

Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy & Procedures

Zahra Grammar School



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Bullying Prevention and Intervention Policy & Procedures

Rationale

Zahra Grammar School recognises its duty to students to provide a safe and positive learning environment where individual differences and diversity within the Zahra Grammar School is respected and accepted.

Bullying is not tolerated at Zahra Grammar School

It is our policy that:

- bullying be managed through a 'whole-of-Zahra Grammar School community' approach involving students, staff and parents/guardians
- bullying prevention strategies are implemented within the Zahra Grammar School on a continuous basis with a focus on teaching age-appropriate skills and strategies to empower staff, students and parents/guardians to recognise bullying and respond appropriately
- bullying response strategies are tailored to the circumstances of each incident
- staff establish positive role models emphasising our no-bullying culture
- bullying prevention and intervention strategies are reviewed on an annual basis against best practice.

Bullying

Bullying is the repeated and intentional behaviour of causing fear, distress or harm towards another person that involves an imbalance of power. It can involve humiliation, domination, intimidation, victimisation and harassment. In any bullying incident there are likely to be three parties involved: the bully, the person being bullied, and bystanders.

Bullying can take many forms including:

- **Physical bullying** which involves physical actions such as hitting, pushing, obstructing or being used to hurt or intimidate someone. Damaging, stealing or hiding personal belongings is also a form of physical bullying.
- **Psychological bullying** which is when words or actions are used to cause psychological harm. Examples of psychological bullying include name calling, teasing or making fun of someone because of their actions, appearance, physical characteristics or cultural background.

- **Indirect bullying** which is when deliberate acts of exclusion or spreading of untrue stories are used to hurt or intimidate someone.
- **Cyber bullying** which is the ongoing abuse of power to threaten or harm another person using technology. Cyber bullying can occur in chat rooms, on social networking sites, through emails or on mobile phones.

What Isn't Bullying?

There are many negative situations which, whilst being potentially distressing for students, are not bullying. These include:

- **Mutual Conflict Situations** which arise where there is disagreement between students but not an imbalance of power. Mutual conflict situations need to be closely monitored as they may evolve into a bullying situation.
- **One-Off Acts** (of aggression or meanness) including single incidents of loss of temper, shouting or swearing do not normally constitute bullying.

Signs of Bullying

Major behavioural changes in a student may be indicative of bullying. Such behavioural changes may include:

- crying at night and having nightmares
- refusing to talk when asked "What's wrong?"
- having unexplained bruises, cuts or scratches
- an unwillingness or refusal to go to school
- feeling ill in the mornings
- a decline in quality of school work
- becoming withdrawn and lacking confidence
- beginning to bully siblings
- acting unreasonably.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to recognise signs of bullying and notify the Zahra Grammar School through a trusted staff member immediately (such as a class teacher), if they suspect their child is a victim of bullying.

School's Bullying Prevention Strategy

Zahra Grammar School recognises that the implementation of whole-Zahra Grammar School prevention strategies is the most effective way of eliminating, or at least minimising incidents of bullying within our community.

The following initiatives form part of our overall bullying prevention strategy and our strategy to create a 'no-bullying' culture within the Zahra Grammar School:

- a structured curriculum and peer group support system, that provides age-appropriate information and skills relating to bullying (including cyber bullying) and bullying prevention, to students over the course of the academic year
- education, training and professional development of staff in bullying prevention and response strategies
- regular provision of information to parents/carers, to raise awareness of bullying as a Zahra Grammar School community issue to equip them to recognise signs of bullying, as well as to provide them with clear paths for raising any concerns they may have relating to bullying directly with the Zahra Grammar School
- promotion of a supportive environment that encourages the development of positive relationships and communication between staff, students and parents/carers
- promotion of responsible bystander behaviour amongst students, staff and parents/carers
- reporting of incidents of alleged bullying by students, bystanders, parents/carers and staff are encouraged
- interviewing students at random.
- records of reported bullying incidents are maintained and analysed, in order to identify persistent bullies and/or victims and to implement targeted prevention strategies where appropriate
- education of staff, students and parents/carers on health conditions to promote understanding and to reduce stigma and fear
- anti-bullying posters are displayed strategically within the Zahra Grammar School
- promotion of student awareness and a 'no-bullying' environment by participating in events such as the National Day of Action Against Bullying and Violence

Reporting Bullying

Students and their parents/carers are sometimes reluctant to pursue bullying incidents, for fear that it will only make matters worse.

A key part of the Zahra Grammar School's bullying prevention and intervention strategy is to encourage reporting of bullying incidents as well providing assurance to students who experience bullying (and parents/carers) that:

- bullying is not tolerated within the Zahra Grammar School their concerns will be taken seriously
- the Zahra Grammar School has a clear strategy for dealing with bullying issues.
- Bullying incidents can be advised to the Zahra Grammar School verbally (or in writing) through any of the following avenues:
 - informing a trusted teacher
 - informing the School Coordinator
 - informing the Principal.

