

# Anti-bullying Plan

Nepean Creative and Performing Arts High School





# 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.

# Nepean Creative and Performing Arts High 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.

In collaboration with the school's development of the Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) policies and procedures this plan has been developed with input from staff, students and the wider school community including parents/carers. This wider collaboration ensures multiple perspectives have been taken into consideration and contributes to the success of this plan.

## Statement of purpose

Nepean Creative and Performing Arts High School is committed to creating a safe and caring environment in which all students can achieve success, socially as well as academically. Every person has the right to experience positive and respectful relationships between all members of the school community. The community of Nepean Creative and Performing Arts High School will not accept bullying and harassment. Any form of bullying is not acceptable at Nepean Creative and Performing Arts High School.

## Protection

Bullying can be defined as intentional repeated behaviour by an individual or group of individuals that causes distress, hurt or undue pressure. It can

involve all forms of harassment (including gender, sexuality, culture and disability), humiliation, domination and intimidation of others.

Bullying behaviour can be:

**Verbal:** name calling or put downs, threats, teasing, ridiculing, intimidation or stalking.

**Physical:** punching, tripping, kicking, stealing and/or destroying someone else's property, unwanted kissing and touching.

**Social:** being left out or ignored, having rumours spread about you, making inappropriate gestures.

**Emotional:** spreading rumours, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions

**Cyber:** a form of bullying using text or images posted on personal websites or sent by mobile phone or email. Depending on the nature of the material posted or transmitted, people who engage in cyber bullying may be committing a criminal offence.

Bullying can devalue, isolate and frighten young people. It has long-term effects on those engaging in bullying behaviour, those who are the subjects of bullying behaviour and the onlookers or bystanders. A one-off incident is not bullying.

Every person at Nepean Creative and Performing Arts High School has the right to experience positive and respectful relationships between all members of the school community. They also have the right to learn and teach in a happy and safe environment.

The school understands that there are individual and shared responsibilities in preventing and responding to bullying behaviour. The school's plan will reflect an approach to bullying prevention which utilises systems and policies, curriculum exercises, pro-social skills development,

environmental improvement and work with individual students and small groups.

Maintaining peacefulness within the school environment will be a collaborative effort of teachers, parents and students. All staff have a responsibility to act on any report of bullying from students and to treat all individuals with respect. It is important for parents to contact the school as soon as they become aware of any bullying at school experienced by their child. Students as well as their parents and caregivers are encouraged to be proactive in dealing with bullying, so that the appropriate support can be provided to those students involved in any incident.

Nepean Creative and Performing Arts High School endeavours to act in accordance with the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA,1992) so that all students are protected from discrimination through humiliating comments or actions about a person's disability, such as insults, comments or actions which create a hostile environment. Our school works to both develop and implement strategies to prevent harassment and victimisation of people with a disability in accordance to the Disability Standards for Education (2005).

Nepean Creative and Performing Arts High School is an inclusive environment, where diversity is affirmed and differences are respected. Our school community strives to build harmonious relationships to promote student and staff wellbeing in a secure and supportive environment.

The school will implement the PBL program where appropriate behaviour in a number of settings within and external to the school are explicitly taught to students. The program will be developed in consultation with staff, students and parents/carers to ensure all aspects are thoroughly covered. Each stakeholder has a role to play in the implementation of a successful program to reduce the likelihood of bullying occurring through explicitly teaching and modelling of appropriate respectful behaviour. The PBL team includes the Head Teacher of Engagement, Enrichment and

Recognition, the Student Representative Coordinator, the Anti-Racism Contact Officer, staff across different Key Learning Areas and the Senior Executive represented by the Principal.

The safety, health and wellbeing of students inform school policies, programs and practices. Partnership with parents, caregivers, students and the wider community is central to the success of this process.

The school endeavors to achieve this in the following ways:

- A clear whole school definition of bullying, including our schools response to bullying is actively promoted throughout the school community
- A clear Anti-bullying Plan has been developed in collaboration with staff, students, parents/caregivers, which addresses all forms of bullying
- Procedural steps to appropriately respond to bullying incidents are clearly documented and promoted to staff, students and parents, including defined roles and responsibilities.
- Teaching and learning programs promote student resilience and address all forms of bullying through teaching of language and social skills, coping strategies, motives for bullying and being effective bystanders.
- Professional development is available to assist school staff to understand the schools Anti-bullying Plan, assist in the implementation of anti-bullying related teaching and learning programs, and strategies to provide support for students.
- Students are consulted regularly to monitor and determine the types of bullying behaviour and in what school or social context bullying occurs

- Students are given a platform/option to effectively report bullying incidents
- Physical environments in the school and staff supervision practices limit the incidents of bullying (including digital citizenship)
- Families are informed, supported and engaged through regular, clear communication and systematic parent awareness raising and skill development.

