Anti-bullying Plan

Erina Heights Public School – Revised 2022

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.

Principals must ensure that the school implements an Anti-bullying Plan that is developed collaboratively with students, school staff, parents, caregivers, and the community and includes strategies for:

❖ developing a shared understanding of bullying behaviour that captures all forms of bullying including cyber-bullying

❖ developing a statement of purpose that outlines individual and shared responsibilities of students, parents, caregivers and teachers for preventing and responding to bullying behaviour

❖ maintaining a positive climate of respectful relationships where bullying is less likely to occur

❖ developing and implementing programs for bullying prevention

❖ embedding anti-bullying messages into each curriculum area and in every year

❖ developing and implementing early intervention support for students who are identified by the school as being at risk of developing long-term difficulties with social relationships

❖ developing and implementing early intervention support for those students who are identified at or after enrolment as having previously experienced bullying or engaged in bullying behaviour

❖ empowering the whole school community to recognise and respond appropriately to bullying, harassment and victimisation and behave as responsible bystanders

❖ developing and publicising clear procedures for reporting incidents of bullying to the school

❖ responding to incidents of bullying that have been reported to the school quickly and effectively

❖ matching a planned combination of interventions to the particular incident of bullying

❖ providing support to any student who has been affected by, engaged in or witnessed bullying behaviour

❖ providing regular updates, within the bounds of privacy legislation, to parents or caregivers about the management of the incidents

❖ identifying patterns of bullying behaviour and responding to such patterns monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the Plan reporting annually to the school community on the effectiveness of the Anti-bullying Plan through the Annual School Report (ASR).

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.

Our Anti-bullying Policy defines the rights and responsibilities of students, staff and parents so that the whole school community is able to co-operate and support the policy guidelines. The Anti-bullying Plan will be available on the school website to all families and a link to the document will be provided to new families as part of our Parent Information Sessions and Kinder Orientation Program. Teachers will ensure the rights and responsibilities are discussed with their classes at the beginning of each year, and at other times, to ensure maximum understanding.

All members of the school community contribute to the prevention of bullying by modelling and promoting appropriate behaviour and respectful relationships.

Statement of Purpose

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.

At Erina Heights Public School we believe that learning is a lifelong process. Within our school community, each member is recognised as an individual with potential skills, abilities and gifts, which need to be shared and developed. This will occur in a cohesive, supportive, safe, fun, happy and stimulating environment where creativity and flexibility are encouraged and respected. Within this context we do not tolerate bullying or harassment in any form.

Protection

At Erina Heights Public School we have identified bullying as follows:

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. It can have long-term effects on those involved.
Bullying can happen:

- face-to-face (e.g. pushing, tripping, name-calling)
- at a distance (e.g. spreading rumours, excluding someone)
- through information and communications technologies (e.g. use of SMS, email, chat rooms).

Some conflicts between children are a normal part of growing up and are to be expected. These conflicts or fights between equals and single incidents are not considered bullying, even though they may be upsetting and need to be resolved. Identifying bullying can sometimes be difficult. Bullying is often conducted out of sight of teachers and children may be reluctant to report bullying.

Cyber-bullying refers to bullying through information and communication technologies. Cyber-bullying can be carried out through an internet service such as:
- email
- chat room
- discussion group or forum
- instant messaging
- social networking websites such as Instagram, Facebook, or YouTube.

Cyber-bullying can also include bullying through mobile phones by:

- text and picture messaging
- video clips
- phone calls.

The incidence of electronic bullying is ever increasing as students have greater access to mobile phones and the internet. Students are not allowed to access social networking sites such as Facebook, YouTube, snapchat or Instagram or any such new innovations within social networking at Erina Heights Public School. All mobile phones are handed in at the office by students at the beginning of the school day and retrieved at the end. Students attending overnight excursions are permitted to have phones for the purpose of taking photographs only. A Mobile Phone Agreement is signed by students and parents prior to each excursion. Should an incident of bullying involving an electronic medium occur at school then the school will deal with the issue by following the Student Wellbeing Policy and School Discipline and Effective Management Policy.

