

Fort Street High School



Bullying of Students – Prevention and Response Policy

1. Context

This policy sets out Fort Street High School's position on student bullying and the requirements for preventing and responding to student bullying in our school. Bullying in any form will not be tolerated in our school community and will be treated seriously.

2. Purpose

The NSW Department of Education rejects all forms of bullying behaviour. All members of our school community have the right to be in an environment free from fear, intimidation and harassment. Fort Street High School is a positive, accepting and understanding community that empowers students to be active in their pursuit of justice for themselves and others.

3. Definition

Bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons. Bullying can involve humiliation, intimidation, victimisation and forms of harassment including those based on sex, gender, race, disability, homosexuality, transgender status. Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long term effects.

Conflicts or fights between equals or single incidents are not defined as bullying.

The 3 main features of bullying are:

- the misuse of power in a relationship
- it is ongoing and repeated
- it involves behaviours that can cause harm.

3.1 Bullying Behaviour

Bullying behaviour can be:

- **Verbal** - name calling, teasing, sexual harassment, abuse, put-downs, sarcasm, insults, threats
- **Physical** - hitting, punching, sexual harassment/threats, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting
- **Social** - Ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating, making inappropriate gestures, spreading rumours
- **Cyber** - malicious SMS and email messages, inappropriate use of social media and camera phones
- **Psychological** - dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions, threatening or extorting in relation to money, schoolwork, possessions or safety

4. Responsibility

Schools exist in a society where incidents of bullying behaviour may occur. Preventing and responding to bullying behaviour in learning and working environments is a shared responsibility of all staff, students, parents, caregivers and members of the wider school community. At Fort Street High School we strive to create a school-wide culture that is safe and inclusive and allows students to flourish free from discrimination, harassment or any form of bullying.

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

4.1 Staff responsibilities

- respect and support students
- model and promote appropriate behaviour
- support students to become resilient
- have knowledge of school and departmental policies relating to bullying behaviour
- communicate the FSHS Anti-Bullying Policy and Anti-Bullying Plan to students, including definitions and repercussions of bullying
- respond in a timely manner to incidents of bullying according to the school's Anti-bullying Policy
- ensure open lines of communication between home and school to respond to bullying situations if they arise.

In addition, teachers have a responsibility to:

- provide curriculum and pedagogy that supports students to develop an understanding of bullying and its impact on individuals and the broader community, including digital safety.
- be aware of where anti-bullying messages are taught in the curriculum
- identify signs of bullying in all school environments

4.2 Student responsibilities

- behave appropriately, respecting individual differences and diversity
- behave as responsible digital citizens – this means interacting with others online in a positive and respectful manner, and ensuring that comments, images, videos and other material shared online respects the privacy and reputation of all
- have a clear understanding of the different forms of bullying. i.e. psychological, cyber and physical
- follow the school Anti-bullying Policy. This includes being aware of the consequences associated with bullying
- behave as responsible upstanders
- report incidents of bullying according to the school Anti-Bullying Policy.

Consequences for students will be individually based, and may involve: exclusion from class, exclusion from the playground, school suspension, ongoing counselling from appropriate agency for both victim and perpetrator of the bullying.

Upstanders are the most powerful participants in bullying incidents. It is imperative that upstanders make it clear to the bully that his/her behaviour is unacceptable, support the target of bullying, and report the bullying incident to a trusted adult

4.3 Parent and caregiver responsibilities

- support their children to become responsible citizens and to develop responsible on-line behaviour
- be aware of the school Anti-Bullying Policy and assist their children in understanding bullying behaviour
- support their children in developing positive responses to incidents of bullying consistent with the school Anti-bullying Policy
- support their children to become resilient – confident to report bullying and overcome challenges they face
- report incidents of school-related bullying behaviour to the school
- work collaboratively with the school to resolve incidents of bullying when they occur.

4.4 Members of the school community

- model and promote positive relationships that respect and accept individual differences and diversity within the school community
- be empowered with information about the school's Anti-Bullying Policy
- work collaboratively with the school to resolve incidents of bullying when they occur

5. Reporting

Reports of student bullying can be made to any staff member at Fort Street High School. Students or parents can make reports in person, via email or via phone. A teacher or school executive staff (such as the Deputy Principal or Head Teacher) will address the reported bullying in a timely manner. All bullying concerns are shared with the Year Adviser and Head Teacher Wellbeing. Reports made by students and parents will be treated respectfully and responded to in-line with Department of Education processes and procedures. We are sensitive to difficult situations that may be presented; however, confidentiality may not always be possible.

