



## Riverstone Public School **Anti-Bullying Plan**

### **Policy Statement**

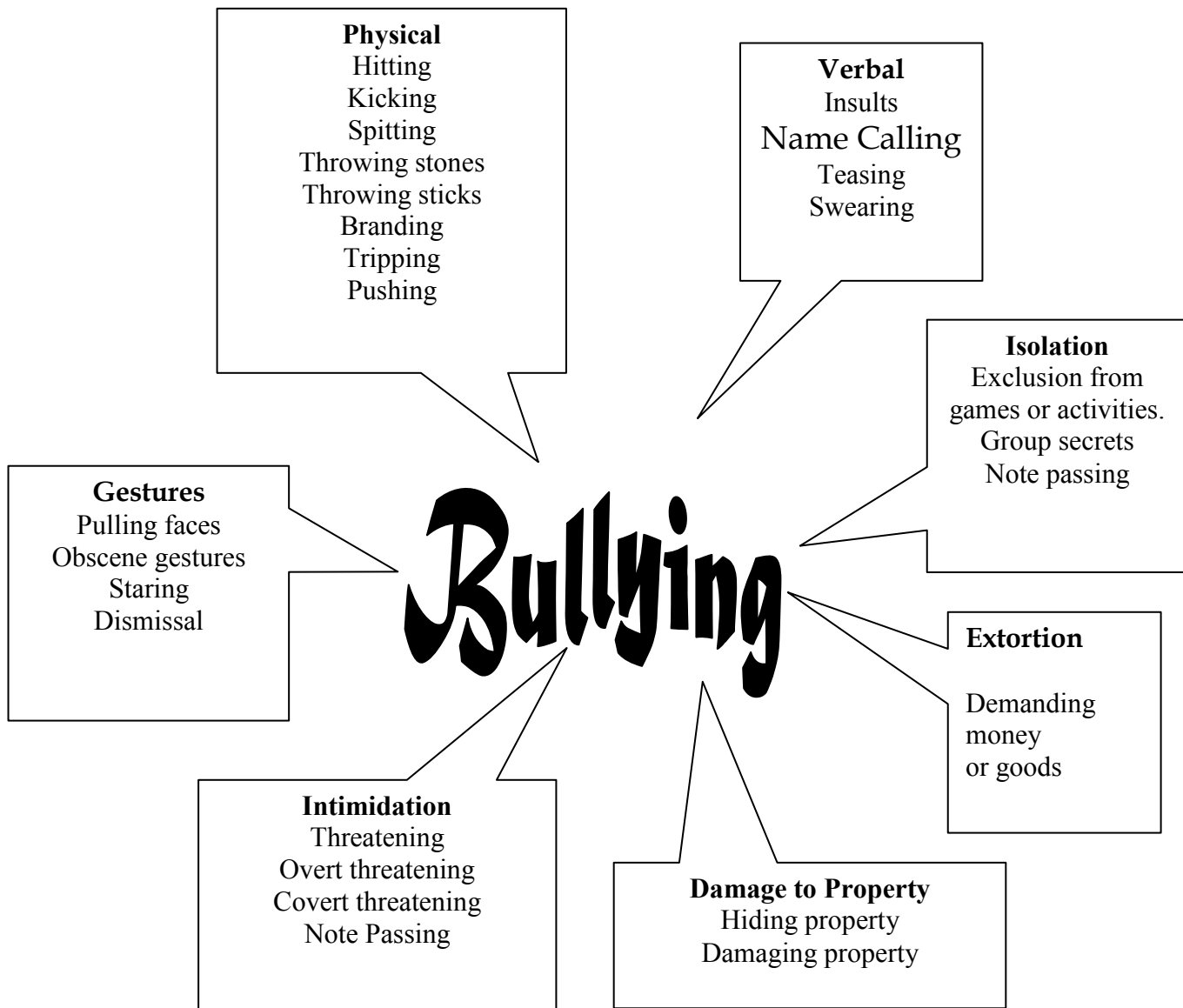
Riverstone Public School values Knowledge and Friendship and has a zero tolerance towards any form of bullying or harassment. Our school is an inclusive environment, where diversity is affirmed and individual differences are respected. The wellbeing, safety and health of students are a cornerstone of all school policies, programs and practices.

### **Defining Bullying Behaviour**

*Bullying is repeated oppression, psychological or physical, of a less powerful person by a more powerful person or group of persons. (Ken Rigby 1996)*

*Bullying is a conscious and wilful act of aggression. It can last for a short period of time or go on for years and is an abuse of power by those carrying out the bullying.*

There are many forms of bullying but those listed below are probably the most common.



## **Statement of Purpose**

Riverstone Public School will not tolerate bullying or harassment of any kind.

All teachers are firmly committed to preventing any acts of bullying.

The role of the school in the prevention of bullying includes:

- Sending very clear messages to students as to what is acceptable behaviour.
- Consistently applying sanctions against bullying behaviour.
- Creating an environment where students care for and are interested in each other.
- Providing the students with skills to solve problems and avoid conflict.
- Establishing links between the school and the community so that everyone knows the content of the anti-bullying program.