Responding to Bullying

Bullying behaviours vary enormously in their extent and intent and, as a consequence, each incident needs to be dealt with on its facts.

In all circumstances the Zahra Grammar School:

- takes bullying incidents seriously
- provides assurance to the victim that they are not at fault and their confidentiality will be respected
- takes time to properly investigate the facts including discussing the incident with the victim, the bully and any bystanders
- takes time to understand any concerns of individuals involved
- maintains records of reported bullying incidents
- will escalate its response when dealing with persistent bullies and/or severe incidents.

Actions that may be taken when responding to bullying include:

- notification of/consultation with parents/carers

- offering counselling to persistent bullies/victims
- implementing effective follow up strategies
- disciplinary action, at the School Coordinator's discretion, including suspension and expulsion of persistent bullies, or in cases of severe incidents.

School Procedure on Bullying Prevention:

Implementation

This Policy is implemented through a combination of:

- staff training
- student and parent/carer education and information
- effective incident reporting procedures
- effective management of bullying incidents when reported
- the creation of a 'no-bullying' culture within the Zahra Grammar School community
- effective record keeping procedures
- initiation of corrective actions where necessary.

Signage

Anti-bullying posters may be posted in strategic locations in the Zahra Grammar School to promote appropriate behaviour and encourage students to respect individual differences and diversity.

To Reduce Bullying

Prevention strategies include:

- Using the curriculum to teach students about the values
- Teaching students about protective behaviours, conflict resolution and problem solving
- During the National day of Action against bullying and violence workshops are conducted by teachers to raise awareness and educate students in regards to bullying.

- Anytime throughout the year guest speakers are invited from Police Department or from Headspace to create awareness against bullying
- Clear school classroom and playground rules displayed around the school.
- Promoting wellbeing, resilience and diversity through respect, friendship and fun in the health program.
- Implementation of a range of programs by external providers
- Develop programs to help students participate and have a say in their learning.
- Develop policies which promote student safety and co-operation.
- Provide professional development for staff.

Intervention strategies include:

- Counselling students who have been involved in bullying (victims and perpetrators).
- Talking with parents or caregivers about the situation.
- Putting consequences in place for those who bully others.
- Empowering students to be proactive and to act against bullying.
- Teaching students proactive strategies for being upstanders.
- All staff receive training in how to address bullying effectively and respectfully.
- All staff are supported to deal with bullying when the need arises.

Post Intervention strategies include:

- Monitoring the situation between the students to ensure their safety and wellbeing are maintained.
- Reviewing our playground duty procedures to ensure they are effective.
- Reviewing and evaluating behaviour management strategy.
- Talking with parents about strategies.
- Reviewing existing policies to make sure they are effective, in particular the student welfare and Behaviour Management policy.

ANTI-BULLYING ACTION PLAN - Steps

1. Bullying incident witnessed by teacher or report of bullying is made by a student or parent/carer
2. Teacher / Student discussion Strategies put into place
3. Teacher records the details of the incident in the day book or in the incident reporting form.

4. The teacher informs the coordinator who makes sure that the children involved are monitored.
5. The coordinator contacts the parents of the victim and the bully and arrange a meeting with them
6. If bullying continues student referred to Principal.
7. Bullying continues. Suspension and referral to counsellor / outside agencies.

Bullying Support Services

The following support services are available to students and staff:

Youth Liaison Officers

Youth Liaison Officers are NSW Police Force members who are responsible for administering the Young Offenders Act 1997 (NSW). They are responsible for delivering cautions, referring children to youth justice conferences, and implementing strategies to reduce crime by juveniles in the community.

School Liaison Police

School Liaison Police are NSW Police officers who work with schools to reduce crime, violence and anti-social behaviour. Our students are encouraged to contact the School Liaison Officer if they have any concerns.

The Zahra Grammar School also provides access to the following support services:

In order to liaise with local Police or with the Youth Liaison Officer, the Principal as the Head of Organisation will contact with Local Area Command Campbelltown and Macquarie Fields.

Useful Contact numbers are:

School Liaison Police	02 9605 0499
Police, Fire, Ambulance	000
Campbelltown Police Station	02 4620 1199
Crime Stoppers	1800 333 000
Police Assistance Line	131 444
FACS Campbelltown	02 4629 3222

References

<https://policies.education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/bullying-of-students-prevention-and-response-policy>

<https://cms.det.nsw.edu.au/antibullying>

<https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/>

<https://www.esafety.gov.au/>

<https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/NationalDay>