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Anti-Bullying Policy

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1. **Introduction**

**Bullying is unacceptable at Wamuran State School**

At Wamuran State School we are committed and determined to promote healthy relationships. All students have the right to feel that they belong in a safe, happy, and caring community that enables them to learn to the best of their ability. Bullying has the potential to severely hamper the wellbeing of the child. Bullying behaviours are distinctive and are recognised as extremely serious and often long lasting, and as such, are not tolerated at Wamuran State School. As a school we embed proactive practices through the use of SWPBS and Program Achieve to ensure that any bullying related issues are seen as a priority and dealt with promptly.

- We strive to ensure all students are able to learn and work in an environment where they feel safe and are free from bullying and/or violence.

- We seek every opportunity to encourage school staff, parents and students to work together to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills that support learning, positive behaviour and constructive social relationships.

- We implement policies and strategies guided by current research on effective approaches to the prevention of bullying and violence.

- We use our role in the community to raise awareness that bullying of and violence toward children and young people are issues for the whole community and require a community response.

As part of Wamuran State School's Responsible Behaviour Plan, The Wamuran Anti-Bullying Policy is fundamental to achieving our objective of a safe, supportive and disciplined environment. The opportunity to enjoy a positive future is built around the school’s values.

- Love of Learning
- Caring for self, others and the environment
- Success at all stages
- Feeling of belonging

Our beliefs in learning which build upon our values are;

- Support
- Engage
- Expect
- Enjoy
- Discover

Essential to effective learning is a safe, supportive and disciplined environment that respects the following rights.

- The rights of all students to learn
- The rights of teachers to teach
- The rights of all to be safe

Our school community has identified the following school rules to teach and promote our high standards of responsible behaviour:

- Be Safe
- Be Responsible
• Be Respectful.
• Be Positive

Our school rules have been agreed upon and endorsed by all staff and our school P&C. They are aligned with the values, principles and expected standards outlined in Education Queensland's Code of School Behaviour.
2. Aims

The staff and students of Wamuran State School will work together to create a climate in our school whereby bullying behaviours are not accepted by any member of the school community. Our policy aims to use all students, staff and parents to work towards the elimination of any form of bullying.

Our aims include:

2.1 The prevention and control of bullying through teaching of social skills to encourage the development of resilient children with strong self-esteem.

2.2 The raising of school community awareness of what bullying is and making clear the school’s expectations.

2.3 The implementation of “Bully Prevention in Positive Behaviour Support”, “Program Achieve”, “Circle Time”, “Games Factory” and support programs throughout all levels within the school.

2.4 Giving help and support to “targets” of bullying.

2.5 Helping and supporting students to change their bullying behaviours.

2.6 Informing parents and caregivers of any unacceptable student behaviour and including them in the support process of students exhibiting bullying behaviours and their targets.
3. **What is Bullying?**

Bullying involves the abuse of power in relationships. It is the repeated, deliberate and hurtful treatment of a person resulting in that person feeling powerless or humiliated. Cyber-bullying involves the use of information and communication technologies, such as email, mobile phone and pager text messages, instant messaging (IM) and defamatory personal websites, to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour by an individual or group, that is intended to harm others.

Bullying can take many forms. The *National Centre Against Bullying* identifies five kinds of bullying:

3.1 **Physical bullying:** This is when a person (or group of people) uses physical actions to bully, such as hitting, poking, tripping or pushing. Repeatedly and intentionally damaging someone's belongings is also physical bullying.

3.2 **Verbal bullying:** Repeated or systematic name calling, insults, homophobic or racist remarks and verbal abuse.

3.3 **Covert bullying:** Such as lying about someone, spreading rumours, playing a nasty joke that make the person feel humiliated or powerless, mimicking or deliberately excluding someone.

3.4 **Psychological bullying:** Threatening, manipulating or stalking someone.

3.5 **Cyber bullying:** Using technology, such as email, mobile phones, chat rooms, social networking sites to bully verbally, socially or psychologically.