Where incidents of cyber-bullying are impacting on the learning of any student, the staff at Erina Heights Public School will respond to these incidents depending upon the circumstances and the content of the cyber-bullying.

Cyber-safety

Teaching your child to be cyber-safe will help them to engage with the online world safely and positively and protect them from online risks.

Prevention

Early Intervention

In a safe and supportive school, the risk from all types of harm is minimised, diversity is valued and all members of the school community feel respected and included and can be confident that they will receive support in the face of any threats to their safety or wellbeing.

At Erina Heights Public School we promote and provide a supportive learning community where all students feel and are safe. Students have a fundamental right to learn in a safe, supportive environment and to be treated with respect. Similarly, parents and other local community members have the right to feel safe, supported and respected in the school content.

School communities working together with staff, students and families can recognise, challenge and address issues that arise within the school.

At our school we have identified the following features as likely to be the most effective in preventing and reducing bullying:

❖ A whole-school approach that includes the explicit teaching of anti-bullying skills and the implementation of Positive Behaviour for Learning strategies to promote positive relationships.
❖ An increased awareness of bullying in the school community through assemblies, 'Everybody Matters Week", other focus days and student-owned plans and activities.
❖ A whole-school detailed policy that addresses bullying.
❖ The use of SENTRAL to document and monitor incidents of bullying.
❖ Effective classroom management and classroom rules.
❖ The promotion of a positive school environment that provides safety, security and support for students and promotes positive relationships and student wellbeing,
❖ Effective methods of student wellbeing that are consistently used, are non-hostile and non-punitive,

❖ A 'NO Blame' approach when dealing with issues of bullying is adopted by all staff,
❖ Encouragement and skill development for all students (and especially bystanders) to respond negatively to bullying behaviour and support students who are bullied,
❖ A reward system based on positive reinforcement including: Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL), PBL 'Hoot Rewards', PBL class rewards, Hoot Stamp Chart Rewards and Recognition Assembly Awards,
❖ Classroom management strategies including behaviour ladders and ClassDojo.

Early intervention may be provided by:

❖ providing opportunities for additional skill development (e.g. in pro-social values, violence prevention, respectful relationships, or social and emotional skills) for students who engage in anti-social behaviour or whose well-being is at risk,
❖ establishing positive peer relationships through the implementation of our Structured Playground Program, Student-led PBL lessons and our Kindergarten Buddy Program.
❖ the provision of parenting sessions and support,
❖ offering support in the form of peer counselling from older students (and training for this purpose),
❖ involvement of allied school staff (e.g. school psychologist or counsellor, student welfare, well-being officer, School Chaplains, school nurse, speech therapist),
❖ partnering with other specialist agencies or professionals (e.g. speech therapists, occupational therapists, mental health providers) to ensure early intervention support is made available.

LEARNING FOR LIFE

Response

In responding to incidents of bullying the following factors must be considered by all parties involved:

- ❖ Interventions need to be matched to the particular incident of bullying.
- ❖ No method of addressing bullying has been reported as 100% effective.
- ❖ More than one intervention will usually need to be implemented.
- ❖ No one intervention is appropriate in all circumstances of bullying.
- ❖ Not all hurtful behaviours are bullying, but schools address inappropriate behaviour whether or not it meets the definition of bullying.
- ❖ At **NO stage** should a parent approach another student regarding issues of bullying including to and from school; these incidents will be dealt with under the DoE Policy for **Reporting Incidents Involving Assaults, Threats, Intimidation or Harassment.**

Upstander Training

This intervention is part of our PBL program and is a proactive strategy that trains bystander students to behave in a supportive way to students who are being bullied, to intervene where feasible or to report the incident to a teacher.

