



Department of  
Education



# **PREVENTING AND MANAGING BULLYING**

Guidelines for Byford Secondary College

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These guidelines are provided to outline the approaches and strategies for the prevention and management of bullying implemented at Byford Secondary College. The prevention and management of bullying is incorporated within the College's *Managing Student Behaviour* plan.

## **Rationale**

Bullying is a learnt behaviour which is unacceptable and can be successfully changed. Our College takes an educative approach to managing and preventing bullying. The College's processes and activities promote the development of the values and behaviours that create and maintain inclusive, safe and supportive education environments.

All members of our College community are committed to ensuring a safe and supportive environment where all members have the right to be respected and have a responsibility to respect each other.

## **Definitions**

*Bullying is when an individual or group misuses power to target another individual or group to intentionally threaten or harm them on more than one occasion. This may involve verbal, physical, relational and psychological forms of bullying. Teasing or fighting between peers is not necessarily bullying.<sup>1</sup>*

Confirming if the behaviours were intentional is not required to implement the strategies for responding effectively. Young people involved in bullying are not always fully aware of the impact of their actions on others. It is more important to act as a result of the effects on the targeted individual immaterial of the determination of intent.

Bullying involves:

- **Verbal Bullying**: The repeated use of words to hurt or humiliate another individual or group. Verbal bullying includes using put-downs, insulting language, name-calling, swearing, nasty notes and homophobic, racist or sexist comments.
- **Emotional/Psychological Bullying**: Includes repeated stalking, threats or implied threats, unwanted email or text messaging, abusive websites, threatening gestures, manipulation, emotional blackmail, and threats to an individual's reputation and sense of safety.
- **Relational Bullying**: Usually involves repeatedly ostracising others by leaving them out or convincing others to exclude or reject another individual or group, making up or spreading rumours, and sharing or threatening to share another's personal information.
- **Physical Bullying**: Includes repetitive low level hitting, kicking, pinching, pushing, tripping, 'ganging up', unwanted physical or sexual touching and damage to personal property. More serious violent behaviours are not necessarily treated as bullying and may be better managed through the College's discipline processes.
- **Cyber Bullying**: Involves the use of information and communication technologies such as email, text messages, instant messaging and websites to engage in the bullying of other individuals or groups. This technology provides an alternative means for verbal, relational and psychological forms of bullying.

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<sup>1</sup> *Behaviour Management in Schools* policy, Department of Education

- **Bystanders:** Bystanders are those who are aware of, or witnesses to, bullying but are not directly involved in bullying or being bullied themselves. All members of our College community need to know how to support those who are being bullied and how to discourage bullying behaviours. Any member of the College community can be a bystander and can learn ways to act successfully in preventing or stopping bullying.

## **Terminology**

The Department of Education promotes the use of affirmative language that supports the values of the *National Safe Colleges Framework 2011* and *Australian Curriculum* (i.e. Civic and Citizenship curriculum).

The terms 'bullies' and 'victims' are not recommended as appropriate terminology to use when identifying, reporting, recording and responding to bullying incidents. More appropriate terms to use may include 'bullied students', 'students who are bullied', 'students who bully' and 'students who engage in bullying behaviour'. This will ensure that the unacceptable behaviours are addressed in a manner that supports the individuals involved to learn and demonstrate more acceptable social behaviours without the impact of enduring labels.

## **Rights and Responsibilities of Byford College Community Members**

Members of the College community have the right to expect that Colleges are safe and supportive learning environments. This expectation comes with a shared responsibility by the whole-College community to prevent and effectively respond to behaviours that have the potential to affect College safety and wellbeing, including bullying.

By ensuring all members of the College community have explicit knowledge of their responsibilities and support to develop the required skills to fulfil them, each member will be better equipped to ensure that the rights of all are supported.

The whole-College community includes students, staff, parents, caregivers and the wider community who interact within the College context. The following is the Byford Secondary College framework for rights and responsibilities.

## Rights and Responsibilities of Byford Secondary College Community Members

MEMBERS	RIGHTS	RESPONSIBILITIES
<b>All students, teachers, parents, wider College community</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• are safe and supported in the College environment</li> <li>• are included</li> <li>• are treated with respect</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• participate and contribute to College positive behaviour programs</li> <li>• build positive relationships</li> <li>• demonstrate respect and tolerance towards others</li> </ul>
<b>College leadership</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• is supported in developing the College's plan to prevent and effectively manage bullying</li> <li>• is supported in implementing the strategies and programs under the College's plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provides leadership in resourcing the College's plan</li> <li>• ensures the College community is informed of the plan</li> <li>• implements the plan</li> <li>• supports staff to implement the strategies and programs under the plan</li> </ul>
<b>Staff</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• feel safe and supported in the workplace</li> <li>• are informed of the college's plan on bullying</li> <li>• have access to professional learning in preventing and effectively managing bullying</li> <li>• have access to curriculum resources suitable for supporting students in building positive relationships, resiliency, safety and bullying prevention (including social/emotional learning)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• promote and model positive relationships</li> <li>• participate in developing the College plan</li> <li>• identify and respond to bullying incidents</li> <li>• deliver the strategies and programs to students in responding to bullying effectively</li> <li>• promote effective bystander behaviour</li> <li>• promote social problem-solving</li> <li>• use appropriate terminology when referring to bullying and the students involved</li> </ul>
<b>Students</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have access to curriculum that supports the building of resiliency and social skills</li> <li>• are informed of the College's plan on bullying</li> <li>• are provided with supports to stop bullying</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understand and value the concepts of inclusion and tolerance</li> <li>• identify and respond effectively to bullying</li> <li>• are aware of themselves as bystanders</li> <li>• seek help for themselves and others as needed</li> </ul>
<b>Parents/Carers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• are treated with respect</li> <li>• are confident their children are provided with a safe and supportive College environment</li> <li>• are provided with access to information on the prevention and management of bullying</li> <li>• are informed of the College's plan and opportunities to participate</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• support and encourage children to treat others with respect and tolerance</li> <li>• act in accordance with the College plan if they observe/know about bullying</li> <li>• encourage children to report bullying incidents</li> <li>• work effectively with the College in responding to bullying</li> </ul>
<b>Wider community: including other professionals</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• are strategically included in prevention and bullying management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provide support and input into the College's approach to preventing and managing bullying</li> </ul>

