

# Our School Anti-Bullying Plan Annual Report

Our school anti-bullying 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. It can be downloaded from our school website: <http://www.bankstownw-p.schools.nsw.edu.au/home>

## Statement of purpose:

Bankstown West Public School is an inclusive environment where diversity is affirmed and individual differences are respected. Quality education is provided for students to meet their learning needs in a secure, ordered and supportive environment.

Students and all members of the community have the right to expect that they will spend the school day free from the fear of bullying, harassment and intimidation. Bullying behaviour can be verbal, physical, social or psychological.

Students, teachers, parents and members of the wider community have a responsibility to create a safe and happy environment, free from all forms of bullying.

Bullying is not acceptable in any form.

Bankstown West Public School uses a proactive approach that teaches students strategies in how to work and play in the classroom and playground. They provide teachers with a framework that is positive and consistent across grades K-6. We aim to:-

- ensure the school is a safe and happy environment for all.
- recognise that bullying occurs and that it needs to be dealt with swiftly and with due thought to procedural fairness.
- provide a strong supportive culture where there is an understanding that bullying and anti social behaviour, including cyber bullying, is not acceptable under any circumstances.

## Students can expect to:

- have their concerns responded to by school staff
- be provided with appropriate support (for both the subjects of, and those responsible for, the behaviour)
- take part in learning experiences that address key understandings and skills in relationships, safety, gender equity, discrimination, bullying and harassment. This will be guided by the Personal Development, Health and Physical Education key learning areas.
- know that students, parents, teachers and caregivers work collaboratively to prevent and respond to bullying behaviour.

## Protection

- The Social Skills Program trialed in Term One of 2012 was deemed to be successful in modeling and promoting skills in communication, decision making and interaction. This program will be extended into Term One of 2013 and will continue to be modified, as required, in the following years.
- During technology sessions students were educated about cyber bullying (as age appropriate) and responsible internet usage. Due to the changing nature of technology and the increasing number of students using social media this will need to

be continued into 2013 and the following years. Connections were made with police liaison teams in educating students about correct internet usage. Educating parents about safe practice will need to be addressed.

- Through the provision of Peer Support the school focused on teaching specific skills and attitudes over one term. The unit on *Being Optimistic* was taught by Year 6 students in 2012 but the students found the concepts difficult. New units developed by the Peer Support Foundation will be investigated for implementation in 2013.
- The school continued to acknowledge and reinforce positive behaviour through the implementation of our reward system, as articulated in the School Discipline Policy. This level system recognises and rewards positive behaviour and student achievement. Feedback from staff, students and parents has been positive so the system will continue to be implemented in 2013
- The Anti-bullying Plan is available to all parents through the school website. The effectiveness of the Anti-bullying Plan will be reported to the school community annually through the website and P&C meetings.
- A copy of the class management system, school discipline code and class rules were sent home at the beginning of the year to facilitate communication of expectations between home and school. The majority of the notes were returned signed by both parents and students indicating a commitment to school policies. This practice will continue in 2013.
- General awareness raising sessions were held periodically over the year to deal with such issues as reinforcing playground rules, reinforcing the uniform policy and attendance requirements. Through communication with the students and parents, the process of assigning a support person to the child being bullied was integral to the child feeling safe and secure at school. School counsellor intervention was utilised with the child receiving regular counselling sessions, with the parent following school advice and seeking additional support from outside agencies.
- The school's expectation of senior primary students was stipulated in a letter to parents in the second semester. 95% of these letters were returned signed with parents committing to supporting high expectations of students' behaviour.
- Parental agreements concerning appropriate internet usage and use of technology were sought so that there is now a data base of students' names which will be regularly updated with new enrolments added over the years.

## Prevention and Early Intervention

A support teacher also met with a group of Year 6 children regularly in the second semester of the year. These sessions focused on building students' interpersonal skills, assertiveness training, risk taking and developing strategies to deal with new situations. As a result of these intervention strategies, the children felt more comfortable and less anxious about their transition to high school.

The support teacher also worked with a small group of children on developing their social skills in taking turns, co-operating, following the rules of games and playing fairly. In general, there were fewer incidents of bullying behaviour recorded through RISC from these students. Small group support, teaching desired behaviours to individual students, was deemed as a successful, pro-active approach and will be implemented as required in 2013.

## Response

The Referral System continued to be utilised. Integral to the success of this system is the consistent, systematic recording of incidents and frequent communication with parents using the RISC software program. While there was a small increase in the recording of incidents from 2012 to 2013, this was due to teachers adopting a more consistent approach to ensuring bullying incidents were reported in a timely and efficient manner. The adoption of

the new Easy School Reporting Procedures in 2013 will be supported by professional development for staff to ensure the successful implementation of the new recording system.

## Additional Information

The Anti-bullying plan will be reviewed on a regular basis, every three years, so that all members of staff are aware of and committed to the plan. It should reflect the current needs and teaching practices at Bankstown West public School. Surveys of staff, parents and teachers will be conducted regularly. Other evaluative processes such as number of referrals and number of children accessing the behaviour system will also be utilised. These surveys will give important information about the nature and incidence of bullying behaviours at Bankstown West Public School and will drive future directions to ensure the school is a safe and happy place.

As the plan was first implemented in 2012, it will be formally reviewed in 2014.

## Principal's comment

The safety and wellbeing of the children in our care is of prime consideration. Bullying is not tolerated and incidents are always dealt with swiftly and decisively with the knowledge that not only the person effecting the bullying and the person being targeted but also bystanders play a role.

The changing nature of society with regard to social media requires an increasing emphasis on dealing with safe and respectful internet usage.

Our success requires learning on the part of all staff members, students and parents and carers.

The commitment of all members of our school community is an indication that past successes in dealing with bullying will be carried forward as we strive to keep all children safe and happy so they are in the best position to focus on their learning.

## School contact information

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