STUDENT WELLBEING

Anti-Bullying Strategies

PROTECTION

<u>Definition</u>: Bullying can be defined as intentional, repeated behaviour by an individual or group of individuals that cause distress, hurt or undue pressure. It also involves the abuse of power in relationships.

Bullying behaviour can be:

- **verbal** – for example name calling, teasing, abuse, putdowns, sarcasm, insults, threats
- **physical** – for example hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting
- **social** – for example ignoring, ostracising, alienating, inappropriate gestures
- **psychological** – for example spreading rumours, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions
- **cyber** (online bullying) – for example through use of technology, such as emails, blogs, websites, mobile phones etc., including sending abusive texts or emails, taking and sharing unflattering or private images of others, posting unkind messages or inappropriate images on social networking sites, excluding individuals from online chats or other communication, assuming the identity of the victim online and representing them in a negative manner or manner that may damage their relationship with others, repeatedly, and for no strategic reason, attacking players in online gaming.

<u>Statement of Purpose</u>

At Liverpool West Public School, we use positive student strategies. We are building, promoting, and utilising a consistent approach to behaviour management based on addressing students' rights and responsibilities. This is supported by the implementation of Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) and our three school rules: Be Safe, Be Respectful, Be a Learner.

Students and staff have the right to expect that they will spend the school day in a safe, respectful learning environment that directly addresses any incident of bullying, harassment, and intimidation. Any inappropriate behaviour that interrupts teaching and learning at the school and interferes with the wellbeing of students and staff is not accepted.

This includes the following:

- promoting a safe, respectful learning environment
- staff using consistent language and demonstrating respectful ways of relating in all practices
- explicit teaching and acknowledgement of school expectations of behaviour and learning
- explicit teaching of what bullying is and related school practices for staff, students, and the community
- consistent application of procedures and support for students who present with difficulties in relating safely and respectfully with others
- forming productive partnerships with the community to provide a range of options to support students' social, emotional, and academic needs.

Students, teachers, parents/carers, and members of the wider school community have a shared responsibility to create and maintain a safe, respectful learning environment that challenges

bullying. Each group within the school community also has specific responsibilities in preventing and dealing with bullying.

<u>Positive School Culture</u>

The school aims to minimise bullying by engaging in a range of programs to promote respectful relationships, reduce incidences of bullying and to provide timely support from an educative framework for students who are involved in bullying, including witnesses (bystanders). Students who are found to engage in bullying behaviour are managed in accordance with the NSW Department of Education and Community *Complaints Handling Policy*, the school's *Code of Conduct* and State-wide *Student Welfare Policies and Procedures*. Students who are found to engage in bullying are also provided with social support that includes explicit teaching on respectful ways of relating to others and the school's approach to challenging bullying, including consequences for continued engagement in such behaviour.

PREVENTION

Liverpool West Public School is an inclusive environment, where diversity is affirmed, and individual differences are respected across all settings. This is evidenced by staff demonstrating practices, school communications and the provision of an inclusive curriculum. In addition to developing and maintaining a supportive learning environment in class time, the school has developed strategies to promote respectful practice and collaborative play during break times. Specific practices are in place that promote a safe and respectful school environment. Such practices include but are not limited to the following:

- explicit teaching of the school's *Code of Conduct*
- NSW Department of Education Behaviour Code for Students
- development of Class Management Plans, Risk Assessments and Individual Behaviour Plans
- implementation of the school's student welfare plan
- provision of additional school learning support officers (SLSOs) on the playground to support games and fair play
- provision of school equipment, resources, and explicit teaching to promote collaborative play
- implementation of Child Protection units of work
- implementation of Positive Behaviour for Learning
- explicit teaching of digital citizenship.

Student engagement and leadership is promoted through several strategies, such as the School Representative Council and leadership programs. Students are encouraged to participate in co-curricular groups that promote teamwork through performing arts, public speaking, and sports.

The school has a comprehensive system for acknowledging effort in behaviour and learning both across the school and within individual class settings. The school acknowledgement system also recognises leadership across extra-curricular activities.

STUDENT WELLBEING

EARLY INTERVENTION

While the school provides a whole school approach to promoting and teaching respectful practices and social competence, some students will require additional support as in all areas of learning. Early identification of a difficulty enables the school to provide educational intervention. This may include recommendations for families to seek out of school assistance when required for students who are identified as being at risk of developing long-term difficulties with social relationships. Students may be identified through staff observation of behaviours, however, when presenting behaviours are not reasonably evident, the school relies on students requesting assistance and/or parents/carers raising concerns with the school.

When a concern is raised, the school will endeavour to assess the situation, act in accordance with school policies and procedures and provide support. As with any concern raised around a student presenting difficulty in the school setting, the school will seek to work collaboratively with the student's parents/carers to address concerns.

There are many strategies to assist students. Specific strategies will vary depending on the situation, however, there are several common elements addressed by school actions. These include the following:

- increased monitoring of behaviours and interactions
- explicit teaching on the expectations of behaviour within the school, procedures for addressing behaviours and consequences of problematic behaviours
- request for parent/carers to collaborate on addressing the student's difficulty
- increased teacher scaffolding of desired behaviour in the class setting which may include class, group or individual learning activities around the need identified.

RESPONSE

The Bullying of Students – Prevention and Response policy applies to all student bullying behaviour, including online (cyber) bullying, and applies outside of school hours and off school premises where students have been involved and there is a clear and close connection to the school as per point 2.2, https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/pd-2010-0415.

In response to incidents of bullying, staff will:

- investigate the incident
- interview all involved students
- provide support to the victim and others involved, including a referral to the school counsellor if required
- inform parents.

In selecting appropriate actions in response to an incident of bullying, complex issues need to be considered and individual circumstances, such as age, the difference in power of those involved and/or disability need to be considered. Consistent with departmental and school policies, the severity and seriousness of the bullying will be assessed, and action taken.

Any serious incident involving assaults, threats, intimidation, or harassment are referred to the principal who, on examination of the seriousness and the facts, is required to act in accordance with the Department of Education and Communities policies and may result in notifications to

authorities such as the Police, the Child Wellbeing Unit or Department of Community Services and the School Safety and Security Unit.

The Anti-Bullying Plan will be reviewed regularly within a three-year period so that all members of the school community are aware of and remain committed to the plan. The review will provide opportunities for reflection and renewal.

The school Anti-Bullying Plan is published on the school website. The community is updated through ClassDojo on the school's progress to promoting a responsible, respectful, and safe learning environment.