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.

This plan was initially developed in collaboration with parents of Pottsville Beach Public School community. Parents were invited to view a draft version of the plan posted on the school website or pick up a hardcopy from the school. Parents could then provide written feedback over a three week period on its content either by dropping it off at school or by email to the school.

The Student Representative Council and stage three students were also consulted on key elements of the plan before it was finalised.

At the end of the four week consultation period, the plan was presented by the Principal at the 2011 December P&C meeting. The plan will be implemented from Term 1 2012 and evaluated on an ongoing basis and formally reviewed at least once every three years.

**Statement of purpose**

Pottsville Beach Public School is committed to providing a safe and caring environment which fosters respect for others and does not tolerate bullying.

Students, teachers, parents, caregivers and members of the wider School community have a shared responsibility to create and maintain an environment free from all forms of bullying.

At Pottsville Beach Public School we:-

- provide a high quality education that encourages students to become self-directed lifelong learners who can create a positive future for themselves and the wider community
- understand the Anti-bullying plan
- create a culture where it is acceptable and encouraged to report incidents of bullying
- maintain a positive, inclusive climate of respectful relationships where diversity is valued
- actively work together to resolve incidents of bullying behavior when they occur

**What is bullying?**

Bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behavior that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons. There is no justification for the action. The victim has done nothing to deserve such treatment. Conflict or fights between equals or single incidents are not defined as bullying.

Bullying can happen anywhere: at school, in sporting teams, between neighbours. Bullying is behaviour that continues over time and includes:

- be physical (hitting, kicking, and pinching),
- verbal (name-calling, teasing),
- psychological (standover tactics, gestures),
- social (social exclusion, rumours, putdowns)
- sexual (physical, verbal or non-verbal sexual conduct)
- cyber-bullying - using technology eg. Computers or mobile phones

It can be motivated by jealousy, distrust, fear, misunderstanding or lack of knowledge. It can make people feel threatened and can often be hidden from adults.
Protection

At Pottsville Beach Public School we:

- Openly talk about bullying what it is, how it affects us and what we can do about it.
- Create a culture where it is acceptable and encouraged to report incidents.
- Teach our students the skills which build self esteem and empower them to take responsibility for themselves and give them the opportunity to practice these skills.
- Respond to substantiated instances of bullying behavior in accordance with the school’s discipline and welfare policy and all relevant NSW Department of Education and Communities (DEC) policies and procedures.

Responsibilities of Staff

All staff have a responsibility to:

- be role models of caring and tolerant behavior;
- ensure students feel safe and valued;
- encourage students to ask for help when needed;
- listen to reports of bullying;
- be observant of signs of distress or suspected incidents of bullying;
- deal with all reported and observed incidences of bullying as set out in this plan and the school’s discipline policy;
- report incidences of bullying to the stage supervisor Deputy Principal or Principal consistent with school welfare reporting procedures.

Responsibilities of students

All students have a responsibility to:

- be assertive and to follow the action plan;
- see a teacher (or ask to see the Principal) if the perpetrator/s continue;
- inform a teacher if they see someone else being bullied - both at school or on the way to and from school;
- behave as responsible bystanders;
- not bully others;
- report any cyber-bullying to their teacher, Deputy Principal or Principal (do not delete any emails)
- not retaliate with physical or verbal bullying;
- tell a teacher and give them full details of the incident

Responsibilities of parents/caregivers

All parents/caregivers have a responsibility to:

- watch for signs their child may be being bullied;
• listen sympathetically, giving assurance and support to
  their children in developing positive responses to incidents
  of bullying consistent with the school's Anti-bullying Plan
• discussing the action plan with your child;
• advising your child to tell a teacher,
• informing your child's class teacher of suspected bullying

Prevention

All members of the school community have a clear understanding of the
school's anti-bullying plan and school's discipline policy. In order for the
anti-bullying message to permeate Pottsville Beach Public School's culture
information is provided for students, parents, caregivers and teachers to
identify bullying behaviour. The anti-bullying message is incorporated
into the PD/H/PE curriculum, year assemblies and whole school assemblies, Student Representative Council meetings and staff meetings.

• Students are educated in ways they can protect themselves and
  others from bullying behaviours
• Programs are encouraged that promote resilience, life skills and
  social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and communication
  skills i.e., You Can Do It Program, Buddy Programs, Leadership
  Training
• Elective and structured activities operate at some recess and
  lunch breaks
• Passive play operates each lunch time K-2 students

• In relation to cyber-bullying, students and the community are also
  educated through newsletter articles for example:
  - Guard their contact information i.e. only give your mobile
    phone number, instant messaging name or email address to
    trusted friends and keep a note of who you have given it
    to. Don't give your details to people you don't know - or
don't want to know!
  - Take a stand against cyber-bullying i.e. Speak out
    whenever you see someone being mean to another person
    online. Most people respond better to criticism from their
    peers than to disapproval from adults.

Once a year, the Principal will hold an Anti-bullying information session
for parents outlining not only the school's Anti-bullying Plan, but
strategies they can employ to help prevent their child from becoming a
potential victim of bullying.

