the home and at school.
- Report bullying to class teacher as soon as possible and encourage their child to do so.
- Provide support and encourage their child to seek help.

Student

- Show respect for all members of the school community.
- Speak out against bullying and report it when they see it.
- Report bullying to the class teacher as soon as possible.
- Support students who are bullied.

Teacher Responding to Reported Bullying:



Student Responses

To prevent bullying students need to:

- work to create a happy school environment for all.
- respect yourself and others.
- learn to tolerate and accept individual differences.
- stand up against bullying behaviour.
- support the school policy on bullying.

If you are bullied YOU need to:

- tell the bully to stop.
- seek help and talk about it to someone you trust.
- report it to a teacher.

If you are a bystander or know someone who is being bullied YOU need to:

- care enough to do something about it, whether it affects you personally or not.
- try to defuse a situation before it gets out of hand.
- report it to a teacher or parent (take a friend with you if you want).

Parent Responses

If your child is Bullied you need to:

- work with the school to support your child.
- call the class teacher, not the other child's parents.
- report the incidents even if your child does not want this.
- tell your child:
 - ~ that bullying is wrong.
 - ~ they have the right to attend school without fear.
 - ~ the problem is unlikely to stop without adult intervention.
 - ~ Tell child to use strategies taught at school – No Go Tell.
- help your child learn to stand up against bullying behaviour.
- use the Internet, books and ask the school for resources to support your child.
- support the school policy on bullying.

If your child bullies another student you need to:

- tell them it is wrong and to stop.
- know that the profile of bullies includes:
 - ~ both boys and girls
 - ~ students who may have also been victims of bullying and
- work with the school and support the school policy on bullying.

If your child sees a student bullied by another student you need to tell them:

- it is wrong and not to support the bully.
- to support a friend who is bullied.
- report it to a teacher.

Support for Students Being Bullied

- Students who have been bullied will be questioned in private. Questioning the victim in front of the bully and bystanders may put the victim in an uncomfortable position. If they are scared of the bully, they will probably deny there is a problem. Instead, teachers will diffuse the situation and speak to the victim in private at a later time. Doing this will assure a more honest response. This process will follow the Restorative Practices Framework.
- Students will be provided with suggestions to deal with bullying behaviours. Many times, victims of bullying just need a simple suggestion about how to eliminate the bullying. Some victims of bullying may have trouble thinking of solutions on their own. They need an adult to guide them towards some sort of solution. Students who are victims of bullying will be helped to find a solution to their problem. After identifying what strategies they have already tried, staff will provide suggestions to the student.
- Some of the strategies that might be suggested to students include:
 - ~ *Hold the anger*
It's natural to get upset by the bully, but that's what bullies thrive on. It makes them feel more powerful. Practise not reacting by crying or looking red or upset. It takes a lot of practice, but it's a useful skill for keeping off a bully's radar. Sometimes kids find it useful to practise "cool down" strategies such as counting to 10, writing down their angry words, taking deep breaths or walking away.
 - ~ *Act brave, walk away, and ignore the bully*

Firmly and clearly tell the bully to stop, and then walk away. Practice ways to ignore the hurtful remarks, like acting disinterested. By ignoring the bully, you're showing that you don't care. Eventually, the bully will probably get bored with trying to bother you.

- *Tell an adult*
Teachers, the Assistant Principal, Principal and your parents can all help stop bullying.
- *Talk about it*
Talk to someone you trust, such as your teacher, brother or sister, mum or dad, other members of your family, or a friend. They may offer some helpful suggestions, and even if they can't fix the situation, it may help you feel a little less alone.
- *Remove the incentives*
If the bully is trying to get you to give them something of yours, stop bringing it to school for a while if it is possible. Students may also be presented with some 'What if' situations to assist them in dealing with situations that may arise.
- *Avoid the bully*
Use a different part of the playground to the bully and make sure you have someone with you so that you're not alone with the bully. Buddy up with a friend on the bus, in the playground, or at lunch — wherever the bully is. Offer to do the same for a friend.
- *Restorative conversation*
Students will have the opportunity with the support of a friend and their teacher or a member of the school executive to discuss the bullying situation through the Restorative Practices Framework. This will give the student being bullied the opportunity to confront the situation in a supported environment and explain their feelings to the bully. This process may not always be appropriate, depending on the wishes of the student involved.
- *Use a buddy system*
Students who have been bullied will be assisted in identifying another student who can provide the support they need. This is a win/win situation for everyone. Again, victims of bullying generally do not have lots of friends. This is one reason they are targets for bullies. Using the other more confident students at our school to provide support for this child is a great way to build self-confidence into these kids. Not only does this provide them with the support they need, but it also teaches the "buddy" valuable lessons about standing up for those who are less fortunate. It is important that students who are given this support treat their buddy with respect and accept their offer of support if it is going to be effective.

