



Education &  
Communities

# Anti-bullying Plan

Cammeraygal High School





# 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.

The plan has been developed by a team of teachers with input from students and parents through the school's P&C and through student focus groups.

## Statement of purpose

Cammeraygal High School is an inclusive environment where diversity is acknowledged and individual differences are respected. ALL members of the community have a shared responsibility to ensure that strategies are in place to minimise the occurrence of bullying and to deal effectively with bullying when it occurs.

The role of the bystander is constantly questioned and discussed in our wellbeing programs. We believe that the role of the bystander can be a strong deterrent to those intending on bullying others' we nurture the belief stated by the political philosopher Edmund Burke, "All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing."

## Protection

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Bullying is intentional repeated behaviour by an individual or group of individuals that causes hurt, distress or undue pressure of another. It involves the abuse of power in relationships. It can involve all forms of harassment including that which is based on:

1. Sex or gender
2. Race
3. Disability
4. Homosexuality
5. Transgender

Bullying can take many forms including:

- Cyber bullying via Facebook, texts, phone and other forms of social media
- Physical bullying and violence
- Threats, harassment and intimidation
- Emotional bullying – teasing, put downs or ignoring/exclusion

Bullying is a serious matter that can result in the victim of bullying experiencing social, psychological and learning difficulties.

It is the aim of Cammeraygal High School to be a happy and safe school with harmonious relationships between all members of the school community to promote student and staff wellbeing. All members of the school community are expected to show respect and tolerance for individual differences and diversity and behave as responsible bystanders

and digital citizens, supporting the school's anti bullying plan through words and actions.

It is important to note that our school believes that reducing bullying occurs when there is a partnership between students, staff and parents. Acting together to reinforce positive relationships is a powerful way of reducing anti-social behaviour and contributing to a safe and secure school and home environment.

## Prevention

Cammeraygal High School is aware that a child's tendency to bully stems from a number of factors. We are committed to the welfare of each child but we are also focused on making students accountable for their actions. Thus, we combine a welfare and disciplinary approach to ensure a balanced approach to treating and reducing bullying.

Strategies include:

- A strong 6-7 Transition Program developed and implemented together with our main feeder primary schools which includes a peer support-led Year 7 Orientation camp and opportunities to discuss the harmful effects of bullying in our Orientation program.
- A peer support program which links students entering year 7 with a Year 9 student trained in peer support.
- Input from our Police School Liaison Officer, both in grade meetings with all year groups and in targeted crime prevention workshops.
- Explicit classroom programs especially in PDHPE and English.
- Visiting performances which use drama and performance to role play bullying-related behaviour, its impact and coping strategies.
- Professional learning for teachers around bullying and particularly dealing with cyber bullying.

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- Consistent teaching and modelling of the core values of respect, integrity, responsibility, tolerance and inclusivity in all aspects of schooling be it in the classroom, on the sports field or on excursions.
- Recognition of positive achievement through the school newsletter and whole school assemblies
- Provision of information to parents on a regular basis through information sessions and the school newsletter about cyber-bullying, and encourage parents of cyber-bullying victims to take the matter to the police as cyber-bullying is considered a crime
- A leadership camp for all student leaders where students are trained to develop harmonious relationships with others and to take action as a 'leader' if they witness bullying
- A strong SRC team that can act to voice their concerns re bullying to staff and work with the school on developing further strategies to combat bullying
- Rewarding positive behaviour which is seen to be actively reducing bullying from students through the merit system

## Early Intervention

For students identified as being at risk of developing long-term difficulties with social relationships and/or a history of being bullied or engaging in bullying behaviour the school implements a range of programs. These include:

- Behaviour support for students identified by their primary school as at risk
- Access to and counselling by their Year Adviser, the Deputy Principal or the School Counsellor

- Mentoring and other support programs through the Learning Support and Wellbeing Teams
- Adult mentoring programs including Raise Mentoring
- Learning Coach conversations with Learning Coaches to set academic and social goals and to work towards them .