**What is not bullying?**

While it is important to understand and define what bullying is, it is also important to be clear which behaviours are NOT bullying. For some people, ‘bullying’ is a highly emotive term and its use may lead to a strong reaction (Rigby, 2010). The *National Centre Against Bullying* acknowledges that while the following behaviours are often upsetting to those involved, they do NOT constitute bullying:

- social bantering with minor insults and jokes
- mutual arguments and disagreements (where there is no power imbalance)
- not liking someone or a single act of social rejection
- one-off acts of meanness or spite
- isolated incidents of aggression, intimidation or violence.

While these behaviours would not be considered bullying because they do not involve deliberate and repeated harm and a power imbalance, they need to be addressed in the same way as other inappropriate student behaviours.
**Signs and Symptoms of Bullying:**

Often, targets of bullying are reluctant to tell others what has happened. Should a child show some of the following signs, it may be necessary to talk with them to see if they have experienced bullying.

Children may:

- be fearful of walking to or from school, or may change their normal route to school.
- not want to go on the bus.
- be unwilling to go to school or complain of feeling sick each school morning.
- begin doing poorly in school work.
- come home with clothes or books damaged or missing
- become withdrawn, start stammering or lose confidence
- become distressed and anxious or stop eating
- lose money or ask to borrow money (to pay others)
- have unexplained scratches, bruises or other injuries
- begin to use bullying behaviour towards other children or siblings
- become aggressive and unreasonable towards family members or teachers.
4. **Student Rights and Responsibilities**

**Student Rights**

As a member of this school you have the right to:

- **4.1** Be free from bullying.
- **4.2** Be safe everywhere.
- **4.3** Learn without disruption.
- **4.4** Protect yourself from others by walking away.
- **4.5** Say “No” to any negative peer pressure.
- **4.6** Tell your teacher or staff member that someone is making you feel uncomfortable.

**Student Responsibilities**

Our school expects you to:

- **4.7** Not tolerate any form of bullying.
- **4.8** As a bystander take steps to de-escalate bullying behaviour.
- **4.9** To report bullying in any form – you will be supported.
- **4.10** Encourage positive behaviour amongst peer groups.
- **4.11** Use positive language choices (No put downs)
- **4.12** Be supportive of students who are bullied.
5. **Prevention**

This policy takes an integrated approach to the prevention of bullying and response to bullying incidents. The key focus areas for the successful and long term prevention of bullying in our school will be:

5.1 Policy implementation – the explicit teaching and modelling of the strategies by all teachers.

5.2 Integration of the Bully Prevention in Positive Behaviour Support, Program Achieve, Circle Time and Games Factory programs into the core curriculum.

5.3 Nurturing of a school culture which accepts diversity and will not tolerate bullying.

As a school community we will not allow cases of bullying to go unreported but will speak up. This requires preventative action by staff, students and parents, which includes:

**Staff Processes**

5.4 Explicitly teach behaviour expectations, social skills and knowledge of the policy to all students each week. (See Appendix C)

5.5 Continually remind students of the need to behave responsibly. Promote Positive Bystander Behaviours

5.6 Children are explicitly taught about the influence of the bystander. Bystanders can support the bullied and thereby shift the balance of power away from the bully. If children see someone being bullied (or witness it online), keep safe and choose your response to match the situation. (See Response to Bullying – Student Processes)

5.7 Be role models in word and action at all times.

5.8 Be observant of signs of distress or suspected incidents of bullying.

5.9 Make efforts to remove occasions for bullying by active patrolling during playground duty.

5.10 Arrive at class on time and move promptly between lessons.

5.11 Take steps to help targets and remove sources of distress without placing the target at further risk.

5.12 Be consistent in dealing with issues.

5.13 Record incidents as appropriate (playground duty books, behavioural referral forms).

5.14 Listen actively to student concerns and follow through.

**Student Processes**

5.15 Follow the “Stop”, “Walk”, and “Talk” plan if you experience bullying.

5.16 Refuse to be involved in any bullying situation.

5.17 If you are present when bullying occurs:

- Take some positive form of preventative action
- Report the incident or suspected incident to appropriate staff members and help break down the code of secrecy.

