STUDENT ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

1. PURPOSE

At Central Coast Steiner School, all members of the community have the right to a safe and supportive school environment. A safe and supportive environment for students is one where students feel secure and cared for, and the risk of harm is minimised.
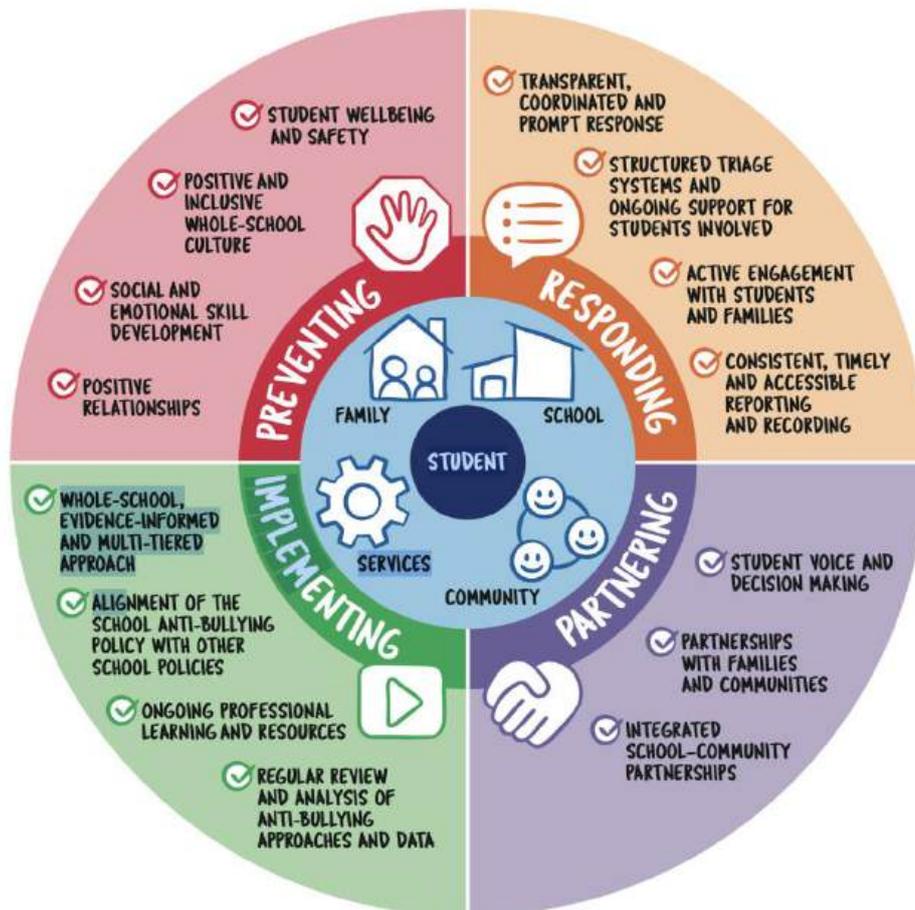
Our School community strives to establish and nurture relationships grounded in kindness and fairness. Bullying constitutes a violation of each student's right to dignity and safety at school. Bullying in any form is unacceptable.

Preventing bullying is the shared responsibility of students, staff and parents/guardians and our broader school community. We all share the responsibility to establish, nurture and restore healthy, inclusive and respectful relationships.

