



Harassment and Bullying Policy – NBSHS

Policy and procedures for preventing and responding to bullying

Purpose:

Bundaberg North State High School is committed to providing a quality education for every student. At North Bundaberg State High School we have high expectations and aim to help our students achieve an OUTSTANDING future.

We value:

- RESPONSIBILITY and commitment to learning
- RESPECT for self, others and surroundings
- RIGHT to learn in a safe and supportive environment

There is no place for bullying at North Bundaberg State High. Bullies and victims of bullies are at risk of poor health, behavioural, emotional and academic problems. Prevention measures and early intervention are the most likely to reduce long-term issues.

Definition of Bullying:

"Bullying is a systematic and repeated abuse of power. In general bullying may be defined as:

- *dominating or hurting someone*
- *unfair action by the perpetrator(s) and an imbalance of power*
- *a lack of adequate defence by the target and feelings of oppression and humiliation."*

(Rigby, 2010)

In line with North Bundaberg State High School's Responsible Behaviour Plan, bullying behaviour will not be tolerated. Bullying behaviours include, but are not limited to; taunting, mocking, taking or vandalising belongings, inappropriate text messaging, sending offensive or degrading images by phone or internet, offensive graffiti, gossiping, spreading rumours, making offensive comments, and excluding others.

Bullying may be related to:

- Disability
- Gender
- Race, religion or culture
- Sexual orientation
- Appearance

At North Bundaberg State High School there is broad agreement among students, staff and parents that bullying is observable and measurable behaviour. When considering whether or not bullying has occurred, we will therefore avoid speculation on the intent of the behaviour, the power of individuals involved, or the frequency of its occurrence. Whether bullying behaviour is observed between students of equal or unequal power, whether it occurs once or several times, and whether or not the persons involved cite intimidation, revenge, or self-defence as a motive, the behaviour will be responded to in similar fashion, that is, as categorically unacceptable in the school community.

Prevention:

Attempting to address specific problem behaviours will not be successful if the general level of disruptive behaviour in all areas of our school is not kept to a low level. Therefore, our schoolwide universal behaviour support practices will be maintained at all times. This will ensure that:

- Our universal behaviour support processes will always remain the primary strategy for preventing problem behaviour, including preventing the subset of bullying behaviour
- All students know the 3 school values of Respect, Safety and Responsibility and have been taught the expected behaviours attached to each value in all areas of the school
- All students have been or are being taught the specific routines in the non-classroom areas, from exiting the classroom, conducting themselves in accordance with the school expectations in the playground and other areas, to re-entering their classrooms
- All students are receiving high levels of positive reinforcement for demonstrating expected behaviours, including those associated with following our routines, from all staff in the non-classroom areas of the school
- A high level of quality active supervision is a permanent staff routine in the non-classroom areas. This means that duty staff members are easily identifiable and are constantly moving, scanning and positively interacting as they move through the designated supervision sectors of the non-classroom areas.

Proactive School Approaches

At North Bundaberg State High School the student body is informed of bullying through a number of whole school proactive strategies including:

- “Better Buddies” activities and RAS lessons
- RAS Program
- Whole School and Year Parades to address specific bullying issues
- Guest speakers at school lessons/events to provide insight into bullying concerns and consequences
- School-based Police Officer to address bullying concerns
- Bullying and resilience programs implemented on a needs basis (for example - Rock and Water)
- Student Services Support – Chaplain, Nurse, Guidance Officer, Youth Support Coordinator
- Individual Year Level Coordinators, Junior and Senior Heads of Department, Junior and Senior Deputies
- Stop Harassing Me Postcards and Program
- Responsible Behaviour Plan for students

What Students Do When They Are Being Bullied?

When students make a claim of being bullied, staff members will check if they have followed strategies to stop the bullying themselves. These strategies include:

1. Tell the bully to stop
2. Change your thinking – talk to an adult (such as the Chaplain) about staying positive and building resilience
3. Avoid the bully if possible
4. If it is a case of cyber bullying a record of the bullying (a screen shot) is to be taken and then the bully blocked from further contact
5. If it is a case of bullying that has occurred via text messaging a record of the bullying (a phone screen shot) is to be taken
6. Keep a record of any incidents (in school diary or journal)
7. If the bullying continues or you feel uncomfortable students are to report to the Year Level Coordinator

Resolution Process followed by teachers

If the student has tried to stop the bullying/harassment but it has not worked, then the Year Level Coordinator will follow appropriate procedures, from the list below;

1. Victim counselled by teacher and a written statement taken
2. Bully/bullies are identified and interviewed and the allegation investigated
3. Bully writes a statement in response to the allegation
4. A satisfactory agreement is created between all parties through a mediation process
5. Implementation of the "Stop Harassing Me" postcard with the assistance of the year coordinator
6. Parents will be notified during this process and school records will be kept
7. Work with the parents/family to offer combined support to all stakeholders
8. Consequences will be given for students who have been found to be taking part in any bullying
9. More serious consequences will be put into place if bullying is an ongoing or of a serious nature. Consequences may include referral to the School-based Police Officer and/or suspension.

North Bundaberg State High School uses behavioural data for decision-making. This data is entered into our database on a daily basis and can be recalled as summary reports at any time. This facility allows the school to track the effectiveness of its anti-bullying process, to make any necessary adjustments, and to identify specific bullying behaviours that may need to be revisited or revised in the instructional process.

The school will respond to any school related bullying incidences, when they are made aware of them. If bullying occurs outside of school it should be reported to the local police who have authority over these incidents.