5.1 Action for Students - see appendix 1

If you are being bullied:

- **INFORM:** If you feel safe inform the bully calmly and politely that you want them to stop
- **RECOGNISE:** Is this a one-off incident or is it bullying.
- **TELL:** Tell a responsible and trusted adult about the reoccurring bullying. Talk to them about strategies you can use to manage the situation. For Cyber Bullying block and report perpetrator and capture evidence of offending material eg. screenshots
- **EVALUATE:** Evaluate the situation. If it does not improve follow up with the trusted adult.

If you witness a student being bullied:

- **BE AWARE:** Laughing, teasing, filming is not respectful or responsible behaviour. This is not acceptable.
- **SUPPORT:** Support the student being bullied in a calm manner. Ask the person being bullied “are you OK?”; “Do you need help?” “Can I assist you”?
- **REPORT:** Report the incident to a trusted adult/teacher.

If you are a student exhibiting bullying behaviours:

- **BULLYING IS NOT ACCEPTED:** There are consequences for bullying behaviour. Parent Contact, Deputy Principal involvement, and possible suspension.
- **THINK BEFORE YOU ACT:** Ask yourself if there is an alternative solution to the issues causing a desire to bully someone? Work it out in a kind, intelligent, thoughtful, or neutral manner.
- **REFLECT:** put yourself in the other persons shoes, ask yourself how you would feel if it was you at the other end of the bullying behaviour. Learn how to apologise effectively.
- **MODIFY BEHAVIOUR and GET SUPPORT:** Seek support and strategies from a trusted adult, Year Adviser, Deputy Principal or Counsellor to modify this behaviour.

5.2 Action for Parents

If your child is being bullied:

1. Listen calmly and get the full story
2. If required, encourage your child to report the incident to their Year Adviser, Counsellor or Deputy Principal.
3. Work collaboratively with the school to resolve the incident
4. Discuss and practice strategies to respond to bullying

Cyber bullying is a growing problem that impacts students.

Parents are encouraged to:

- closely monitor online interactions and social media accounts
- report Cyberbullying to the eSafety commissioner if the post/image does not get removed
- block and report the person to the online platform
- keep evidence – take screenshots
- contact the police if needed

If your child is bullying others:

1. Talk with your child and explain why bullying is unacceptable
2. Consider what else might be happening for your child
3. Teach conflict resolution skills
4. Discuss the behaviours with the school regarding any concerns you may have
5. Monitor your child's online interactions

If your child has seen bullying:

1. Encourage your child to talk about what happened
2. Talk about being a supportive upstander
3. If your child tells you that the bullying is continuing or increasing, contact the school

6. Prevention

Fort Street High School teachers and other school staff are provided with support and professional development to discourage, prevent, identify, and respond to student bullying behaviour.

The school will implement strategies to prevent bullying:

- promotion of the respectful, responsible, achiever message in all aspects of school life: assemblies, year meetings, Fortuna lessons, newsletters and in classrooms
- professional development for staff relating to bullying, harassment, and proven counter measures
- community awareness and input relating to bullying, its characteristics, and the school's programs and response
- provision of programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving
- classroom teachers clarify the school policy on bullying with students each year
- curriculum includes anti-bullying messages and strategies, embedded in Key Learning Areas, through wellbeing initiatives
- Student Representative Council, peer support delegates, staff and students to promote the philosophy respectful and responsible behaviour

6.1 Wellbeing Programs

A range of anti-bullying initiatives are embedded into the FSHS Calendar of Events, Wellbeing Road Map and Fortuna Lessons.