## Prevention

At Nepean Creative and Performing Arts High School we endeavour to deal with bullying efficiently and effectively. Strategies for dealing with bullying are linked to the school's Student Welfare and Discipline Procedures 2016, and encompass a range of opportunities to manage unacceptable behaviours. In addressing issues of bullying, we recognise the repeated and recurring nature of bullying and have put mechanisms in place to identify patterns of repeated offending.

Strategies and programs that are in place at Nepean Creative and Performing Arts High School to effectively teach the skills that will lead to eliminating bullying behaviours include:

- Bi-annual school camps to address respect of others and develop strong networks and relationships between peer groups and staff including the year advisor, advisor assistant, HT in-charge of the year group.
- The inclusion of articles in the school newsletter to encourage parent communication and highlight respectful relationships,

relevant school assembly addresses and themed year meetings three times per term.

- Anti-bullying strategies and support networks are embedded in the PDHPE program in the year 7 topic 'Connecting Up'; Respectful relationships are covered in year 8 through the topic 'R.E.S.P.E.C.T'; Year 9 covers resilience and dealing with difficult situations through 'Getting Through To Find a Better You'; whilst year 10 focusses on accepting and celebrating diversity through 'Sexual health and diversity'
- Providing professional learning for staff including Child Protection annual updates
- School values that model Care Opportunity Success combined with a whole school commitment to PBL
- Nepean Student Wellbeing Network including school counsellor support, Year Advisers
- Wellbeing initiatives such as peer support, peer mediation,, mentoring programs, authentic student voice with an active SRC and student leadership team
- Transition to high school orientation program which includes multiple visits for students who have increased anxiety about attending high school, have special learning or are identified from the primary school as those requiring extra support. They become familiar with staff, students and services to ensure they feel safe when entering High School.
- Facilitate Young People and Police Session and Cyber Bullying Police Talks. Ongoing relationship with Police School Liaison Officer
- Raise student awareness of various cultures through annual multicultural events, guest speakers and celebrations of culturally significant events such as Sorry Day and NAIDOC week.

- Partnership with external agencies such as: Headspace for students with wellbeing issues including anxiety, depression; Panthers on the Prowl helps with multiple programs including intensive mentoring of students programs, engaging students in education and supporting female education through targeted workshops
- Clear process for reporting bullying behaviours

## Early Intervention

The school has early intervention strategies for students who are at risk of developing long-term difficulties with social relationships and those students who are identified as having either previously experienced or engaging in bullying behaviour.

For students at risk the school will:

- Learning Support Team: Assess student needs of learning and wellbeing on a fortnightly basis; develop strategies to support the student; disseminate appropriate information to classroom teachers and year advisors.
- Student Advisers: provide support regarding the wellbeing, progress and performance of students in their year group on a fortnightly basis in formal meetings; regularly within their daily dealings with students.
- Peer Mediation is coordinated by the HT Enrichment, Engagement and Recognition and offers an effective method for students to peacefully resolve conflict with others in a supportive environment.
- School Counsellor: available to help students settle into high school and to assist them with any problems that may occur at home, school or elsewhere.

- The School Council Representatives meet regularly to discuss matters relevant to students; suggestions are made either directly to the SRC members or anonymously via the suggestion box in E Block

## Response

The school empowers the school community in recognising and responding appropriately to bullying, harassment and victimisation by encouraging the notion of responsible bystanders with the following expectations from the school community.

### The obligations of the community:

**Staff:** All staff must respond to bullying by recording, investigating, counselling, implementing consequences or referring to HT, DP

**Parents:** Parents must report concerns of issues relating to bullying behaviours to HT Engagement, Enrichment, Recognition, Counsellor or DP as soon as possible.

**Students:** Students need to report incidents of bullying behaviours to a teacher. Students who witness harassment must also report this to staff.

Instances of bullying will be documented on the school's welfare tracking system, Sentral. Year advisor (or assistant in the absence of the year advisor) will begin the initial step of mediation. After mediation has occurred all parents/carers of those involved will be contacted in relation to the outcome.