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5.18 Have the courage to speak out, as this may help to reduce pain for yourself and other potential targets in the future.

**Parent Processes**

5.19 Aim to have regular quality time alone with each child.

5.20 Take an active interest in your child’s social life and acquaintances.

5.21 Advise your child to tell a teacher or staff member about the incident. (Students can gain much self-respect through taking the initiative and dealing with the problem without parental involvement.)

5.22 Do not take the issue up with the child exhibiting the bullying behaviours. Raise any concerns with your child’s teacher. Be willing to inform the school of any cases of suspected bullying, even if your own child is not directly affected.

5.23 Do not encourage your child to retaliate.

5.24 Be willing to attend interviews and support programs at school if your child is involved in any bullying incident.

5.25 Be supportive of your child: Both victims and bullies require different kinds of management.

5.26 Be prepared to be open minded regarding situations.

5.27 Talk positively about school and school policies with your children.

5.28 Raise any concerns directly with the Principal or appropriate school staff.

**School-Wide-Positive-Behaviour-Support Team (SWPBS) Process**

5.29 Closely monitor Bully Box slips and playground duty report folders and follow up when necessary.

5.30 Individual counselling by the school’s guidance officer.

5.31 Facilitate and help implement anti-bullying programs.

5.32 Remain approachable and available to all students.

5.33 Consult regularly with appropriate staff

5.34 SWPBS differentiates in what should be done to support students according to their level of student need. It suggests that school take a universal approach when dealing with most students for whom giving helpful advice is generally sufficient: a more focussed approach for those who seem to be at risk- and a more concentrated still for a small proportion of students for whom intensive treatment is needed. This model is also a highly relevant framework for prioritising the allocation of resources for dealing with bullying.
5.35 SWPBS re-emphasises the value of positively reinforcing pro-social actions taken by students. In the area of bullying, encouraging and improving of behaviour that is incompatible with bullying - for example helpful and cooperative behaviour - is strongly recommended.

Principal/Deputy Principal Processes

5.36 Monitor the effectiveness and efficiency of the Anti-Bullying Policy and associated programs.

5.37 Induct new staff in Anti-Bullying Policy.

5.38 Engage outside support services when necessary.
6. Responses to Bullying

School Response to Bullying

Wamuran State School makes systematic efforts to prevent problem student behaviour through teaching and reinforcing expected behaviours on an ongoing basis. If, however, an incident of bullying occurs the context will be investigated and responded to using appropriate measures below. The nature of the bullying incidents will help to determine which method is most appropriate.

The Traditional Disciplinary Approach

When unacceptable behaviour occurs, students experience predictable consequences. Our school seeks to ensure that responses to unacceptable behaviour are consistent and proportionate to the nature of the behaviour.

Strengthening the Target

This approach to dealing with cases of bullying aims to assist students who have been the target of bullying to cope more effectively in interactions with the bully or bullies. Students who are being targeted are advised or trained to become less vulnerable.

Mediation

In this approach, students in conflict are invited to work with a trained teacher or peer mediator, to find a mutually acceptable way of resolving their problem. It requires a readiness by the parties involved in the bullying to agree to meet and seek a solution, facilitated, but not imposed, by a neutral practitioner.

Restorative Practice

The aim of this approach is to work with students rather than doing things to them or for them. Such approaches are underpinned by the principle of restorative justice whereby the student causing harm is held to account for his/her behaviour.

The Support Group Method

This is a non-punitive approach that involves the students who have been identified as bullying being confronted at a group meeting with vivid evidence of the target’s distress. Those present also include a number of students who are supportive of the target. The target is not present. The students are required to say what they will do to improve the situation for the target.
The Method of Shared Concern

This is also a non-punitive approach. It involves first working with the suspected bullies and with the target, in one-to-one meetings. When progress has been made, a meeting is held with the suspected bullies as a group to plan how the problem might be resolved. Subsequently they are joined by the target and an agreed solution is negotiated.
Student Process

Student Reporting and Recording Procedures.