All year groups participate in:

- **Harmony Day** develops intercultural understanding
- **RUOK? Day** emphasizes the need for strong relationships and the importance of friendship in mental health and wellbeing
- **Wear if Purple Day** emphasizes the need to foster supportive, safe and inclusive environments for rainbow young people.
- **National Day of Action Against Bullying & Violence** is Australia's key bullying prevention initiative, connecting schools and communities to find workable solutions to bullying and violence.
- **International Woman's Day** is a global day celebrating the social, economic, cultural and political achievements of women. The day also marks a call to action for accelerating gender parity.
- **Diversity Committee** is a diverse student lead group who raise awareness within the school community
- **Anti-Racism Contact Officer (ARCO)** provides impartial support to staff, students and community members who wish to make a complaint of racism, in cases where the complaint involves staff or a community member
- Public recognition, awards and rewards for positive behaviour

Individual year groups participate in:

Year 7	Year 8
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Fortitude & Digital Citizenship/E-SafetyAnti-bullying lessons delivered through FortunaesAnti-bullying performance presentationYear 7 camp & Peer Support ProgramBullying and harassment – Police Talk	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Anti-bullying lessons delivered through FortunaesAnti-bullying performance presentationBullying and harassment - Police TalkConnected Curricular
Year 9	Year 10
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Anti-bullying lessons delivered through FortunaesDuke of Edinburg Camp – Bronze AwardPeer Support TrainingOnline safety & social media - Police Talk	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Anti-bullying lessons delivered through FortunaesDuke of Edinburg – Silver AwardLove BitesLeadership – Peer Support & Duke of EdinburgOnline safety & social media - Police Talk
Year 11	Year 12
<ul style="list-style-type: none">Fortunaes - resilience and stress managementYear 11 Camp - Life ReadyDuke of Edinburg – Gold AwardHealthy Relationships - Police Talk	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Fortunaes - avoiding risk and peer pressureStress management & after high school transitionDuke of Edinburg – Gold AwardHealthy Relationships - Police Talk

7. Interventions

Early intervention is critical to responding effectively to bullying. At FSHS we will regularly communicate to staff, students and parents/caregivers the importance of reporting bullying incidents involving themselves and/or others.

In addition, students at-risk of developing difficulties with building relationships, students who have previously been bullied, and students who have engaged in bullying behaviours, will be supported to build positive relationships and resilience, and avoid bullying in the future.

These students may be referred to the School Counsellor and Student Support Officer for support through the following programs:

- School Counsellors Support** - students can be referred by Deputies, class teachers, self-referrals or parents relating to issues such as school, home, medical, disability or return from suspension. Counsellors and the Student Support Officer will offer support and guidance until necessary.
- Social Skills Lessons** - Social skills are taught in various lessons through teacher demonstration of socially accepted behaviour. These include but are not limited to: Step Up, Theragames, Raise Mentoring, Fortunaes.
- Year 6 to Year 7 Transition** – Learning and Support Teacher collects and collates the data and information provided by the primary schools. An extra orientation day is provided to students who require additional support and students who have been identified with behavioural issues and specific learning needs.

8. Response

All staff must be committed to a common response to bullying when it does happen.

At FSHS teachers will:

- know Fort Street and Department of Education policies relating to bullying.
- actively observe students under their care anywhere on school grounds.
- identify behaviour which fits the definition of bullying as defined in the School's Anti-bullying Policy.
- intervene appropriately where bullying behaviour is identified.
- escalate the matter to Principal and/or Deputy Principal/s.

- record the details of the event in a school register (such as Sentral).
- report the details of the event to relevant staff, eg. Head Teachers, Year Advisers
- participate in an investigation if required.

8.1 Teacher response to bullying

When bullying occurs at FSHS the following steps will be followed by teachers. Steps need not occur in this order as the initial response may begin at step 2 or 3. All events or reports of events are to be taken seriously and must be recorded in Sentral; including students involved, details and outcome.

Step 1: Personally, handle the situation, refer to Faculty Head Teacher for support if required

1. Advise students that they are engaging in bullying behaviour, and to cease this behaviour
2. Listen calmly and document what the student tells you (see appendix 2)
3. Talk to each student individually about the incident and collect written **Incident Reports** from perpetrator of the bullying, bystander(s)/witnesses (s) and victim(s)
4. Provide student suggestions on what to do if the bullying occurs again
5. Teacher or Faculty Head Teacher to notify parents via phone
6. Teacher or Faculty Head Teacher documents incident on Sentral, including consequences and outcome. Sentral notification to be made to Deputy Principal & Year Adviser
7. Give copies of all written reports to the Head Teacher Wellbeing and relevant Year Adviser.

