

Waranara School: POLICY & PROCEDURES STATEMENT

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

POLICY SCOPE: This policy applies to all Waranara School Teachers, support staff and volunteers, as well as students and parents/carers.

POLICY APPLICATION: The policy will be used to ensure Waranara Centre students and staff maintain positive and respectful interpersonal relationships and interactions. The policy provides a guide to the various responsibilities associated with this conduct, and strategies to address inappropriate behaviour.

POLICY OUTLINE

CONTEXT

Activities and operations at Waranara School are overseen by the school's auspice agency, Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand. Good Shepherd operates a range of diverse programs, including the Waranara School, where young people from differing backgrounds may come together to engage in common activities. Positive relationships between all young people engaged in these programs are vital, in order that they are most effectively supported to achieve their education and personal goals. A formal policy clearly communicates to students, staff, parents/carers, and the broader community Waranara School's behavioural requirements and expectations in relation to bullying.

POLICY STATEMENT

Respectful relationships are a fundamental to the success and effectiveness of Waranara School, alongside student safety, inclusivity and equity. Bullying, discrimination, verbal/physical abuse, and violence is rejected under all circumstances, as they are fundamentally at odds with the school's values regarding the right of all individuals to respect and dignity. It is therefore viewed as unacceptable for any student, employee, parent, caregiver or other stakeholder to experience bullying in any form. In line with a restorative practices' framework, Waranara School views the prevention of bullying as a shared responsibility of the entire school community, including staff members, students, and parents/carers.

PURPOSE

This policy is designed to provide school staff with an overview of current best practice approaches to address the issue of bullying. It presents a practical guide to prevention and early intervention strategies, outlining how to respond in situations where instances of bullying are observed or reported.

PRINCIPLES

Waranara School shares the underpinning values of its governing agency Good Shepherd Australia New Zealand, which endorses the importance of respect, dignity, compassion, and the inherent worth of all people. Where these are compromised due to instances of bullying or threatening behaviour between school participants, Waranara School will seek to respond in a timely and consistent manner, using restorative practice principles as an effective means to address and resolve issues that may arise.

PROCEDURES FOR RESPONSIBLE PARTIES

GOOD SHEPHERD GENERAL MANAGER, SAFETY & RESILIENCE /WARANARA SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

To contribute to the development of an environment that is free of bullying, Waranara School Principal and Good Shepherd General manager, Safety and Resilience will:

- Ensure that all staff have read and are familiar with the Waranara School Anti-bullying Policy and Action Plan at induction stage.
- Ensure that the school Anti-Bullying Policy and Action Plan are implemented effectively, through on-going reporting and monitoring mechanisms.
- Ensure that all staff responsible for the direct supervision of groups of young people at Waranara School receive additional training on effective responses to bullying behaviours and consequences where required.
- Document all instances of bullying, with statistics collected to accurately reflect the instances of bullying within Waranara School.
- Display Anti-Bullying Posters prominently in common areas within Waranara School, and all other Good Shepherd youth-focused programs
- To initiate a review of Waranara School anti-bullying policy in response to any emerging trends, additional best-practice information, or information that will enhance the effectiveness of our prevention of/response to issues of bullying within the school.
- Ensure that Waranara School's student orientation procedures and school information booklets clearly outline the Anti-Bullying Policy, with relevant documentation distributed to all students and parents/carers.
- Oversee the provision of support to students who may have been subject to instances of bullying, ensuring that they receive a level of internal pastoral care, therapeutic intervention or external referral that is appropriate to the circumstances and their individual requirements.
- Use restorative practices' principles as part of disciplinary strategies implemented with students who are found to have participated in bullying behaviour. This may involve stakeholder conferencing, reflective problem-solving activities, or alternative behaviour mapping. Young people will be provided with information about clear alternatives to bullying within a non-punitive framework, and the consequences of on-going behaviour that contravenes their student rights and responsibilities contract.
- Provide contact information to students and parents/carers for external schools and personnel who can provide additional support and assistance in relation to bullying, including local Police Youth Liaison Officers. These details are also included in Information Booklets provided to young people and families at Waranara School at orientation stage.
- Implement the strategies outlined in the Anti-Bullying Action Plan, overseeing the effective facilitation of restorative justice processes and principles that underpin the school response to instances of bullying.

ALL WARANARA SCHOOL STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS

- To intervene appropriately in any situation where bullying is reported or observed. Appropriate responses are to be developed in collaboration with Waranara School Principal, the formal Anti-Bullying Action Plan, and in consultation with young people, parents (where required) and other Good Shepherd program staff where relevant.
- Bullying behaviour that occurs off premises and outside school hours is to be deemed part of Waranara School's scope of responsibility and duty of care, where there is a clear and close relationship between the school and a student's conduct. Staff members are to

action reports of bullying in this context according to standard school policy and procedure, unless otherwise advised by Waranara School Principal or Good Shepherd General Manager, Safety and Resilience.