6.1 Check that you have followed the “Stop”, “Walk” and “Talk” Plan.

6.2 Report bullying to the closest staff member AND to the Class Teacher. Other communication methods available are:

- Classroom Bully Boxes – each class has a bullying box in their classroom and enables them to confidentially report bullying
- Electronic communication (Electronic bully box)
- Secret ballot techniques – where at the commencement of the school year students are provided with a survey (often including a map of the school) to identify who and where they may have experienced bullying
- Consumer satisfaction surveys – such as the school opinion surveys that seek general responses about safety and wellbeing of students.
- School Chaplain / Guidance Officer

6.3 Remember to keep your teacher informed of what is happening.

6.4 All incidents reported in Playground Duty Folder will be checked by administration.

6.5 Administration records the incident and appropriate action taken.

Bystander’s Process

When a Bystander witnesses bullying:

- Speak up and let the person doing the bullying know that what they are doing is bullying
- Refuse to join in with the bullying and walk away
- Help the student who is being bullied to ask for help
- Ask a teacher or support person for help
- Report what happened.

Have the courage to speak out, as this may help to reduce pain for yourself and other potential targets in the future.
Staff Processes:

When a behaviour incident is reported to a staff member

1. Listen carefully to the child who is making the complaint about bullying.

2. Document the incident in the Behaviour Folders.

3. Have a discussion with the target to determine if this is an ongoing occurrence of bullying or a one off incident and whether the target can identify any reason for the bullying.

4. If the teacher reasonably suspects that this is an incidence of bullying, the incident will be referred to Administration. Appropriate procedural steps will be decided upon by Administration. Other services will be involved where warranted.

5. All incidents reported in Playground Duty Folder will be checked by administration.

6. Administration records the incident and appropriate action taken.
Parent Processes:

Parents who have become aware of circumstances of bullying regarding their children are encouraged to follow these guidelines:

1. Discuss the issue with their child to determine whether it is Bullying. (See Section 2 What is Bullying? What is Not Bullying?)

2. Ask their child if they have followed the Stop, Walk and Talk Process.

3. If necessary, make an appointment to speak to the class teacher.

4. If the child reports that the bullying is continuing, please make a follow up appointment to speak to the teacher.

5. If the issue is still unresolved, make an appointment to speak to the Principal/Deputy Principal.

NB. Do not directly approach the child exhibiting the bullying behaviours towards your child.

Ways Parents can help when their child has been bullied:

When a child has been bullied and is feeling upset, there are a number of positive things that parents are able to do to help them. These may include:

- Encourage the child to talk about their feelings.
- Eliminating (if possible) some of the obvious causes of bullying.
- Building up the self-esteem of the child with encouragement and pointing out their uniqueness and special qualities.
- Teaching children how to cope with teasing
- Reinforce the 3 step Anti-bullying process. Acting out some scenarios and demonstrating the way the child may respond in the role-play.

One of the most important things a parent can do when their child has been bullied is to talk to them about their feelings and what they have experienced. Encourage the child to go through some of the reasons that may have been given about why the child was bullied and see if these may be able to be changed or eliminated.
Section 7. Monitoring and evaluating the Policy

Wamuran State School’s Anti-Bullying Policy has been developed in consultation with the school community and endorsed by the Principal, President of the P&C and will be reviewed in 2012.

We undertake to review the policy annually using data collected from students, staff and parents.
Section 8. Appendices

Appendix A – “Stop”, “Walk”, and “Talk” plan

“Stop”, “Walk”, and “Talk”

Bully Prevention is a 3 step response to problem behaviour. The language used for each of the three steps is explicitly taught. The three steps are implemented across the entire school. The signals and language used is consistent across the school in order to ensure the clarity of the response sequence.

Stop

Children use the stop signal when they experience problem behaviour or when they see another student experiencing problem behaviour.

