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.

Representation from the Blaxland Public School Community has been ensured through:

- notification of the review of the school’s Anti Bullying Policy through the newsletter,
- notification of the review of the school’s Anti Bullying Policy on the school’s website and Facebook pages and
- publication of the draft on the website for parents to view.

The school community is invited to provide appropriate comments and suggestions to the school through:

- reviewing the initial draft publication on the website and
- a parent policy review meeting, prior to policy implementation.

The school community is invited to review and evaluate the policy post implementation.

Policy Statement

Blaxland Public School is an inclusive environment, diversity is affirmed and individuality is respected.

Quality Education is delivered in a safe, secure and supportive setting. Student welfare is at the core of policies, practices and teaching and learning at Blaxland.

Partnerships within the school community are valued and central to the learning and development of students, their self-esteem, confidence and success of this school as a learning community.

Students have a right to come to school happily and without fear of harassment or intimidation. Bullying can devalue, isolate and frighten individuals. Students can experience loss in confidence, self-esteem and learning.

“Children’s peer relations are important, not only because they can and do bring happiness or misery to particular children, but also because they help to set the pattern of human interaction between adults in years to come, and have far reaching implications for the healthy functioning of men, women and families.”

Ken Rigby, Director, Institute of Social Research, University of Sth Aust.

Statement of purpose

Students attend school to participate in quality education that enables them to become lifelong learners who will create a positive future for themselves and their communities. Bullying impedes teaching, learning, individual development and student welfare. Bullying therefore cannot be accepted at Blaxland Public School. Students, teachers, parents and caregivers will work collaboratively together to create a safe, secure and happy environment that is free from all forms of bullying. Positive relationships will be promoted. Individual differences will be accepted and respected.
Bullying can be defined as intentional, repeated behaviour by an individual or group of individuals that causes upset, distress, undue pressure, hurt or fear.

Bullying involves an intentional and wilful misuse of power in relationships.

Bullying can involve direct or indirect harassment, humiliation, violent or physical domination and/or intimidation of others.

Bullying can be:

- **verbal** e.g. name calling, teasing, abuse, putdowns, ridicule, insults, threats, extortion
- **physical** e.g. hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting
- **social** e.g. ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating, making rude, cruel or crude gestures. Inappropriate comments about ethnicity, language, religion, gender, and culture
- **psychological** e.g. spreading rumours, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions, inappropriate notes, graffiti, letters, phone messages, SMS, email and misrepresentation. This includes forms of cyber bullying such as flaming, harassing and or threatening messages, denigration, impersonation, outing or trickery, ostracism and sexting.

**Bullying, in any form will not be accepted or tolerated at Blaxland Public School.**

In the event of bullying the school will:

- provide counseling to all students involved,
- notify parents of students involved,
- ensure students have class teacher support,
- refer issue to the LAST for ongoing support,
- notify the Student Welfare team who will determine strategies to be implemented,
- invite parents to Welfare meetings in order to work towards effective resolution,
- remove any students who continue to demonstrate bullying behaviour from the playground in order to provide learning support for the child/children,
- provide a safe area for any student involved in a bullying issue,
- suspend a student for an act of physical aggression towards any member of the community and
- suspend a student for consistent acts of bullying despite support strategies implement

These outcomes are not meant to be a prescriptive list of actions to be implemented sequentially.

The school executive may implement strategies as they feel are necessary at the time of the incident.

Students, teachers, parents and caregivers will work collaboratively together to resolve incidents of bullying behaviour constructively.

**Students have the right to:**

- be treated with courtesy, kindness and respect
- express feelings and opinions assertively
- work and play in an atmosphere of harmony and cooperation
- feel secure and to be safe in a caring and supportive environment
Students will:

- be valued for their individuality, including that of race, gender, cultural, physical or intellectual diversity

Students have a responsibility to:

- treat others with courtesy, kindness and respect
- listen to others with mutual respect
- maintain a safe and secure school environment
- refuse to become involved in instances of bullying
- model and support school rules, behaving appropriately
- develop responsibility for their own actions
- value others, for their individual differences
- work to achieve their personal best whilst allowing others to do the same.

