

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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1 PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide students, parents and staff with information regarding behavioural expectations and procedures in regard to bullying within Biala School. Biala School is committed to providing a safe and inclusive learning environment for all students and does not tolerate any form of bullying. These procedures are designed to ensure that a positive, supportive and productive learning environment is maintained for the wellbeing of all students.

2 BACKGROUND

Bullying is when people repeatedly and intentionally use words or actions against someone or a group of people to cause distress and risk to their wellbeing. These actions are usually done by people who have more influence or power over someone else, or who want to make someone else feel less powerful or helpless.

Bullying behaviour has three key features;

1. It involves the intentional misuse of power in a relationship
2. It is ongoing and repeated
3. It involves behaviours that can cause harm.

Bullying behaviour can also involve intimidation, victimisation and harassment, including that based on sex, race, religion, disability or sexual orientation, both online and offline.

Bullying can be illegal if it involves behaviours that include physical violence, threats of violence, damaging property or stalking.

Schools are required to establish strategies and practices to encourage positive student behaviour, recognise and reinforce student achievement and wellbeing, and manage disruptive student behaviour.

Preventing and responding to bullying is the shared responsibility of all school staff, volunteers, and contracted staff employed by schools, and students, parents and carers.

3 SCOPE

This policy applies to all students, management and staff of Biala School, and Biala Support Services, parents, family members, volunteers, contractors and visitors.

This 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.

4 DEFINITIONS

The following definitions apply for the purpose of this Policy:

Bullying	Is any intentional, repeated, and harmful behaviour, whether verbal, physical, or social, that creates an imbalance of power. This behaviour may be directed at an individual or group and can cause emotional or physical distress.
Cyberbullying/ Online bullying	Refers to bullying through information and communication technologies, including social media, messaging applications (apps) and emails
Head of Education	Means the Head of Education of Biala School
Parent	Means the parent, carer, guardian or primary person responsible for the student
Principal	means the primary person responsible for the executive decision-making in the organisation.
The School	Means Biala School
Staff Member	Means any person employed by Biala School by a contract of employment

Identifying bullying behaviour

Bullying behaviour can be:

- verbal e.g. name calling, teasing, abuse, putdowns, sarcasm, insults, threats
- physical e.g. hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting
- social e.g. ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating, making inappropriate gestures
- psychological e.g. spreading rumours, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions, malicious SMS and email messages, inappropriate use of camera phones

Bullying behaviour is not:

- students not getting along well
- a situation of mutual conflict
- single episodes of nastiness or random acts of aggression or intimidation

5 POLICY STATEMENT

Biala School does not tolerate any form of bullying and is committed to providing a safe and inclusive learning environment for all students.

All students and staff have the right to be treated fairly and with dignity in an environment free from disruption, intimidation, harassment, victimisation and discrimination.

All members of the school community contribute to the prevention of bullying by modelling and promoting appropriate behaviour and respectful relationships.

The school implements educational programs to raise awareness about bullying, its impact, and strategies for prevention.

The School actively promotes positive behaviour and respectful communication through its culture and through reinforcing initiatives, including the 'Triple B' values, classroom discussions, assemblies, and extracurricular activities.

All staff members receive training on recognising and addressing bullying behaviour. This includes teaching strategies to create a positive classroom and school environment.

6 PROCEDURE

6.1 Reporting

Reports of student bullying can be made to any staff member at the school. The staff member will address the reported bullying in a timely manner.

If a student, parent or carer believes a matter is not being dealt with effectively, they can refer the matter to the Head of Education or the Principal, for resolution.

Anonymous reporting can be made by letter addressed to the Head of Education. Please provide as much detail as possible in order to allow proper investigation of the claims.

6.2 Investigation

The school will promptly investigate all reports of bullying, maintaining confidentiality to the extent possible.

Investigation will be conducted using principles of Procedural Fairness and will include;

- Giving the perpetrator the opportunity to explain the behaviour
- Explaining why the behaviour is unacceptable
- Examining the motivation of the behaviour

6.3 Actions

If bullying behaviour is confirmed, appropriate behavioural management and disciplinary actions will be taken. This may include behavioural counselling and education such as supporting the student to learn more appropriate behaviours and/or developing a Student Behaviour Support Plan.

In the event of extreme bullying and, if appropriate, the School will contact the Police Youth Liaison Officer (YLO) or Police School Liaison Officer (SLP). Ballina Police Station contact number is (02) 6681 8699

6.4 Support and Follow-up

Victims and perpetrators will be offered counseling services to address the emotional impact of bullying and promote positive behavior.

The school will monitor the situation to ensure that the bullying behavior has ceased and take further action if necessary.

7 RECORDS

All incidents, investigations and outcomes are documented in Compass, the school's electronic Management System

8 RELEVANT LEGISLATION

The Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 ("Care and Protection Act");
The *Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012* ("WWC Act");
The Children's Guardian Act 2019 ("Children's Guardian Act"), Part 3A Child safe scheme ("Children's Guardian Act")
The *Crimes Act 1900* ("Crimes Act").

9 KEY RELATED DOCUMENTS

Biala School Discipline Policy & Procedures
Child Protection Policy Procedures
Code of Conduct - sets out information about the standards of behaviour expected of all staff members;
Complaint Handling Procedures – provides the steps taken by the School in addressing complaints;
and Child Safe Policy.

10 NOTES

10.1	Contact Officer	Business Manager
10.2	Implementation Officer	Head of Education
10.3	Approval Authority / Authorities	Principal
10.4	Date Approved	11 th January 2024
10.5	Date of Commencement	29 th January 2024
10.6	Date for Review	31 st January 2027
10.7	Documents Superseded by this Policy	Biala Special School - Anti-Bullying Policy, March 2019
10.8	Amendment History	The Policy Unit will complete this section as required.