Partnership with parents and the wider community is considered central to the success of addressing bullying when it occurs in our community

## **Managing Bullying**

### **Primary Prevention**

The primary method of prevention is the promotion of a positive school climate that acknowledges that while bullying does occasionally happen, it will not be tolerated within the school community. A focus will be maintained with:

- Classroom posters that identify what bullying is, the different types of bullying and strategies for dealing with bullying when it occurs.
- Term 1-Anti-Bullying Program. Lessons that focus on bullying conducted at the beginning of each term to empower students to recognise forms of bullying and learn how to deal with issues that arise
- Term 2- Drug Education
- Term 3-The Peer Support Program  
Child Protection Program
- Term 4- Road safety.
- Professional development for staff related to anti-bullying and the strategies to counteract bullying
- Community awareness and input relating to anti-bullying, its characteristics and input relating to anti-bullying, its characteristics and the schools program and response eg newsletters.
- Provide programs that promote resilience, life skills and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and communication skills eg Peer Support Program
- Staff supervision of set areas in playground.
- Ensure students know and understand what behaviour is acceptable in school Re: Discipline Policy
- Maintenance of staff commitment to acknowledge victims of bullying and quickly and effectively deal with bullying incidents.

### **Early Intervention**

- Students are to be encouraged to report bullying involving themselves or others.
- Teachers to regularly remind students to report incidents. Reporting is not dobbing.
- Parents are encouraged to contact the school if they become aware of a problem.
- Students are recognised for positive behaviour (Discipline Code).
- Teachers use a class and playground management plan if an incident of bullying occurs.
- Executives are alerted to incidents of bullying.

## Intervention

- Once identified, the bully, the victim and witnesses are spoken to, all incidents or allegations of bullying will be fully investigated.
- Consideration as to why the bullying occurred will be investigated eg ( The bigger picture or contributing factors)
- Both bully and victim are to be offered school based assistance and support (i.e. outside school resources, counselling maybe utilised if deemed necessary).
- A meeting of relevant persons is to be convened following identification of on-going bullying behaviour (Principal or Executive, class teacher, parents, students and the school counsellor). All issues relevant to the behaviour of the student are considered and specific needs are addressed by the LST.

## Post Intervention

- Riverstone Public School's Discipline Policy outlines appropriate procedures of the consequences for inappropriate behaviour in the classroom and in the playground.
- Incidents of bullying will be noted on pink slips and recorded on RISC. When an incident involves bullying the term "bullying" should be used. Details of bullying incidents will be communicated to parents (re: to Discipline Policy).
- Possible consequences may involve:
  1. Warning
  2. Removal to the stage supervisor or principal
  3. Parental contact
  4. On-going monitoring
  5. Time out-classroom/playground
  6. School service/Team building
  7. Mediation sessions with the victim to reconcile differences.
  8. Referral to school counsellor
  9. Class/group changes
  10. Suspension

## Response to and advice to be given to students who are being bullied

The initial response of a teacher when a child reports that he/she are being bullied is to **acknowledge how the student is feeling** and to **assure the student that it is not their fault**.

Students at Riverstone Public School are taught to follow the **TELL!** philosophy on "How to Bust a Bully". The posters are displayed in all classrooms and around the school. Staff reinforce **TELL!** when addressing bullying in teaching/learning programs and in the playground.

**T**alk to a teacher

**E**xplain what has happened

**L**ose the fear, because there is always someone who will

**L**isten and help!

## **Advice to be given to students who know someone else is being bullied:**

Students should be made aware that witnesses to bullying have a very powerful role to play. Early intervention can defuse conflict situations before bullying sets in or gets out of hand. Therefore the following suggestions should be made:

- If possible, intervene as the bullying occurs by telling the bully to stop. This is very useful if the onlooking student has influence with the bully.
- Refuse to join in with the bullying.
- Support students who are being bullied-just standing by can be enough.
- Tell an adult if you are concerned about the bullying.
- It is every student's right and responsibility to report bullying whether it happens to oneself or to someone else.

## **The Role of Parents**

The following suggestions are made to parents through newsletters and at parent information meetings.

- Take an active interest in what is happening in your child's school/social life.
- Encourage your child to accept and tolerate differences in others.
- Build your child's self confidence by recognising an affirming his/her positive qualities.
- Discuss the school's expectations and behaviour with your child.
- Set an example by being positive in things you say and do.
- Be alert for signs of distress-reluctance to attend school, damaged clothing, loss of personal property and loss of confidence, decline in academic performance, uncharacteristic mood changes and withdrawal from social activities.
- Act if your child is being bullied at school – report to teacher/principal

## **Monitoring and Evaluating**

### **Annual**

- Collate pink slip data related to bullying and run reports from RISC data
- Evaluate whole school prevention strategies and develop an action plan to address areas for improvement