This Policy builds on the School's *Student Code of Conduct* and *Student Discipline Policy* to provide clear procedures and strategies to prevent, identify and respond to bullying. It aligns with the NSW Anti-Bullying Framework: https://www.nsw.gov.au/education-and-training/nesa/school-regulation/nsw-anti-bullying-framework

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NSW Anti-Bullying Framework

2. DEFINING BULLYING

Bullying is behaviour that is:

- Deliberate and often repeated
- Intended to cause fear, distress, hurt or harm

Bullying can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices. It can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Bullying is often enacted where there is a perceived power imbalance, meaning that it can be difficult for the victim to stop it happening again

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There are four main types of bullying behaviour:

1. **Physical:** Examples include hitting, pushing, shoving, intimidating or otherwise physically hurting another person, damaging or stealing their belongings. This includes threats of violence.
2. **Verbal/written:** Examples include name-calling, teasing or insulting someone about an attribute, quality or personal characteristic.
3. **Social/relational/ emotional bullying:** Examples include deliberately excluding someone, spreading rumours, sharing Information that will have a harmful effect on the other person and or damaging a persons, social reputation or social acceptance.
4. **Cyber bullying:** Examples include any form of bullying behaviour that occurs online or via a mobile device it can be verbal or written, and it can include threats of violence as well as images, videos and/ or audio.

See: https://education.nsw.gov.au/schooling/schooling-initiatives/anti-bullying/educators/understanding-bullying

3. PREVENTING BULLYING

Central Coast Steiner School takes a whole-school approach to preventing bullying. We strive to implement proactive, multi-tiered and evidence-informed anti-bullying strategies that address the diverse needs of students through prevention, timely intervention, and targeted supports.

We actively strengthen our whole-school ownership and accountability of this Policy by embedding antibullying strategies within the school's overall culture, expectations, and support structures.

3.1 Building a Positive School Culture

At Central Coast Steiner School, we:

- Communicate clear expectations are through the Student and Parent/Guardian Codes of Conduct
- Foster a strong, well-connected community with open communication and responsiveness
- Consistently educate about and model kindness, fairness and inclusivity
- Recognise, acknowledge and celebrate positive, respectful, friendly student behaviour

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3.2 Curriculum and Explicit Teaching (EK–12)

We educate about:

- Kindness, inclusivity, diversity, positive relationships, conflict resolution and resilience
- Bystander action and peer responsibility
- Personal responsibility and emotional self-regulation
- Cyber- safety practices, including privacy, consent, image-posting, sexting etc. (Years 5–12)
- Friendships with age-appropriate programs about sharing and consent
- Student voice, providing Circle Time (primary) and Guardian Time (high school) to ensure safe, supportive forums
- Our shared values, to support a sense of belonging at school
- How to raise concerns, how to seek help if and when needed

3.3 Student Responsibilities

Students are educated so that they are aware of the school's respectful and kind culture.

All students are expected to:

- Uphold our Student Code of Conduct
- Uphold a safe and supportive school environment
- Not engage in any kind of bullying behaviour themselves or within a group
- Regulate their own emotional responses
- Take positive bystander action, if safe
- Communicate to peers that bullying is not acceptable
- Remove themselves from bullying situations as soon as possible
- Report incidents of alleged bullying/ feeling targeted promptly to staff

3.4 Staff Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of staff to:

- Model kind, respectful, inclusive relationships
- Provide active, attentive student supervision
- Ensure timely, documented and consistent follow-up of allegations of bullying
- Support students to understand and uphold Student Codes of Conduct

- Engage Wellbeing Officers and specialist services as required
- Engage in/ access relevant professional learning and resources, e.g. https://www.bullyingnoway.gov.au/
- Inform Deputy Principal/Principal about bullying allegations in a timely, consistent way

4. RESPONDING TO BULLYING

Bullying is a serious breach of the Student Codes of Conduct and will be addressed in accordance with the Student Discipline Policy.

The Deputy Principal/Principal will be informed of all allegations of bullying.

4.1 Investigation Procedures

All reports will be investigated promptly and fairly. Procedural fairness principles apply, including:

- The right to be heard
- The right to unbiased decision-making

Responsive steps include preliminary and documented individual interviews with:

- The student/s reporting bullying
- Witnesses, where applicable
- The student/s alleged to have engaged in bullying
- Relevant staff

Procedural fairness includes the consistent requirement for objective and unbiased fact-finding. Following this, the Deputy Principal/Principal will determine the required responses, with due consideration of student wellbeing and privacy.

