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.
Our 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 and Communities.

At the beginning of each year the P & C will be given a copy of the Anti-Bullying policy and invited to provide feedback. Parts of the Anti-Bullying plan will be placed in the newsletter at the beginning of each year, particularly highlighting the responsibilities of each of the stakeholders in the school community.

Statement of purpose

In our school’s Statement of Purpose, staff and community agreed that part of providing the best education for our children included a commitment to provide a stable, safe and ordered environment, promoting inclusion and developing student self esteem and self worth.

At Londonderry Public School we believe that all people have the right to feel safe, both physically and psychologically. Bullying impacts negatively on the people involved, interfering with their right to learn and feel secure, and damaging their sense of well being.

Protection

Our school community views all forms of bullying behaviour as unacceptable and all stakeholders will work together to create a safe learning environment for all students. As a PBL school, Londonderry Public School adopts a school ethos of “Learning and Participating Safely and Respectfully”. A safe learning environment is promoted by all staff for all students.

Bullying is a systematic abuse of power involving deliberate hurtful gestures, words or actions which are repeated over time and can involve violence. Bullying involves racist and sexist harassment and any other forms of discriminatory behaviour and may occur because of peoples’ inability to accept or value differences. Cyberbullying refers to bullying through information and communication technologies. (See the school’s Social Media Policy).

Students, parents, caregivers and teachers accept shared responsibility in preventing, reporting and responding to bullying behaviour.

Prevention

Students are explicitly taught what bullying is and the role of ‘enablers’ in supporting bullying behaviours. All classes participate in anti-bullying lessons which include positive behaviours for learning and strategies to counter bullying behaviour. All classes participate in ‘Play is the Way’ lessons which explicitly teach expected behaviours in all settings. This program aims to enhance pro-social behaviour and develop tolerance through the use of physically interactive games as well as specific timetabled lessons teaching social skills. Emphasis is placed on teaching the ‘Golden Rule’ (Treat others the way you would like them to treat you). Strategies to deal with bullying behaviour include prevention, early intervention and response.

Early Intervention

Students identified as being at risk of developing long-term difficulties with social relationships and those identified as having previously experienced bullying or engaged in bullying behaviour will be referred to the LST and appropriate strategies will be implemented and monitoring procedures put into place. Parents/caregivers and outside agencies will be consulted when deemed necessary.

Whole school strategies include:

- implementation of the ‘Play is the Way’ program K-6
- teaching for and about diversity
- using the curriculum (imbedding Aboriginal Education) to teach about respectful relationships
implementing a Peer Support Program based on Values Education and Making Friendships

informing the school community about bullying issues via the school newsletter and website

**Response**

- Students are taught to identify and define the difference between conflict and bullying
- The role of enablers is taught and appropriate actions for witnesses/bystanders are taught
- Students are taught strategies to problem solve, resolve conflict and anger management skills
- Students who experience or witness bullying behaviours are taught to report such behaviours immediately to a teacher

The usual method of reporting will be verbally. After receiving notification, the teacher will investigate the incident in a timely manner. Executive support should be sought as deemed necessary. Incidents will be recorded on RISC and appropriate actions will be implemented as advised by the LST. Parents/caregivers will be advised of the incident and consulted throughout the process of intervention and/or consequences.

Each bullying incident is unique and as such should be dealt with on an individual basis. Serious incidents will be referred to the LST and appropriate strategies will be sought and implemented.

Serious incidents involving assaults, threats, intimidation or harassment will be reported to the police.

A member from the school executive will contact the Child Wellbeing Unit or Community Services where appropriate.

In case of dissatisfaction regarding the handling of an incident, the complainant will be directed to follow appeal procedures as set out in the departmental Complaints Handling Policy.

Patterns of bullying behaviour will be identified through analysis of RISC data. Once patterns have been identified, the school Welfare Team will meet to decide on an appropriate course of action.

The school has a responsibility to provide regular updates to parents and caregivers about the management of bullying incidents that have been reported to the school. Individual parents and caregivers who have children directly affected by bullying will be contacted personally by a school LST member or executive to give current feedback on specific incidents. The wider school community will be invited to participate in schoolwide surveys regularly to gauge the severity and occurrence of bullying within the school. This will provide feedback as to trends in bullying within the school as well as student and parent satisfaction regarding the manner in which the school deals with bullying incidents.

The school’s Anti-bullying plan will be reviewed every three years with the school community. All stakeholders will be invited to participate in the review process through such means as surveys and meetings.

**Additional Information**

- Penrith Police Youth Liaison Officer (YLO) ph. 47219363
- Kids Helpline ph. 1800 55 1800

**Principal’s comment**

Our aim at Londonderry Public School is to create and maintain a safe, friendly and happy environment for all students. We want Londonderry PS to be a place where our children want to be and know they are cared about.

The principal has an open door policy. Parents, staff and students know they will be given time if there is a problem.
Team members
Joy Connolly – Principal
Bev. Bullock – Relieving Assistant Principal
Kelly Garlick – Relieving Assistant Principal

School contact information
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