Parents and caregivers have a responsibility to:

- support their child in all aspects of their learning
- be appropriate role models
- be aware of the school anti bullying policy
- assist their child in understanding appropriate behaviour
- support their child in developing positive and constructive responses to incidents of bullying, do not encourage retaliation

Blaxland Public School will:

- implement an Anti-Bullying Plan
- inform students, parents and caregivers of their Anti Bullying Plan
- provide students with strategies to respond positively and constructively to incidents of bullying
- provide students with strategies to deal with bullying responsibly as an observer or bystander
- communicate with parents
- include parents in Anti – Bullying practices and processes
- follow up complaints of bullying, harassment and intimidation

Teachers have a responsibility to:

- respect and support students in all aspects of their learning
- model appropriate behaviour
- respond in an appropriate and timely manner to incidents of bullying according to the school’s bullying plan
- teach co-operative learning skills, play skills and conflict resolution skills through Key Learning Areas
- be observant of signs of distress
- intervene sensitively
- actively supervise classroom and playground activities
- consult with students to identify any issues of concern
- report all incidences of bullying to the Principal
Prevention

Blaxland Public School will teach and consistently reinforce strategies across all Key Learning Areas in order to prevent bullying situations arising. Strategies will include:

- provision of an anti-bullying policy by the whole school community,
- identification and understanding of what constitutes bullying,
- provide proactive school practices that promote the value and respect of individuality, working as a team and leadership,
- school initiative programs such as Peer Leadership, Personal Development, Child Protection,
- empower the whole school community to recognise and respond to bullying appropriately, including student and parent reporting of suspected bullying and
- options from the school welfare and discipline code to deal with bullying are identified, such as withdrawal, detention, in-school detention, behaviour monitoring cards, counseling, suspension, and incident reports to the Department of Education and Training and the NSW Police Force (as required by NSW School Policy).

Strategies to deal with bullying

Blaxland Public School will provide a range of appropriate strategies to deal with bullying. These will include:

- dealing with incidences quickly and effectively
- an action plan for bullying where:
  - all parties are interviewed and incidents are recorded
  - school based consequences or counseling with teacher or support staff are implemented,
  - parents are contacted. Formal interviews may be arranged for the victim, the bully, their parents and the school,
  - possible referral to the school counselor.

- intervention and support by school staff for both the student bullied and the student identified as bullying. This could include individual discussion, class teaching, parent interviews, counselor intervention and/or the inclusion of options from the school welfare and discipline code. The incident will determine the strategies employed in order to provide for an appropriate and effective response.
  - options for reporting and accessing help such as a note in the office information box, a quiet word to the class teacher, a trusted school staff member, Assistant Principal, Principal, Parents, Caregivers, School Captains, an older trusted school member who will help with their choice of reporting strategy etc.
  - access to ‘Responding to Suggestions, Complaints and Allegations’ and the appeals procedures.
  - professional learning for school staff in identification strategies, teaching for strategies, dealing with bullying e.g. ‘The Pikas Method’ or ‘Shared Concern Method’, cross key learning area teaching strategies for concept and strategy reinforcement.

Students can:

- avoid difficult students. Walk away. Ensure that they are never alone with someone they suspect is bullying,
- be firm about their rights. Say, ‘STOP! I don’t like what you are doing,’
- look the student in the eye and be assertive. Say, ‘Stop! Leave me alone’ and walk away,
- ignore the offensive student,
- find a friend. Play with other friends,
- seek help from older trusted students such as School Captains, SRC,
- talk to the Duty Teacher, Class Teacher, Assistant Principal, Principal,
- talk to their parents, sibling and
- go to the office or library.
Early Intervention

Students identified:

- at risk of developing long term difficulties with social relationships
- of having previously been bullied and
- as having engaged in bullying behaviour will be offered inclusion in proactive activities designed to develop positive interaction with peers.

This includes, for e.g.:

- lunch time gardening club,
- lunch time social grouping for playtime,
- anti-bullying program Kindergarten to Year 6, implemented through the library,
- referral to the school counselor,
- peer support,
- buddy program,
- teacher and principal support,
- establishment of a safe area with activities to engage in,
- resilience activities Kindergarten to Year 6
- restoring damaged relationships
- implementation of PIKAS methodologies
- mediation activities
- assertiveness training
- establishing clear behavioural expectations Kindergarten to Year 6.

Not all hurtful behaviours are bullying, however, the school will address inappropriate behavior whether or not the behaviour meets the definition of bullying.

Response

Blaxland Public School will provide professional development for staff, anti-bullying information for parents through the school’s website and newsletter and implement teaching and learning Kindergarten to Year 6 to support the school community with:

- the knowledge to identify bullying behaviour,
- knowing what steps can be employed to support someone being bullied and the person engaged in bullying,
- understanding what a bystander is and how to report an incident,
- developing assertiveness ultimately leading to resilience
- access to school and departmental policy on anti-bullying, through the school website and in hard copy from the school office.

All students and parents are encouraged to report any incident of bullying to class teachers.

Publication of procedures for reporting incidents is publicised through the school’s website and in newsletter articles throughout the year.

Teachers will refer the incident to the school executive who will initiate procedures to resolve the issue as soon as possible.

Support is provided for the student being bullied, students witnessing the bullying and for the student engaging in bullying behavior.