4.2 Support and Intervention

Responses may include:

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Support for the student/s who has/have experienced bullying

- Counselling with the school's Wellbeing Officers
- Trauma-informed practices where appropriate
- Social skills, confidence and resilience building
- Re-skilling and conflict management strategies
- Restorative processes

Support for the student/s who has/have engaged in bullying

- Specific behavioural interventions that identify and address underlying motivations
- Teaching about behavioural change/replacement behaviours
- Trauma-informed practices where appropriate
- Behaviour Management Plan/ Safety Management Plan where required
- Immediate preventative measures may need to be implemented to avoid recurrence or reprisals
- Ongoing monitoring and review to ensure wellbeing and safety

Support for bystanders and witnesses

- Counselling with the school's Wellbeing Officers as needed
- Guidance on positive intervention strategies
- Reinforcement of personal and peer responsibility

Parent/Guardian Involvement

- Parents/guardians are informed and engaged as appropriate
- Collaborative planning may be needed for ongoing behaviour support

4.3 Restorative and Disciplinary Action

Restorative practices are central to the School's approach. These may include:

- Genuine reparation that includes, and goes beyond verbal apology

- Agreed actions to restore relationships and foster positive future relationships
- Involvement of Wellbeing Officers and/or Police Liaison Officers where appropriate

Disciplinary consequences, as per our *Student Discipline Policy* may include:

- Formal warning
- Suspension
- Expulsion

5. PARTNERING WITH FAMILIES AND COMMUNITY

The responsibility to uphold a kind, safe and supportive school culture is communicated at each student enrolment interview. Preventing and responding to bullying is a shared responsibility.

5.1 Parents and Guardians

Parents/guardians are asked to:

- Support the School's kind, respectful, inclusive culture
- Support their child/ren to uphold the School's Code of Conduct
- Support their child/ren in upholding safe online behaviours
- Listen to and support their child if bullying allegations are raised
- Be mindful of the definitions of bullying, avoid unhelpful drama, avoid jumping to conclusions or making accusations
- Encourage their child to speak with their Class Teacher/Year Guardian/ Deputy Principal/Principal
- Contact the School Class Teacher/Year Guardian/ Deputy Principal/Principal
- Uphold the *Code of Conduct for Parents and Guardians*

5.2 Partnerships

Our partnerships strengthen prevention, foster personal responsibility and provide specialised support.

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The Central Coast Steiner School works collaboratively with:

- School Police Liaison Officers (including regular focus on cybersafety)
- Specialist external program/event providers where appropriate
- Support services across community settings, ensuring students receive appropriate, trauma-informed and holistic care, especially for students whose needs exceed what can reasonably be provided by the school

6. IMPLEMENTING AND REVIEWING

6.1 Implementation

This **Student Anti-Bullying Policy** is implemented through:

- Whole-school upholding of a safe, supportive culture
- Whole-school communication of expectations through Staff and Student Code of Conduct etc.
- Integration of respectful relationship education into curriculum, events and wellbeing programs
- Working constructively with families, as per our *Code of Conduct for Parents and Guardians*
- Active, attentive student supervision practices
- Provision of intervention and procedural fairness in instances of alleged bullying
- Clear reporting and documentation procedures
- Ongoing professional learning and provision of resources
- Collaborative community partnerships

6.2 Monitoring and Review

The effective and consistent implementation of this policy is monitored through:

- Maintaining records of incidents and responses
- Regular monitoring and support of students involved in bullying incidents

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- Analysis of anti-bullying approaches and data to inform future strategies in an evidence-based way
- Reviewing/ updating Behaviour Management Plans/ Student Safety Plans within agreed timeframes
- Periodic policy review to ensure relevance and effectiveness

Revisions will be communicated to the School community and made accessible to relevant stakeholders.

Reviewed: 17/02/2026 RM