Step 2: If bullying continues refer to Head Teacher Wellbeing

1. If bullying continues to occur, document on Sentral and notify Head Teacher Wellbeing and relevant Year Adviser. Include details and dates of parent phone calls, mediation and consequences previously issued
2. Include the type of Bullying on Sentral – physical, verbal, psychological, cyberbullying
3. Head Teacher Wellbeing will maintain a register of bullying incidents using Sentral data
4. Head Teacher Wellbeing, Counsellor/Student Support Officer and Year Advisor will work together to resolve the situation and issue further consequences
5. Perpetrator of the bullying work with Head Teacher Welfare, Parents, Counsellor/Student Support Officer and/or Year Advisors to identify how to change their behaviour

Step 3: Refer to Deputy Principal

In the case of physical assault, sexual assault, persistent or extreme bullying, all staff will immediately refer to the Deputy Principal or Principal. When needed serious cases will be referred to the police. Using the recorded history on Sentral, the Deputy Principal will then determine actions to be taken by the school.

These actions may include:

- Contacting parents of the perpetrator of the bullying and victim(s).
- Arranging for parent and/or student interviews
- Organising behaviour cards or behaviour contracts
- Referring students for counselling
- Referral to the Principal

Persistent long-term bullying is grounds for suspension/exclusion and the Senior Executive will make decisions regarding this.

8.2 Executive Response to bullying

The Head Teacher Wellbeing will conduct regular reviews of Sentral data and reports from the Deputy Principals, Executive and Wellbeing Teams to identify patterns of bullying. The type of bullying behaviour is collated into the year groups that they are taking place in.

8.3 School Response to Bullying

The Anti-Bullying data will be reviewed annually by the Executive and Wellbeing Teams and their recommendations will be provided to the Senior Executive for future improvements and for inclusion in the school evaluation of the School Plan.

9. Supporting Students who have been bullied

All students affected by bullying are offered mentoring or counselling.

Counsellors and the Student Support Officer are available at the school for students to self-refer, Deputies, Faculty Head Teachers, Head Teacher Wellbeing, Year Advisers or teachers may also refer students to the Counsellor via Sentral → Wellbeing → Referrals.

Students are reminded of these provisions and are offered mentoring by the Deputy Principal, Counsellor, Student Support Officer, Head Teacher Wellbeing or Year Advisors.

10. Communicating the Anti-Bullying Policy

The Anti-Bullying Policy will be distributed by the Principal to all staff members and the Community Support Group (P&C). The plan will be placed on the parent portal and the school website; parents will be informed of its location by the Principal's report in the school newsletter (Mercurius). Students will be informed of the Policy by the Deputy Principal responsible for their year group and student education of the policy will occur in Fortuna lessons.

11. Resources

NSW Department of Education Anti-Bullying Policy

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

Anti-Bullying NSW

<https://antibullying.nsw.gov.au/>

Bullying – No Way!