## Response

To empower students to recognise and respond appropriately to bullying, harassment and victimisation and to behave as responsible bystanders there is a clear policy across the school of **Ignore – Walk away – Report** (in writing) with a school undertaking to follow up and record all reports of bullying. An incident report form is available for this purpose and can be handed in to Year Advisers. A Bully Box in student reception provides a discrete way for students to put in incident reports. Serious and ongoing issues can be referred to the Deputy Principal. All incidents are recorded on Sentral.

All written incident reports or parent contacts are investigated within the week where possible. Interventions can include:

- Mediation or peer mediation
- Counselling
- A record of incidents in Wellbeing on Sentral
- Referral to the Learning Support team for inclusion in social skills programs
- A *safe at school* plan

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- Support sessions/warnings with the Police School Liaison Officer
- Parent/career interviews
- Referral to outside agencies including Headspace, Kyds and Planet X youth centre
- Year meetings with the year adviser to address widespread problem behaviour
- A silent buddy (older students who work with victims of bullying to provide older 'brother/sister' advice, to look out for them and help 'bullyproof' students)
- Referral to the Child Wellbeing Unit or Community Services if appropriate
- Anti bullying program worksheet material and
- Disciplinary consequences

The school's Sentral information system and internal email provide efficient and confidential ways of communicating information about students having issues to their teachers. Students with risk assessments and/or behaviour management plans have these details made available to their classroom teachers and Head Teachers. Information about identified issues is shared at the weekly communication meetings.

Teachers are expected to be active in identifying and eliminating bullying at all times during class, on playground supervision, in the corridors and at sport venues. Teachers who witness or are told about bullying should:

- Ensure that the student reporting the incident is not overly distressed and feels comfortable in returning to the class or the playground

- Ask the student reporting to write a report on the incident/s; this report serves as important documentation that the teacher needs to proceed further with the incident
- Report the matter to the year adviser for further action
- Offer the student counselling if they appear distressed

Each year group is surveyed in Term 2 to establish frequency and types of bullying occurring and to see which strategies students are using to deal with bullying issues including:

- Ignoring and walking away
- Being a **responsible bystander** – sticking up for someone else and telling the bully to stop
- Making a written report to the Year Adviser
- Participating in peer mediation
- Staying with a group of friends supporting each other
- Talking to an older student leader or parent
- Looking for ideas on an anti-bullying website
- Asking a counsellor for strategies to help
- Ringing the Kids Helpline

Results of these surveys help identify **patterns of bullying behaviour** and are published in the school electronic newsletter along with contact information for Kids Helpline. This plan will be published on the school website.

**Serious incidents** of assault (including all physical fights which involve blows to the head), whilst rare, are reported to the police and to the School Safety and Security Unit. Parents are informed if this happens. Students

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involved in fighting or violent behaviour can expect to be suspended. Any possession or threats involving a weapon leads to a mandatory long suspension (up to 20 days).

Supporting both victims of bullying to become more ‘bullyproof’ and those engaging in bullying to change their behaviour can be a complex and long term process. Supporting students by listening carefully, by asking them what they could do differently, by showing confidence in their ability to problem solve and by avoiding ‘demonising’ other students are vital stages in solving issues,

### Additional Information

The plan has been developed by a team of teachers with input from students and parents through the school’s P&C and through student focus groups. The Anti-Bullying plan is available on the school’s website under downloads and will be reviewed every three years by the Wellbeing Committee, Executive Team, parent and community representatives and students. The effectiveness of the plan will be reviewed annually through the Annual Report using school surveys, feedback, record of incidents and observations.

The plan is due for review by the school evaluation team on or before May 2018.

## Principal's comment

This policy has been developed and revised through consultation with a number of key stakeholders in our school community. Policy review is regularly attended to and all comments are welcome. We aim to make the policy easily understood and also to provide websites that teachers, parents and children can access to give further clarification. Please do not hesitate to ask for help if you are unsure of how to report or support a child you believe is being bullied. Early intervention is often the key to successful resolution.

### **Committee Members**

Kathy Melky, Principal

Jodi Arrow, Deputy Principal

Philippa Hicks, Learning and Support Teacher

Elizabeth Hitman, School Counsellor

## School contact information

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