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## Useful websites:

- Kidsmatter: [www.kidsmatter.edu.au/](http://www.kidsmatter.edu.au/)
- National Coalition Against Bullying: [www.ncab.org.au/](http://www.ncab.org.au/)
- Safe Schools Hub: [www.safeschoolshub.edu.au](http://www.safeschoolshub.edu.au)
The policy requires schools to develop protection, prevention, early intervention and response strategies for student bullying in NSW Government Schools.

Protection refers to those factors that increase the likelihood of positive wellbeing outcomes and buffer against the effects of negative experiences. Strategies include:

- developing a shared understanding of bullying behaviour that captures all forms of bullying including online 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 school culture of respectful relationships where bullying is less likely to occur.

Prevention builds on the protective factors and refers to strategies specifically designed to prevent bullying behaviour such as:

- developing and implementing programs for bullying prevention
- embedding anti-bullying messages into each curriculum area and in every year.

Early Intervention refers to providing support before an issue emerges or escalates such as 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
- students who are identified at or after enrolment as having experienced bullying or engaged in bullying behaviour.

Response refers both to the actions of the school when an incident occurs and to the informed development of future protection, prevention, early intervention and response strategies, such as:

- 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 behavior
- 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 and reporting this annually to the school community.
A process for the development or review of the school’s Anti-bullying Plan.

**Step 1:**
Form a school team
The role of the school team is to facilitate the development and revision process. The team should be led by the principal or their nominee, who remains responsible for the final decisions relating to the school Anti-bullying Plan. It is important to have representatives from across the schools, including teachers, executive, students and parents, as well as other community members.

It is also important to ensure representation for those students who have special needs or who are at risk due to their cultural, ethnic or socioeconomic background.

**Focus questions:**
- Who are the key stakeholders in our school community?
- How will you ensure representation from the whole school community?
- What expertise is required to assist the team to successfully complete its task?
- How should the team members be selected? Groups to consider include students; staff; parents; and community members (eg community organisations that work with the school, and the cultural groups that make up the school community).

**Step 2:**
Develop a shared understanding of bullying behaviour, including online bullying.
When undertaken reflectively and collaboratively, this process can build the trust and respect needed for individuals and groups to safely challenge and change inequalities within the school.

The school can then address the needs of all students and foster an inclusive school culture. Development of a working group with a diverse representation from the school community can facilitate a shared understanding of what bullying is. To succeed in creating a shared understanding it may be helpful to:

**Build knowledge and understanding:**
- explore the definition of bullying
- engage your school community in discussions to develop a critical understanding of the role of power, culture, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation and physical ability in bullying
- consider this definition: *Bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or a group towards one or more persons.*

**Online 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 and transgender.**

**Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders.**

**Conflicts or fights between equals, or single incidents, are not defined as bullying.**

**Gather and analyse information:** Conduct an audit of your school’s needs and current provisions and evaluate your existing anti-bullying strategies.
- identify current strategies that should be retained
- identify those that need modification. - identify the areas that will require the development of new strategies
- collect and evaluate copies of the following documents:
  ✓ Bullying: Preventing and Responding to Student Bullying in Schools Policy.
  ✓ Student Discipline in Government Schools Policy.
  ✓ School Attendance Policy.
  ✓ Suspension and Expulsion of School Students – Procedures.
  ✓ Work Health & Safety Policy.

School data that should also be evaluated may include:
- incident reports; complaints and discipline referrals involving bullying of any type; parent complaints about student bullying; reports of playground bullying; reports of attendance issues related to bullying behaviour; referrals to the Learning and Support Team for students identified as being at risk of developing long-term difficulties with social relationships or who have experienced bullying, or engaged in bullying behaviour.

**Focus questions:**
- Are all aspects of the current school Anti-bullying Plan consistent with the Bullying: Preventing and Responding to Student Bullying Policy and other relevant Departmental policies and plans.
- Which school trend data should be considered?
Step 3: Engage the school community

School communities need to work together to recognise, challenge and change inequalities that fuel bullying and harassment within the school and to build trust and respect between all groups.

By doing this, we are better placed to meet the needs of all students and contribute to a socially just environment.

The school team should undertake ongoing and wide consultation with the school community.

The team should present the information it has gathered, and the plan it is developing, to the school community for consideration at various stages throughout the process.

Focus questions:
- How will you achieve a whole school approach that engages all sectors of the school community?
- At what stages throughout the process will the school community be consulted?
- What data will be presented? (Consider sensitivity and privacy issues related to some data).
- What questions should be asked to facilitate understanding and generate ideas? (Especially important for developing shared understanding of some issues including protection and prevention, online bullying, power relationships, bystander issues and response to bullying issues).
- How will perceived concerns be addressed?

Step 5: Develop an Anti-bullying Plan

Identify the series of strategies that will comprise your new Anti-bullying Plan. Write up a plan to reflect the strategies that the team has identified.

Your plan should be in a format that clearly identifies, for example, your expected outcomes, targets, strategies and timeframe. Expand the fine detail of each strategy in your plan.

Discuss the plan and each of the individual strategies with those people who will be involved in its implementation.

Focus questions:
- What principles should underpin the school’s anti-bullying practices?
- What outcomes does the community want the Anti-bullying Plan to achieve?
- Do all the policies, programs and practices within the school work together to achieve these outcomes?

Focus questions:
- Do the strategies support and reflect the aims and beliefs articulated in the ‘statement of purpose’?
- Are there strategies for each of the areas for action required?
- Does the plan include processes to evaluate and review each strategy as well as the plan as a whole?

Step 6: Publication and promotion of the Plan within the school community

Your school may find the Anti-bullying Plan Template useful for publishing your plan for your school community.

Focus questions:
- How will you publish and promote the new Plan within the school community?
- Into which community languages does the school’s Anti-bullying Plan need to be translated?

Step 7: Review

Use the process described in steps 1 to 6 to review your plan at least every three years. Whenever your plan is reviewed:
- forward a copy to your Director
- provide copies for students and parents
- publish and promote a copy on your school website.