When mediation is unsuccessful or the bullying is deemed to be of a more serious nature, these instances will be referred directly to the deputy principal and the year advisor will be advised of the situation to monitor the wellbeing of all students involved.

Students reporting incidents of bullying should speak to their year advisor who will ask the student to document their perspective on the situation. The year advisor will then seek documentation from all parties mentioned including screen shots for online bullying and written accounts of all relevant information and discuss with their year group's head teacher who will advise of further action to be taken i.e. mediation for lower levels instances or a direct referral to the deputy principal.

The initial contact with those involved will be made as close to the report time as possible (ie on the same day). When the report is made at the end of the day, the next available opportunity will be utilized (roll call the following day). Where a report is made on a Friday afternoon, the parents/carers of the students should be contacted prior to the weekend to ensure the wellbeing of all parties and the following Monday roll-call will be the first time of response.

Students will be explicitly shown the referral flow chart which directs issues to the appropriate place depending on the level. The flowchart will provide some examples of incidents to better assist the student in dealing with issues in a timely manner. The flow chart will be placed in the school newsletter, 'The Link', and published on the school website to provide awareness to parents/carers. All staff will be made aware of the procedures on an annual basis and this document's location will be made easily available within the school handbook. Posters of the flow chart will be displayed around the school for continual reminders, including staff rooms, classrooms, and hallways.

The school will endeavor to address issues surrounding bullying (or reports of) quickly and effectively. Planned combinations of interventions to different incidents of bullying have been established in this plan. As incidents of bullying can vary in severity different levels of intervention and different combinations have been outlined in Appendix A.

The school will implement the following strategies/programs for those requiring support after experiencing bullying as either a target, witness, or instigator: Peer Mediation; Counsellor referral; Universal year-group wellbeing discussions (including outside organization such as the graffiti workshop); Wellbeing days with a resilience focus; Year Adviser referral/continued support.

All reported incidents of bullying will be formally recorded in Sentral and appropriate staff members notified in accordance with Incident Reporting Procedures. Where significant bullying has been determined, parents/caregivers of those concerned will be informed.

Serious incidents of assaults, threats, intimidation or harassment will be reported to the police and Incident Support Unit.

The Mandatory Reporter Guide and Child Protection guidelines will be referenced to determine if a report is necessary. Where appropriate the Child Wellbeing Unit or Community Services will be informed.

Any suggestions, complaints and allegations to the school will be dealt with according to Department of Education Policy: Complaints Handling Policy PD/2002/0051/V05). The Complaints Handling Policy establishes the standard approach to resolving complaints, including complaints about the way a reported incident of bullying has been managed and it is required that it be used in all learning and working environments of the department of education and training. If a student is suspended, parents are able to appeal the decision as per DET Suspension and Expulsion of School Students – Procedures which is provided to parents with a letter notifying of suspension.

The school will respond to changes in patterns of bullying indicated by data on Sentral, after consultation with relevant staff.

The Anti-bullying Plan will be promoted and publicised through internal school systems with all stakeholders such as Staff Meetings, P&C Meetings, Year Meetings and school assemblies. The Anti-bullying Plan is available on the Nepean Creative and Performing Arts High School

website, within the enrolment package and updates will be notified in the Link Newsletter.

All available data previously mentioned will be analysed to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the Anti-bullying Plan. Data on bullying leading to suspensions, entries on Sentral, referrals to staff and reports from students and parents will provide essential information to monitor and evaluate the Anti-bullying Plan.

The Annual School Report will be used to communicate the effectiveness of the Anti-bullying Plan to the school community.

The school will review the Anti-bullying Plan every three years in consultation with staff, students, parents and community.

## Additional Information

Beyond Blue - 1300 22 4636

Kids Helpline – 1800 55 1800

Headspace (Penrith) – 47208 800

## Principal's comment

As the Principal of Nepean Creative Arts High School I am committed to a school that is free from bullying, harassment and intimidation of all forms. While prejudice and discrimination may exist in the world beyond our school gates they have no place in our classrooms or on our grounds.

I recognise and remind you that it is the responsibility of each and every one of us to: protect, respect and uphold the dignity of all who are members of the Nepean Creative and Performing Arts High School community.

Glen Turner – Head Teacher Engagement, Enrichment and Recognition

**The Anti-Bullying Plan – NSW Department of Education**

Max Foord – School Principal

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## Resources in developing this plan:

<http://www.prevention-violence.com/en/ext-110.asp>