Walk Away

Sometimes, even when students tell others to “stop”, problem behaviour will continue. When this happens, students are to “walk away” from the problem behaviour. Students walk away when they experience continued problem behaviour or when they see another student experiencing continued problem behaviour. Students understand that walking away removes the reinforcement for problem behaviour.

Talk

Students know that even when they use “stop” and they “walk away” from the problem, sometimes students will continue to behave inappropriately toward them. When that happens, students should “talk” to an adult. Children are explicitly taught the “talk” technique they should use when they experience continued problem behaviour or when they see another student experiencing continued problem behaviour. Students are made aware that at some point the stop/walk/talk procedure will be used with EVERY student and it is important to respond appropriately, even if you don't agree. Children are taught how to respond if someone else uses "stop", "walk", or "talk".

1. Children stop what they are doing
2. Take a deep breath and count to 3
3. Go on with their day
Appendix B – “Stop”, “Walk”, and “Talk” contract

I will support the “Stop”, “Walk”, and “Talk” plan of Wamuran State School by taking the following steps:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Ignore...</td>
<td>But if they do keep doing it, I will</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Stop...</td>
<td>Tell them in a firm, clear voice to stop</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Walk...</td>
<td>But if they do keep doing it, I will walk away</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Talk...</td>
<td>If they keep doing it I will find the nearest staff member and report the incident</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Then

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When...</th>
<th>I will...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Someone asks me to stop annoying them,</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I annoy someone and hurt his/her feeling,</td>
<td>I will tell the person doing the bullying to ..........</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I see someone else bullying a friend,</td>
<td>I will tell my friend to .......................... ..........</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Name:.................................................................................................. Date: ..........................................................
Appendix C – Bully Prevention Implementation Strategies.

Whole School

1. School Rules (revised daily with Program Achieve keys)
2. Explicit teaching of expectations
3. You Can Do It! (Program Achieve)
4. The Bully Prevention in SWPBS Program (Educational and Community Support)
5. Monday SWPBS Parades
6. Games Factory
7. Circle Time
8. Gotchas
9. Student and Staff survey regarding bullying behaviour (term 2)
10. Evaluation and decision making regarding feedback.
11. School expectations explained to parents through the school newsletter
12. Identification of at risk students

Targeted Groups

1. Unlimited Program
2. School Chaplain
3. Mentoring
4. Friends
5. Ed. Wrap

Individual Students

1. Behaviour monitoring sheets
2. Case study for at risk students

Year One

Whole School Programs +

1. Buddy System (Yr7 buddies)

Year Two

Whole School Programs

Year Three

Whole School Programs

Year Four

Whole School Programs +

1. Rock and Water
2. Cybersmart
Year Five
Whole School Programs +
  1. Cooling Conflict (watching performance from yr7)
  2. Cybersmart

Year Six
Whole School Programs +
  1. Cybersmart

Year Seven
Whole School Programs +
  1. Cooling Conflict (Performance made and demonstrated to yr5)
  2. Buddy System (Yr1 buddies)
  3. Leadership Training (Altitude Day with Ylead)
  4. Cybersmart
**Suggested elements of a school anti-bullying policy**

It is extremely important that any policy reflects the needs of your local school community. Otherwise there may be a lack of commitment to its implementation therefore limiting the policy’s effectiveness.

These are the main elements typically included in a school anti-bullying policy:

- a statement of the school's stand against bullying
- a succinct definition of bullying with a listing of the different kinds, both direct and indirect, and how the policy includes or relates to forms of harassment that may be described as racial or sexual or cyber bullying
- a declaration of the right of individuals in the school community including students, teachers, other workers and parents to be free of bullying
- a statement of the responsibilities of those who observe bullying to attempt to stop it
- a general description of what the school will do to prevent bullying, including undertaking risk management procedures and the inclusion of content relating to bullying in the school curriculum
- an undertaking to collaborate with parents in addressing the problem of bullying, especially in the resolution of cases in which action is to be taken by both the school and parents
- an undertaking to evaluate the policy on an annual basis.