Kindergarten Buddy Systems

A Kindergarten Buddy System is adopted each year to promote friendship and support between older and younger peers through collaboration between their classes, which fosters a sense of whole-school community during whole school events.

Structured Playground Program
This program provides alternative activities for those students who find the usual playground challenging. At each break time there are two organised activities available, usually one active and the other more passive. Activities are run by student leaders and supervised by teachers.

Mediation
Assisting the students involved in incidents of bullying to resolve their differences and helping them find a peaceful win-win solution or compromise. Mediation is a suitable intervention only when the imbalance of power between the students involved is not great and when each party has something to gain and to concede. It should always be voluntary and should never be used in cases of major disputes, serious bullying or assault.

Restorative Justice

Stimulating genuine remorse; helping the student displaying bullying take steps to restore damaged relationships. This intervention is usually effective only in the context of a whole school restorative practices approach.

Traditional Disciplinary Approach

Setting out clear behaviour standards and using appropriate and realistic consequences to prevent and deter the student from repeating their behaviour. Such consequences may include time out, loss of privileges, restricted play areas (Playground Passport), parent meetings, suspension, negotiated attendance or even exclusion from the school. *Research has shown that using punitive measures as the only intervention is not effective in preventing or dealing with issues of bullying.*

Executive counselling

Executive counselling is a K-6 strategy used for managing student behaviour in the playground and classroom. It operates as needed with students and their Assistant Principal on stage. These sessions give the Stage supervisor the opportunity to resolve playground and classroom issues that can't be resolved directly by the teacher on duty or in the classroom. It enables staff time to counsel and mentor students who are experiencing difficulties in the playground or classroom, to exclude certain students who repeatedly disregard the rights of

others, and to resolve complex issues in a manner that is fair to everyone involved after gathering all of the facts.

Students may be referred for the following behaviours:

- Bullying
- Continual non-compliance / defiance
- Swearing and Verbal Abuse
- Refusal to follow the teachers instructions
- Refusal to complete set class work
- Deliberate disruption to class learning
- Dangerous behaviours to self or others
- Fighting
- Willful damage to property
- Stealing
- Teasing / Tormenting
- Consistently out of bounds

On some occasions these counselling sessions may be conducted by the Deputy Principal or the Principal, depending on the severity of the incident or behaviour. Persistent misbehavior, or for more serious incidents (such as physical aggression), a warning of suspension or actual suspension may apply as outlined in the *DoE "Procedures for the Suspension & Expulsion of School Students."*

If an incident of bullying happens at Erina Heights Public School we use **Prevention, Intervention** and **Post-intervention** strategies.

Prevention strategies include:
- ❖ promoting the school's core values of PERSONAL BEST, RESPECT AND RESPONSIBLE,
- ❖ using the curriculum to teach students about respectful relationships, civics and citizenship,
- ❖ developing programs to help students participate and have a say in their learning (e.g. Student Parliament),
- ❖ teaching students about violence prevention, conflict resolution, anger management and problem-solving strategies as part of anti-bullying units and Student-led PBL lessons,

- ❖ developing policies which promote student safety,
- ❖ teaching for and about diversity and acceptance,
- ❖ providing school-based professional learning for staff addressing their identification and response to bullying.
- ❖ Regular Learning Support Team (LST), staff and stage meetings where issues of student welfare are discussed on an ongoing basis.

Intervention strategies include:

- ❖ counselling students who have been bullied,
- ❖ talking with parents or caregivers about the situation,
- ❖ putting appropriate consequences in place for those who bully others (e.g. Executive Counselling / Warning of Suspension),
- ❖ teaching students to be 'upstanders',
- ❖ ensuring that all staff know how to address bullying effectively and respectfully,

Post-intervention strategies include:

- ❖ monitoring the situation between the students to ensure that their safety and well-being are maintained,
- ❖ talking with parents or caregivers about the school's anti-bullying strategies as part of Term One Parent Information Sessions and on a needs basis throughout the year,
- ❖ restricted areas if required (playground or classroom card),
- ❖ reviewing and evaluating student wellbeing policies and strategies at weekly,
- ❖ monitoring student wellbeing through consistent centralised tracking system data.