Early Intervention

The school implements the “You Can Do It” program. The main purpose of
the program is to optimise the social, emotional and academic outcomes
of our students.

It identifies the social and emotional capabilities that all young people
need to acquire in order to be successful in school, experience wellbeing
and have positive relationships including making contributions to others
and the community (good citizenship).

The core purpose is the development of young people's social and
emotional capabilities, including:

Confidence, persistence, organization, getting along and resilience.
Those students who are at risk of being ongoing victims of bullying type behavior will be encouraged to report directly and immediately to a member of staff that they themselves have nominated when they feel threatened or intimidated. Their parents will also be informed of this arrangement so that they too can reinforce this strategy with their child. These early intervention arrangements for students at risk will be communicated to all staff.

**Response**

**Reporting Bullying**

At the outset, all students are consistently reminded that they have the right to come to school and feel happy and confident in their learning and play, free from bullying and harassment. No-one has the right to make another person feel worried or uncomfortable. If someone is making a student feel like this, then they must tell someone about it. Bullying only flourishes in a culture of silence or not telling. Telling someone about bullying behaviour is not “dobbing” it is merely asserting their right to feel safe and happy while at school and while coming and going to school.

Incidences of bullying can be reported immediately to any teacher, the Deputy Principal or the Principal by students and parents. Any bullying incidences reported will be investigated and recorded by the Deputy Principal.

Consequences for the perpetrators of clearly substantiated bullying behavior will also be imposed as outlined in the school’s discipline policy and if necessary, suspension procedures.

**Responding to Reported Incidences of Bullying**

When a bullying incident is reported or observed the following procedures will apply:

- Students involved speak with Assistant Principal/ Deputy Principal/Principal about the incident.
- If clearly substantiated and depending on the nature of the incident, the student responsible for bullying is issued with a behaviour slip for the incident and is warned of the consequences for further incidences.
- If it is noted that a student is repeatedly perpetrating bullying behaviours, a behaviour management plan will be developed for him/her in consultation with his/her parents to hopefully modify behaviour and reduce risk to other students.
- In the case of cyber-bullying initiated through school accounts, the student may have their DET account blocked for a period determined by the principal—subsequent consequences for this behaviour determined in line with the School’s discipline policy.
- Staff will be informed of the incident. Discussion at staff welfare meetings—creating staff awareness and providing greater support for students experiencing bullying behaviours or to provide monitoring of students who bully.
- Victims of bullying and students who bully will have access to our School Counsellor for support if the need exists or the student so request it.
Reporting Instances of Cyber-bullying

If students are harassed online, they are encouraged to take the following actions immediately:

- Tell an adult you trust. This can be a teacher, a parent, older sibling or grandparent- someone who can help you to do something about it.

- Leave the area or stop the activity. People who bully get their kicks from knowing they’ve upset their target. Don’t let them know they’ve upset you, and you’ve taken away half their “fun”. Easier said than done when it’s face-to-face, but if it’s on your mobile or the Internet- easy!

- Block the sender’s messages. If you are being bullied through email or instant messaging, block the sender’s messages. Never reply to these messages.

- Keep a record. Save any harasing messages and record the date and time that you received them.

- Advise your service provider. Most service providers have appropriate user policies that restrict users from harassing others. They can respond to reports of cyber-bullying over their networks, or help you track down the appropriate service provider to respond to.

- Report to police. If the bullying includes physical threats, tell the police. Some people think that they can get away with it because they believe it is anonymous. They are wrong. Most can be traced and it’s a criminal offence to use a mobile phone or any form of communication to menace or harass or offend another person.

Evaluating the Program

The plan and strategies put in place will be evaluated on an ongoing basis and will be formally reviewed at least once every three years by:

- Noting and reviewing frequency of bullying i.e. if there has been a reduction/increase in reported or observed incidences of bullying;

- Determining effectiveness of plan

Additional Information

Additional information, resources and support relating to effective ant-bullying strategies can be found at:-

Bullying. No way! www.bullingnoway.com.au
Kids Help Line www.kidshelpline.com.au
Reach Out! www.reachout.com.au

Bullying Among Young Children: A guide for parents by the Australian Attorney General’s Department To get your copy, call 1800708777
**Principal’s comment**

Pottsville Beach Public School strives to provide a quality education for all students, addressing their academic and social needs in an environment free from violence and bullying. In response, this plan has been developed and revised in consultation with staff, students and parents of the Pottsville Beach Public School Community.

**Plan Development Team**

Debra McKinnon – Principal  
Stephen Dean – Deputy Principal  
Kathleen Frost, Merilyn Blakeman, Amanda Hawes, Ann Williams - Assistant Principals  
Jill Abood – Staff Representative  
Craig Blackburn – Parent Representative  
Pottsville Beach PS Student Representative Council and stage 2 students

**School contact information**

Pottsville Beach Public School  
Tweed Coast Way Pottsville NSW 2489  Ph:66761161  
Email: pottsville-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au  
Web: www.pottsville-p.schools.nsw.edu.au