Anti-bullying Plan
Matraville Soldiers’ Settlement Public School Review for 2013
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.

Soldiers' Settlement Public School anti-bullying plan can be found on the school’s website at the following address and from the school’s front office:


Statement of purpose

At Soldiers’ Settlement Public School our aim is to instil the values of:

- Learning;
- Respectful; and
- Responsible behaviours within all students.

Bullying is not an accepted quality of a caring and concerned citizen. It is socially unacceptable and contrary to the Matraville Soldiers’ Settlement Public School Welfare and Discipline Policy.

Protection

All students, staff and parents have the right to come to school secure in the knowledge that their safety will be protected. As all individuals have various ways of coping methods, bullying affects them in different ways. At Soldiers' Settlement It is our aim to provide an anti-bullying plan supported by practices that aim to:

- Ensure that all members of the school community are treated with respect
- Foster better relationships
- Encourage staff and students to take positive steps to avoid hurting others
- Reduce/eradicate bullying at Soldiers' Settlement Public School
- Promote healthy relationships

Bullying is a sustained intentional behaviour by an individual or group of individuals that causes upset, distress, hurt, or an intense sense of fear. Bullying involves intentional and willful misuse of power in relationships. Bullying often seems to involve direct or indirect harassment, humiliation, violent or physical domination and or intimidation of others.

Bullying may be:

- **physical** (hitting, kicking, pinching);
- **verbal** (name-calling, teasing);
- **psychological** (stand over tactics, gestures);
- **social** (exclusion and ignoring others); or
- **emotional** (rumours, putdowns)

- may be done directly (e.g. face to face) or indirectly (e.g. via mobiles or the internet- cyber bullying);
- may be motivated by jealousy, distrust, fear, misunderstanding or lack of knowledge;
- has an element of threat; and
- can continue over time.
Parents have a right to expect that their children will be educated in a secure environment in which care, courtesy and respect for the rights of others are encouraged. Parents are asked to support the school in its efforts to maintain a positive teaching and learning environment by reinforcing to their child the expectation to show positive learning, respectful and responsible behaviours and reporting incidents of bullying behaviour directly to school staff. Teachers have the responsibility of maintaining a positive climate of respectful relationships in preventing and responding to bullying behaviour.

Prevention

At Soldiers’ Settlement Public School we:

- promote our Anti-Bullying Policy, Welfare and Discipline Policy and school rules to set an appropriate code of behaviour for all students, through relevant reminders, assemblies and school newsletter.
- Staff promote positive student behaviour through weekly recognition in assembly and in class, including the Positive Behaviour for Learning awards (PBL).
- provide regular and relevant professional development for staff.
- promote the Anti-Bullying Policy and its implementation by parents through discussion of its meaning and implications for their children.
- are active in working through classroom and playground issues through the Bounce Back program. The staff and community encourage students to report any form of bullying and reassure them it is not “dobbing”. It is everyone’s responsibility to report bullying, regardless of the circumstances.
- are vigilant and aware both in the classroom and when on duty in the playground. They record issues and students of concern into the playground book as well as to the assistant principals. This is then passed on to staff during the weekly staff meeting to ensure a whole school approach to problems of bullying.

Early Intervention

Soldiers’ Settlement Public School implements early intervention strategies and programs through the ‘Bounce Back’ program for students who are identified as being at risk of developing long-term difficulties with social relationships and those students who are identified at or after enrolment as having previously experienced bullying or engaged in bullying behaviour.

Strategies may include individual behaviour plans and goals that focus on targeted behaviours and ‘Bounce Back’ social skills lessons.

Staff attend professional development related to bullying and the strategies to counteract it. Awareness and input relating to anti-bullying, its characteristics and the schools programs is raised through weekly newsletters and P & C meetings. The school provides programs that promote resilience, life skills and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and communication skills. Staff ensure students know and understand what behaviour is acceptable in the school (i.e. consistent classroom/school rules displayed in the school).

Response

At Soldiers’ Settlement we follow the principles of restorative justice in the first instance. We focus on repairing the harm done to people and relationships. The restorative approach allows the student to make amends and shed the offender label.

A restorative approach to conflict or wrongdoing consists in asking 4 Key Questions:

1. What has happened?
2. Who has been affected?
3. How can we involve everyone who has been affected in finding a way forward?
4. How can everyone do things differently in the future?
However, if the student does not take responsibility for the harm caused nor attempts to change their behaviour, other measures may be implemented such as:

- Conferences with the Assistant Principal when bullying is known to be occurring.
- Parents are notified by telephone and letter.
- Interview with parents and assistant principal or principal if bullying continues.
- Loss of privileges
- Short suspension in school and out of school.
- Should bullying continue, referral to school or community counselling.
- Long suspension from school.
- Expulsion from school.

Staff, parents, and students all have different responsibilities in response to bullying:

**School staff have a responsibility to:**
- respect and support students;
- model and promote appropriate behaviours;
- respond in a timely manner to incidents of bullying in the classroom and the playground according to the school’s anti-bullying plan,
- recording incidents using the restorative justice system;
- through the Bounce Back program we teach social skills and anti-bullying strategies to develop an understanding of bullying and its impact on individuals and the broader community; and
- record any interventions regarding bullying and what a teacher is doing on the student welfare database.

**Students have a responsibility to:**
- Behave appropriately, respecting individual differences and diversity;
- Follow this anti-bullying plan; and
- Report incidents of bullying according to their school anti-bullying plan.

**Parents and caregivers have a responsibility to:**
- Listen carefully to your child;
- stay calm;
- get accurate details;
- give your child strategies to cope. Practice these strategies with your child;
- encourage your child to be proud of their and others’ differences, particularly those with special needs;
- should the problem persist seek assistance from the class teacher; and
- further support should be sought from the Assistant Principals or the Principal.

The Soldiers’ Settlement Public School Anti-bullying Plan will be available to the school community on the school website and in hard copy from the front office. The Plan will be reviewed every year along with the School Plan. The Plan will be reviewed in consultation with the school community and an evaluation of school data. Parent evaluation surveys will be sent out to collect information regarding the schools response to bullying incidents and the provision of provided relevant and update information to parents and carers. The effectiveness of the Matraville Soldiers’ Settlement Public School Anti-Bullying Plan will be reported yearly in the Annual School Report.

**Principal’s comment**
At Soldiers’ Settlement we take a whole school approach towards bullying and bullying behaviours. We endeavour to promote a bully free environment by educating parents, students and staff to:

- develop a common understanding of the definition of bullying
- develop a consistent approach to deal with bullying
- ensure that parents of all students are informed and updated in a timely manner
- provide support to students to develop appropriate strategies/behaviours

**School contact information**
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**Kids Helpline**
Website: www.kidshelp.com.au/kids/  Phone: 1800 55 1800