This may involve:

- intervention by the Assistant Principals or Principal.
- Intervention by the School Learning Assistance Support Teacher
- referral to the School Counselor.
- referral to the Student Welfare Committee.
- implementation of teaching and learning for anti-bullying by a specific class.
- implementation of teaching and learning for anti-bullying Kindergarten to Year 6
• parent interviews, parent and student interviews.
• parent and teacher meetings for matrix planning and updates on the progress intervention strategies.

**Serious Incidents**
Serious incidents involving assaults, threats, intimidation or harassment are referred to the:

- Safety Directorate on **1300 363 778**
- School Education Director
- Police
- Child Wellbeing Unit

The school will contact the Child Well Being Unit on **02 9269 9400** when:

- the Mandatory Reporter Guide indicates this should be done,
- there are concerns about risk of harm that do not meet the threshold of significant harm but are not trivial,
- there is an observable pattern of cumulative harm that does not meet the threshold of significant harm, and/or
- when a report has been made to the Child Protection Helpline but has been screened out as not reaching the threshold of risk of significant harm.

The school will contact Community Services when:

- the Mandatory Reporter Guide indicates this should be done.
- a student is considered at being risk of significant harm.

**Appeal Procedures**

The request for review must be lodged within ten working days of the decision made.

Reasons for review are:

- procedural and
- an unreasonable or irrational decision has been made.

The review will:

- examine relevant material,
- make further inquiries if necessary,
- make a determination, within fifteen days of receipt of appeal, if possible.
- advise complainant if unable to complete appeal within fifteen days.
- advise parties, in writing of the outcome of the appeal.
- meet with parties, if required.
- determine if further action is required.

In the event that a resolution is unsuccessful the complainant may issue a complaint to the supervisor of the officer who conducted the review.

Complaints will:

- always try to be resolved informally where it is in the best interests of all involved or
- formally.

Three procedures are implemented to resolve a formal matter.

1. Remedy and systems improvement procedure
2. Negotiation procedure
3. Investigation procedure.
Identifying Bullying Behaviour

The school will:

- encourage students and parents to report incidents of bullying to teachers and the school executive
- provide an independent avenue of reporting for students e.g. letter box in the office
- provide teaching and learning opportunities for students to articulate issues of wellbeing e.g. circle time, peer support
- monitor and record incidences of difficulties in socialization in the playground and classroom
- have a clear, understood and shared understanding of what bullying is and strategies to manage and support all students.

In the event of a pattern of bullying in the school is identified the school will:

- implement a whole school teaching and learning approach Kindergarten to Year 6
- convene a whole school assembly to address the issue and explain the school’s approach to the issue
- speak to all students involved individually and as a group
- meet with parents of students involved, including follow up meeting where required
- review the anti-bullying policy through the newsletter and on the website
- provide parents and student with relevant information
- convene a student welfare meeting with the School Counselor and Learning and Support Teacher

Monitoring and Evaluation

The school will monitor and evaluate the Anti - Bullying Plan through:

- tracking of incidences of playground and classroom behavior
- reviewing the contents of the letter box daily
- teaching and learning assessment
- student and parent reporting
- student surveys
- observation
- staff meetings
- triennial school community surveys and reviews
- reporting to parents on the effectiveness through the newsletter, or website.
- Tri Annual reporting through the Annual School report

Accessing Blaxland Public School Anti – Bullying Plan

The Anti - Bullying Plan is included in the school’s information pack which is provided to parents on enrolment.

Alternatively the plan may be accessed:

- via the school’s website in the policy section

Additional Information

Police Youth Liaison Officer can be contacted at the Blue Mountains Local Area Command at Springwood Police Station 02 47510299

School Liaison Officer can be contacted at the Blue Mountains Local Area Command at Springwood Police Station 02 47510299

Kids Help Line: 1800 55 1800

Kids On Line Counseling:


Family and Community Services:

Principal’s comment

Blaxland Public School is proactive in the understanding and approach to Anti-Bullying.

We are an inclusive school with high expectations of the way in which we interact as a community.

Our values are understood and shared.

Values are taught Kindergarten to Year 6 in conjunction with anti-bullying knowledge and strategies. This is implemented weekly at a class level and whole school assembly level.

While many children will experience some form of social interaction that will require teacher and learning support by the very nature of being a young person, learning and maturing it is rare for our school to encounter true bullying.

It is the endeavour of this school to continue proactivity in anti-bullying in order to sustain positive interaction of our learning community.

Jenny Lees Teacher
Martin Zoglmeyer Assistant Principal
Greg Foye Assistant Principal
Susie Kerr Teacher
Judy Shaw Teacher
Kerrie Palmer Teacher
Lou Ellwood Teacher
Paula O’Brien Learning And Support Teacher
Emma Jamieson Principal

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