Support for Bullies

Students who are having specific issues with their social skills will be supported through discussions with their teacher or a member of the school executive. Often bullying behaviour takes place as the student is displaying learnt behaviours and cannot find alternative suitable behaviours. They will be given strategies such as those outlined below:

- Admit that you have been a bully. This is often the hardest thing to do, but the most important if you are interested in changing your behaviour.
- Apologise to the person or people you have bullied. Do it privately and don't be upset if they are still suspicious of you - they just need time to get used to the 'new you'.
- Implement practical advice for dealing with particular incidents.
- Stop and breathe when you feel the bullying behaviour coming on.
- Remember that you have a choice in how you behave.
- Be mindful of the impact your actions have on others.
- Feel good about yourself when you choose the appropriate behaviour.

Or

Before you say something cruel or unkind

- Count to 10.
- Think before you act and ask yourself
 - ~ Is what I am going to say true?
 - ~ Does it need to be said?
 - ~ Would I like it if someone said it to me?
- If the answer to any of these questions is NO, say nothing.
- Walk away from the situation.
- Ask yourself 'How do I feel?' Do I need to talk to someone about my feelings?

Support for Families of a Student Who Has Been Bullied

If your child tells you they have been bullied, it is important that they are supported and listened to in a calm and supportive way.

Some ideas to help this process are outlined below;

- Believe your child because it is important that your child feels confident to talk to you about problems. Please remember that this is your child's perception of the situation and it's important to find out all sides of the story before making any judgements about others who are involved.
- Take the child's concerns seriously without being over protective.
- Listen to your child. Show you understand that they are upset by the bullying.
- Encourage your child to talk about the situation.
- Tell your child that bullying is wrong and remind them that they have the right to feel safe and happy.
- Keep in mind that there may be other factors involved in the situation that you may not be aware of, such as other people that have been involved or other things that have happened in the past.
- Be aware of your own responses and react in a calm, helpful and supportive manner.
- Make sure your child knows how to get help and support at school and support them in doing so.
- Help your child enhance their friendship skills (having more than one good friend has been shown to reduce the likelihood or impact of bullying).
- Encourage your child to participate in activities other than those related to the school so they have other friendship groups.
- Help your child reflect on what has been done to resolve the situation so far.
- Work with the school to help your child develop a plan of what they could do to help make the situation better.

Support for Families of Students Displaying Bullying Behaviour

One of the worst things a parent can hear is that their child is causing problems at school. Getting a call from a teacher or administrator saying that your child has been observed bullying other students is sure to bring about a number of different emotions. Immediate denial might be the first emotion, followed by a variety of other feelings. There are a number of things that parents can do to deal with this situation and still support their son or daughter.

Your reaction to the school's report that your child is bullying will play a major role in your child's future behaviour. Try not to defend your child or make excuses when the school contacts you with concerns that your child is bullying other students. Defending and making excuses only encourages aggressive behaviour in your child. Your child will feel empowered and their negative behaviour will continue because they know you will defend them. You are setting your child up for future trouble. Instead, listen with an open mind. If your child has been observed a number of times bullying other students, then it is probably happening. Accepting that your child is a bully is the first step in changing their behaviour.

What Can You do to Help?

Schedule an appointment to talk with school staff such as your child's teacher(s) and the school counsellor. School staff that work with your child every day may be able to help you understand why your child is bullying and provide you with some tools to work with your child.

Explain to your child that this kind of behaviour is unacceptable. Stop any show of aggression you observe, and talk about other ways your child can deal with the situation. Establish appropriate consequences for their actions such as taking away privileges and allowing your child to earn them back with appropriate behaviour.

Examine behaviour and interactions in your own home. Is there something at home that is encouraging this type of behaviour, such as violent media of some kind in the form of video games, television or movies? Are there interactions that may lower your child's self esteem such as constant teasing or taunting by a sibling? When you discipline your child, are you focusing on how the behaviour is unacceptable rather than your child?

Talk with your child about who his/ her friends are and what they do together. Peers can be very influential. If your child is hanging around with kids who bully and encourage bullying behaviour, you may want to talk with them about getting involved in activities that will help him make other friends.

Model respect, kindness and empathy. You are your child's role model and they will learn to treat others with respect by watching you.

Be realistic. Your child's behaviour will not change overnight. When you are talking with your child, try to focus on how the behaviour is unacceptable, not your child, and show your support for your child with praise for appropriate behaviour.

Continue to work and communicate with school staff as long as it takes. They should be your allies; working with you to not only put an end to your child's bullying, but also to prevent any bullying in the school.

Access and utilise available resources. There are numerous publications and support material available to parents. One fantastic resource for students and their families is the Bullying – No Way! Website. It can be found at www.bullyingnoway.com.au