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

eSafety Commissioner

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

Headspace

<https://headspace.org.au/>

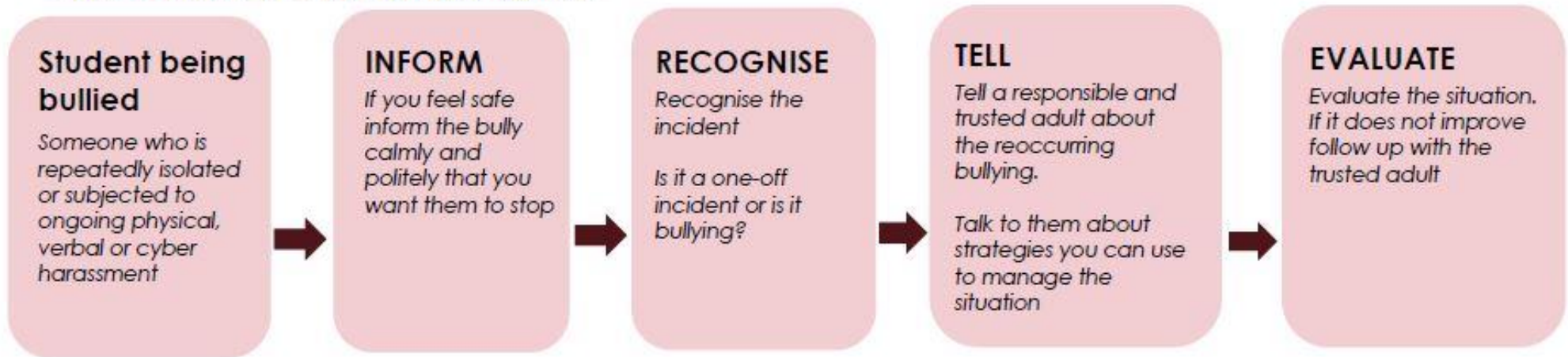
Kids Helpline – 1800 551 800

<https://kidshelpline.com.au/>

Reach Out Australia

<https://au.reachout.com/>

How STUDENTS action bullying behaviour:



DEALING WITH BULLYING

FACTS

FORMS OF CONFLICT

1. CYBER
2. VERBAL
3. PHYSICAL

75%

of bullying is not recognised as bullying. People often think they are having fun or teasing. Also they may be reacting to something you've done to annoy them.

60% OF BULLYING IS CYBER

84%

of Australian students will experience bullying in their high school career. 27% experience frequent bullying.

TOP 3 AREAS BULLIES TARGET

1. APPEARANCE
2. SEXUALITY
3. DISABILITY

OVER **70%**

of bullying stops when bystanders speak up

MISSION: NOT TO REACT 3 TIMES.

95% OF BULLYING STOPS AFTER THREE TIMES WITH NO REACTION

IN **76%**

of cases, blocking a bully through social media, phone or text messaging helps the situation.

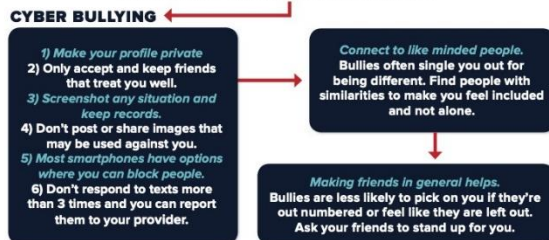
STEPS



KEY IS NOT TO REACT

- 1. BECOME SECURE IN YOUR INSECURITIES**
Key is to become secure in your insecurities. Bullies look for areas of sensitivity and incite a reaction. Acknowledging your weaknesses and strengthening your insecurities will extinguish any sensitivities a bully might look for.
- 2. DON'T TRY TO BE PERFECT**
Everyone has things they don't like about themselves. Don't try to be perfect. Some of the most loved people in the world don't have it all together. You don't have to be perfect to be loved or accepted.
- 3. HURTING PEOPLE HURT PEOPLE**
Remind yourself it's most likely not your fault. "Hurting people hurt people." Some people are offended if you look in their direction. You may have nothing to do with the reason they are bullying. If you can learn to feel sorry for them, you won't be hurt by them
- 4. RESPOND WITH RESPECT**
Often bullying happens because a person believes they have been hurt or disrespected by someone else. The fastest way to stop them is not to continue to disrespect them with comebacks or threats but rather to respect the person.
- 5. TRY BEING NICE TO THEM**
Try being nice to them. Surprisingly complementing them, perhaps even on the very thing they are bullying you about can disarm the bully. It's hard to be mean to someone who is only nice to you.
- 6. SHOW THEM CONSEQUENCES**
If they continue to bully, let them know there are consequences.

OTHER PRACTICAL STEPS



ACTIVITIES

MAKE A LIST
List some things you are insecure about into 3 different categories.

1. Things you can change
2. Things you can change in the future
3. Things you need to change your mind about

ASK THEM
"Have I done anything to offend you? If I have, I apologise and will do my best not to do it again."

LET THEM KNOW
"Hey, I've asked if something I've done has offended you and you said I hadn't. You continued being aggressive towards me. I've been nice to you and still you continue. Just to let you know I've written down 4-5 situations of dates and times you have done and said things and if it happens once more I'll be forced to bring it up with teacher/management. I'm sorry to do this but if feels like you have something against me and it needs to be sorted out."