- To model appropriate respectful relationships and behaviour for young people and families who access Waranara School, with bullying between staff members or between staff and young people prohibited in all circumstances.
- Contribute to an on-going dialogue about the effectiveness of Waranara School's Anti-bullying policies and procedures, providing relevant input and suggestions at Waranara School Team meetings or Good Shepherd whole-of-agency staff meetings, about strategies that may improve school outcomes in relation to these issues.

WARANARA SCHOOL PAID EMPLOYEES

- Integrate anti-bullying content and/or workshops into teaching and learning programs delivered for young people at the Waranara School.
- To display anti-bullying posters and support service information at high visibility locations within Waranara School
- To ensure the issue of bystander action/inaction is discussed in education workshops presented in relation to bullying behaviour, and all students are informed and empowered to respond as a supportive and safe bystander.
- To respond to ALL incidents of reported bullying at Waranara School, consulting with the Anti-Bullying Action Plan, school Principal and Good Shepherd General manager, Safety and resilience about appropriate responses and interventions.
- To identify young people who may be deemed to be at higher risk of bullying, due to previous exposure to bullying or power imbalances within school group dynamics.
- Document all incidences of bullying observed and reported, in student files and on the School Bullying Register. Where required, incidents related to high risk behaviours will be recorded in an *Incident Report*.
- Encourage greater awareness and respect for diversity within Waranara School, with the intentional use of language that is inclusive of those young people from culturally diverse and GLBTGI backgrounds.
- To provide support to young people who have been adversely affected by bullying behaviour, as victims or witnesses, and to support students who engaged in bullying behaviour through restorative interventions that promote alternative behaviour and respectful relationships.
- To report all behaviour that constitutes a criminal offence to Police, in consultation with Waranara School's Principal and Good Shepherd General manager, Safety and Resilience.
- To ensure that all young people who are enrolled at Waranara School have signed a *Student Rights and Responsibilities Form*, which verifies that they are aware bullying behaviour is not acceptable under any circumstances.

REFERENCES

DEFINITIONS

→ **Bullying:** A pattern of repeated physical, verbal, psychological or social aggression that is directed towards a specific student by someone with more power, and is intended to cause harm, distress, and/or fear.

Face-to-face bullying (sometimes referred to as direct bullying) involves physical actions such as punching or kicking or overt verbal actions such as name-calling and insulting.

Covert bullying (sometimes referred to as indirect bullying) is a subtle type of non-physical bullying which isn't easily seen by others and is conducted out of sight, and often unacknowledged by adults.'

Cyber-bullying occurs through the use of information or communication technologies such as Instant Messaging, text messages, email and social networking sites. It has many similarities with offline bullying but it differs in that the student(s) who is/are bullying can be anonymous, it can reach a wide audience and the sent or uploaded material can be difficult to remove.

Most students who cyber-bully also bully off-line. It is now recognised that many forms of covert bullying appear to have significant potential for serious harm.

(Source: *National Safe Schools Framework: Resources Manual*, MCEECDYA, 2011)

→ Bullying can involve humiliation, domination, intimidation, victimisation and all forms of harassment, including that based on sex, race, disability, homosexuality and transgender. Conflict or fights between equals, or single incidents, are not defined as bullying.

(Source: *Bullying: Preventing and Responding to Student Bullying in Schools Policy*, NSW Department of Education and Training)

→ Bullying behaviour can be:

- **verbal** e.g. name calling, teasing, abuse, putdowns, sarcasm, insults, threats
- **physical** e.g. hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting
- **social** e.g. ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating, making inappropriate gestures
- **psychological** e.g. spreading rumours, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions, malicious SMS and email messages, inappropriate use of camera phones.

(Source: *Taking Action Keeping Safe: A resource for student leaders to counter bullying*, NSW Education and Communities Department)

FORMS

- *Student Rights and Responsibilities Form*
- *Student Guidelines Form*
- *Incident Report Form*
- *School Bullying Register*

LEGISLATION

Commonwealth legislation that relates to bullying, harassment, discrimination and violence includes:

- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*
- *Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) Act 1986*
- *Racial Discrimination Act 1975*
- *Racial Hatred Act 1995*
- *Sex Discrimination Act 1984*

OTHER REFERENCES

www.bullyingnoway.com.au

CyberSmart Kids

www.cybersmart.com.au

LawStuff

www.lawstuff.org.au

Kids Help Line

www.kidshelp.com.au

National Centre Against Bullying

www.ncab.org.au

Reach Out

www.reachout.com.au

Think U Know

www.thinkuknow.org.au

Ken Rigby

www.KenRigby.net