



**MACKILLOP EDUCATION  
WARANARA**  
So much more than a school

# NSW\_EDU\_WAR\_02 MacKillop Education Waranara Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedure

## NSW Education Standards Authority

### NSW Registered and Accredited Individual Non-Government Schools Manual

#### **B8 Safe and Supportive Environment**

B8.2 School must provide for student welfare Section 47(1)(g)(i) of the *Education Act – Student Behaviour*

### Definitions

MacKillop Family Services (MacKillop Education Waranara School) will be referred to, forthwith, as MacKillop Education Waranara.

**NCAB** - The National Centre Against Bullying (NCAB is made up of a team of experts who work closely with school communities, governments and industry. They play an important role in speaking out for children and advocating for their right to be free from violence).

**NPYO** - NSW Police Youth Officer

**Parent(s)** - In this document the term parent is used to refer to a parent, parents, carer, carers or guardian

**The School** – MacKillop Education Waranara

**Staff** - means all employees, volunteers, support staff any other person employed the school or the organisation

### Statement

MacKillop Education Waranara is committed to providing a respectful, safe and supportive learning environment for its students. The school is a Special Assistance school that caters for students who are disengaged, or, at risk of disengaging, from learning. The school identifies bullying as a serious issue and all incidents are addressed. This policy will be applied with a deep understanding of our students. Student behaviours are complex and may be a result of individual challenges, adverse childhood experiences or trauma re-enactment. A trauma-informed response will be implemented.

Our values of respect, hope, justice, compassion and collaboration inform the quality of relationships we establish and all that we do to ensure our learning community is a place of



welcome and safety. We celebrate diversity, and we are committed to inclusion, so that every student, regardless of race, religion, culture, gender identity or personal circumstance, including barriers to learning, can access education and experience success.

## Scope

This policy applies to all staff, parent(s)/carer(s) and students.

## What is Bullying?

Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening.

Bullying can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time (for example, through sharing of digital records).

Bullying in any form, or for any reason, can have immediate, medium and long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders.

Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying. (*The National Centre Against Bullying*).

## Forms of Bullying

Forms of bullying include:

*Physical bullying* – pushing, shoving, fighting, pinching and any other unwelcomed physical contact *used* intentionally to intimidate or hurt someone.

*Verbal bullying* – put downs, particularly those referring to physical characteristics, can result in loss of self-esteem. Racial discrimination of any kind is a form of bullying.

*Gesture bullying* – non-verbal signals used to silence and intimidate a target.

*Extortion bullying* – physically stronger and more powerful students may bully other students into giving up their possessions, buying food and drink or taking part in rule-breaking activities.

*Exclusion bullying* – deliberately being left out of activities is a most hurtful form of bullying.

*Visual bullying* – offensive notes or material, graffiti or damaging other student's possessions.

*Sexual bullying* – touching, sexually orientated jokes, drawings of, or writing about someone's body, using rude names or commenting about someone's morals, unwanted invitation of sexual nature, asking questions about someone's private life.

*Cyber-bullying* – the use of various forms of electronic media to spread text and visual messages to cause hurt, embarrassment or intimidation.

## What is not Bullying?

What bullying is not:

- single episodes of social rejection or dislike
- single episode acts of nastiness or spite
- random acts of aggression or intimidation
- mutual arguments, disagreements or fights

These actions can cause great distress. However, they do not fit the definition of bullying and they are not examples of bullying, unless someone is deliberately and repeatedly doing these actions. (NACB)

## Purpose

This policy:

- Meets the requirements of the Section 47(1)(g)(i) *Education Act 1990 - School policies and procedures that make provision for student welfare.*
- provides a definition of bullying to ensure a shared understanding amongst the school community members.
- clearly indicates that bullying will not be tolerated.
- outlines the school's commitment to the creation of a positive and inclusive school culture and the prevention of bullying behaviour.
- describes how allegations of bullying will be investigated and the responses to bullying incidents implemented.

MacKillop Education Waranara will address the prevention of and the response to incidents of bullying by:

- creating a positive, inclusive and safe learning environment for all students.
- implementing education activities to inform the community about bullying and its related effects, and to support the social and emotional development of students.
- encouraging the school community to be vigilant and to report bullying behaviour providing support for all those involved in a bullying incident (targets, bystanders and students engaged in the bullying behaviour).

## Responsibilities

### MacKillop Education Waranara

The school is required to:

- implement, evaluate and regularly review the Anti-Bullying Policy.
- provide consultation, support and professional training related to bullying matters
- provide staff with training, skills and strategies to recognise and address bullying, how to reduce the incidence of bullying, how to report and respond to any incidents of bullying and promote the development and maintenance of respectful student relationships.
- provide parent(s) with information regarding the Anti-Bullying Policy.
- publish the Anti-Bullying Policy on its website and intranet.

## **The Principal**

The Principal will:

- implement classroom anti-bullying education and preventative strategies which promote respectful relationships.
- implement processes and procedures to promote student voice and inclusion.
- support young people and their parent(s) to report any incidences of bullying.
- accurately and factually document incidents of bullying and the implemented responses.
- provide support to students involved in bullying incidents.
- ensure that incidents of bullying and implemented responses are accurately documented.
- provide information on bullying and the policy to all students.
- notify parents and carers of bullying incidents that involve their children in a timely manner.
- work in partnership with parent(s) of students involved when responding to incidents of bullying.
- ensure that students are provided with age-appropriate support and education about bullying behaviours, respectful relationships and processes for reporting bullying, to ensure their safety.
- ensure bullying complaints are investigated and responded to in a timely and procedurally fair manner in accordance with this policy.
- ensure that respect for the dignity and privacy of those students involved is maintained.
- ensure relevant staff are informed about bullying complaints and incidents.
- notify the NPYO of any bullying situation involving violence, significant threat of harm or alleged criminal conduct. Further advice can be obtained from the NSW Police Youth Officer.
- ensure wellbeing support for students involved in bullying.
- maintain confidential records of incidents.