## **Whole-College Prevention Strategies**

The preventive whole-school structures and strategies that Byford Secondary College implements include the following:

- promotion of a whole-school student support approach with shared leadership;
- promotion of collaborative relationships between the College, parents and the wider community on developing and implementing College-based strategies and programs with students;
- development of a positive whole-school *Managing Student Behaviour* plan based on the teaching and recognition of respectful and pro-social behaviour;
- developing active, respectful and trusting relationships within the whole College community;
- established a skilled and resourced Student Services support team;
- provision of professional learning for staff and parents in identifying, preventing and addressing bullying;
- development of a whole-school social competency development curriculum;
- implement strategies such as *MindMatters*, *KidsMatter*, *Friendly Schools Plus*;
- promote a College culture that seeks to be proactive and restore relationships affected by persistent or unresolved conflict;
- promote positive staff role modelling; and
- implement a regular collaborative cycle of evaluation and review of the implemented strategies.

### **Preventive whole-school classroom strategies:**

- develop supportive and inclusive classroom environments;
- implement effective classroom behaviour management approaches that teach and encourage positive behaviours, and address negative behaviours effectively;
- recognise and reinforce positive communication, empathy, tolerance and social problem solving;
- promote the use of cooperative learning strategies;
- implement evidence-based programs such as *Friendly Colleges Plus*, *PATHS* and *Aussie Optimism*;
- encourage and support help-seeking and effective bystander behaviour;
- utilise social problem-solving approaches to resolve peer-based conflicts;
- implement developmental social/emotional learning curriculum which starts from the transition to secondary education onwards and includes:
  - understanding what behaviours constitute bullying;
  - understanding the impact of bullying;
  - the development of effective bystander behaviour;
  - the development of positive social problem solving skills; and
  - understanding cyber-bullying, including strategies for the promotion of cyber safety and positive cyber citizenship.

### **School yard strategies include:**

- a highly visible and active approach to supervision on College grounds;
- implementation of identification of and supervision adjustments to high-risk situations and settings;
- the development of a range of organised activities during break times that encourage positive peer relations and networks;
- recognise and reinforce positive school yard and pro-social behaviour; and
- develop and communicate whole-school processes for responding to school yard problem behaviours.

### **Planning, monitoring and review processes include:**

Byford Secondary College will:

- set a timeline for review and updating;
- use appropriate assessment tools to measure current bullying issues and the College's progress towards achievement targets (snap-shot measures);
- gain input from all key sectors of the College community in the review process;
- use existing data to monitor changes over time (longitudinal measures);
- make adjustments to the selected strategies and programs based on the data;
- review available resources (including human resources) to ensure accessibility and suitability to the strategies and programs being implemented; and
- communicate any changes to the whole-college community.

### **Targeted Early Intervention Strategies**

Early identification and effective responses reduce the associated risks and potential long-term harms caused by bullying.

Targeted early intervention strategies include:

- raising awareness and plan around specific forms of bullying, such as cyber-bullying and racism;
- the identification and targeting of early signs of problematic peer relationship issues within the College community;
- identification of individuals and groups at risk that require targeted programs;
- the teaching of effective bystander behaviour to targeted groups or for specific situations;
- the teaching of pro-social behaviour to identified students and groups;
- provision of high supervision areas for students with higher support needs;
- provision of effective options for individual students experiencing safety issues (such as buddy systems, alternative play areas and transition routines);
- access to specialist/pastoral care staff and case management processes for students at risk of being targeted or those who demonstrate bullying behaviour; and
- the inclusion of parents of students at risk in identifying and addressing bullying behaviours that may be occurring within the community.

## **Intervention for Bullying Incidents**

Byford Secondary College provides clearly articulated procedures for responding to incidents of bullying:

- staff are provided with the support and training to confidently manage bullying situations as they occur;
- staff, students and parents have processes for reporting incidents of bullying or when they become aware that a student needs support because of bullying;
- intervention practices that resolve conflicts, restore relationships, and promote tolerance and social problem-solving are used for responding to bullying incidents;
- there are processes for recording and monitoring bullying incidents and interventions;
- bullied students are provided with supports to promote recovery and resilience; and
- case management of students involved in persistent bullying is implemented.

### **Intervention approaches include:**

- the *Method of Shared Concern*;
- *Group Support Approach* (formerly referred to as the *No Blame Approach*);
- social problem-solving approaches;
- community conferences;
- small group and individual conferences;
- motivational interviewing;
- cooperation circles;
- *Bullying First-Aid* - teacher response/interview; and
- *Co-LATE Model* - teacher interview process from *Friendly Colleges Plus*.

**NOTE:** In situations which have resulted in significant harm or where violence has occurred, behaviour management sanctions may need to be implemented. Sanctions are also warranted where the application of evidence-based methods as described above have been unsuccessful in resolving the problem.