Additional Information

Useful websites

- ❖ *NSW DoE Anti-bullying: https://education.nsw.gov.au/student-wellbeing/attendance-behaviour-and-engagement/anti-bullying/nsw-anti-bullying*
- ❖ *Kids Helpline: https://kidshelpline.com.au/*
- ❖ *Digital Citizenship: http://www.digitalcitizenship.nsw.edu.au/*
- ❖ *Bullying. No way! website: http://www.bullyingnoway.gov.au*
- ❖ *eSafetyeducation: https://www.esafety.gov.au/educators*
- ❖ *Friendly schools friendly families: https://www.communitiesthatcare.org.au/friendly-schools-and-familiesfriendly-schools-plus*

Documents

- ❖ *Bullying of Students - Prevention and Response Policy:* https://policies.education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/pd-2010-0415

Reporting Incidents Involving Assaults, Threats, Intimidation or Harassment

An incident is broadly defined in the Department's *Incident Reporting Policy* as an event which:

- ❖ causes disruption to an organisation, or
- ❖ creates danger or risk that could significantly affect individuals within the organisation, or
- ❖ impacts on the effective operation of the workplace, or
- ❖ attracts negative media attention or a negative public profile for the workplace or the Department of Education and Training, or
- ❖ Workcover describes as a "serious incident" which must be reported by law.

Such incidents that involve assaults, threats, weapons, illegal drugs and criminal activity **will** be reported to the Incident Report and Support Hotline 1800 811 523. These incidents will be reported to the Hotline as soon as possible, but within 24 hours of the incident occurring.

If a student is injured or threatened in the course of an assault at school, or while travelling to or from school if the incident is connected to the school, the principal will notify the Police. The Police will be notified regardless of whether parents, carers or students indicate that they do not want police involvement. It is not the responsibility of parents or carers to report school related incidents to police, although they also may choose to do so.

Additional Support Services may include:

- ❖ Police Youth Liaison Officer (Gosford Police) – (02) 4323 5514
- ❖ Gosford Police Station – (02) 4323 5599
- ❖ Family and Community Services – 13 21 11
- ❖ NSW Health Child Wellbeing Unit – 1300 480 420
- ❖ DoE Regional North Office – Tuggerah: (02) 4357 5300
- ❖ Incident Report and Support Hotline – 1800 811 523

Principal's Comment

I hereby certify that this document has been developed in consultation with the staff, students and parents of Erina Heights Public School. The success of anti-bullying strategies will be gauged through weekly staff meetings and LST referrals. The content will be reviewed every three years as part of the school strategic planning and will be reported to the wider school community each year through the Annual Reporting process.

Schools need to be safe and happy places for students and their teachers. Student welfare at Erina Heights Public School is enhanced when all members of the school community actively participate in the learning programs and the life of the school.

Natalie MacDonald
Principal
November, 2022

Student Wellbeing Committee

Samantha Sheather - Assistant Principal

Dale Stahl – Assistant Principal

Chloe Clarke – Assistant Principal

Jason Barnes - Assistant Principal and PBL Team Leader

Lee Baldock – Assistant Principal and Learning and Support Teacher

Amanda Schoffield – PBL Team

Kerri Kerry – PBL Team

Samantha Alce– School Psychologist

Erina Heights P & C Executive

Amy Ferrier - President

Felicia Graham - Vice President

Linley Lea - Secretary

Gail Reid - Treasurer

School Contact Information

Erina Heights Public School

2 Serpentine Rd,

Erina Heights, 2260

Phone: 02 4367 7608

Email: erinahts-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au

Website: www.erinahts-p.schools.nsw.edu.au/