## **Deputy Principal and Wellbeing Team**

Will assist the principal with the investigation and responses to bullying.

## **School Staff**

School staff are required to:

- take reasonable care for the safety and wellbeing of students at school or when involved in a school activity.
- notify the Principal and maintain a confidential record of any alleged bullying matter.

## Parent(s)/Carer(s)

Parent(s)/Carer(s) of students are required to:

- be aware of the Anti-Bullying Policy and the strategies being implemented in the school and to actively discuss these with their children.
- work collaboratively with the school and its processes and staff to prevent and resolve allegations of bullying at school.
- reinforce the school policy and procedures regarding the proper use of technology
- not engage in bullying behaviours toward any of the students, staff or other parents.
- report serious matters of bullying to the police and the school.

## Students

Students are responsible for:

- not engaging in bullying
- use positive language and behaviour towards others
- immediately seek help from the school if they are aware of or are involved in a bullying incident
- refrain from retaliating in any bullying incident

## Bullying Prevention

The organisation has several programs and strategies in place to building positive and inclusive school culture and support respectful relationships. We strive to foster a school culture that prevents bullying behaviour by:

- Modelling and encouraging behaviour that demonstrates acceptance, kindness and respect.
- Offering student voice and empowerment in classrooms, and through the use of student voice to discuss matters associate with bullying, safety and wellbeing.
- Responding to incidents of unexpected behaviour as opportunities for person growth and managing these as outline in the *Trauma-Informed Practice Behaviour Support Manual*.

## Incident Response

Students who may be experiencing bullying behaviour, and bystanders who have witnessed bullying behaviour, are encouraged to report their concerns to school staff as soon as possible. Students may discuss their concerns with any member of staff.

Parent(s)/Carer(s) who develop concerns that their child is involved in or has witnessed bullying at the school should contact the principal.

The school will respond to all reported incidents of bullying, perceived or actual. The reported incidents will be taken seriously and responded to promptly, fairly and sensitively. The first step in responding to the bullying allegation is to ensure the safety of the person (s) targeted.

## Investigations

A ‘*No Blame*’ approach will be adopted when a bullying allegation is received. The individual(s) making the allegation will meet with the principal and wellbeing team. Discussion and consultation will take place and a decision will be made as to whether an investigation should be conducted.

The situation may be an example of unpleasant behaviour that requires school intervention and management. In this case, the circumstance will be case noted and targeted interventions to support the development of socially appropriate behaviour may be implemented. The behaviour of the student(s) involved will also be monitored.

If an investigation is required, this will be conducted as outlined the *Anti-Bullying Investigation and Response Pathway* (Appendix 1). The investigation will be conducted by the principal in a timely and sensitive manner, with respect for the dignity and privacy of those involved.

The Bullying Record Keeping and Investigation will be completed by the principal.

Where the investigation shows bullying involving violence, significant threat of harm or alleged criminal conduct, a report will be made to the NPYO.

## Responses to Bullying Behaviours

The records of the investigation will be considered by the principal and leadership team. Regardless of whether the bullying allegation is confirmed, the school will monitor the behaviour of the student(s) involved for an appropriate period. Classroom activities will also be used to reinforce the school’s expectations, regarding student behaviour.

If bullying behaviour is identified, the principal and leadership team will decide on the most appropriate response. The following factors will be considered:

- the wellbeing, age and maturity of the students involved
- the severity and frequency of the bullying and its impact on the targeted student(s)
- whether the bullying took place in a group or one-to-one context
- whether the student(s) engaging in the bullying behaviour:
  - have displayed similar behaviour before
  - demonstrate insight or remorse for their behaviour
- the alleged motive of the behaviour, including any element of provocation

Responses to bullying behaviours may include:

- counselling, case worker or wellbeing program for:
  - the student (s) targeted, to discuss strategies which may include how to deal with bullying behaviours.
  - those engaged in bullying behaviour, to discuss the seriousness of the behaviour, changes in behaviour and support that may be required.
- targeted or individual interventions to support the development of socially appropriate behaviour, for those engaging in bullying behaviour
- restorative practice meeting or mediation with all or some of the students involved
- discussion with the student and their parent(s) at a student support meeting
- continued monitoring of the student’s behaviour and offering appropriate support.

Parent(s) of the students involved will be provided with updates on the management of bullying incidents.

## Record Management

System/Tool	Record
Student Management System– case notes	Observations of student behaviour Ongoing monitoring of behaviour of students involved in bullying incidents
Bullying Record Keeping and Investigations Tool	Notes made during the investigation into bullying allegations

## Acknowledgements and Resources

1. Chapter 16A of the *Children and Young Person’s (Care and Protection) Act*
2. *NSW Department of Education and Communities*
3. *NSW Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002*
4. *VIC\_EDU-009 Anti-Bullying Policy May 2022– Mackillop Education*
5. *The Education Act 1990*
6. *The Catholic Education Commission of NSW*
7. *The National Centre Against Bullying*

## Approval and Review Details

Approval and Review	Details
Approval Authority	Group Director, The MacKillop Institute and MacKillop Education
Approval Date	May 2024
Recommended to Approval Authority by	<a href="#">Mackillop Education Waranara School Principal</a> <a href="#">MacKillop Education Waranara Leadership Team</a>
Next Review Date	May 2026

Approval and Review	Details
Version	1

## Appendix 1 – Anti- Bullying Investigation and Response Pathway



