

# Kingaroy State High School's Bullying Policy

Kingaroy State High School provides a caring, respectful and supportive school culture by incorporating Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL). PBL focuses on proactive strategies to foster and maintain a warm, positive, safe environment and includes teaching alternative, appropriate behaviours. PBL is a data driven process which guides decisions in determining whether interventions should be based on whole school, small group or individual processes.

Kingaroy State High School has adopted and abides by the Kandersteg Declaration.

Kingaroy State High School will not tolerate bullying in any form.

## Definition of Bullying

What is bullying?

In 2009, the Queensland Government engaged bullying expert Dr Ken Rigby to undertake a consultancy for the Department of Education and Training to provide current information about research and initiatives in the area of bullying in order to inform the future work in Queensland schools. Dr Rigby (Rigby, 2010) defines bullying in the following way:

***“Bullying is a systematic and repeated abuse of power. In general bullying may be defined as:***

- ***dominating or hurting someone***
- ***unfair action by the perpetrator(s) and an imbalance of power***
- ***a lack of adequate defence by the target and feelings of oppression and humiliation.”***

Bullying can take many forms. The *National Centre Against Bullying* identifies five kinds of bullying:

### 1. Physical bullying

This is when a person (or group of people) uses physical actions to bully, such as hitting, poking, tripping or pushing. Repeatedly and intentionally damaging someone's belongings is also physical bullying.

### 2. Verbal bullying

Repeated or systematic name calling, insults, homophobic or racist remarks and verbal abuse.

### 3. Covert bullying

Such as lying about someone, spreading rumours, playing a nasty joke that make the person feel humiliated or powerless, mimicking or deliberately excluding someone.

### 4. Psychological bullying

For example, threatening, manipulating or stalking someone.

### 5. Cyber bullying

Using technology, such as email, mobile phones, chat rooms, social networking sites to bully verbally, socially or psychologically. In a report commissioned by the Victorian Department of

Education and Training (Bernard & Milne, 2008) the main forms of cyber bullying are identified as:

- **Flaming:** online fights using electronic messages with angry or vulgar messages
- **Harassment:** repeatedly sending nasty, mean or insulting messages
- **Denigration:** Posting or sending gossip or rumours about a person to damage his/her reputation or friendships
- **Outing:** sharing someone's secrets or embarrassing information or images online
- **Exclusion:** Intentionally and cruelly excluding someone from an online group
- **Cyber stalking:** repeated, intense harassment and denigration that includes threats or creates significant fear.

What is not bullying:

The *National Centre Against Bullying* acknowledges that while the following behaviours are often upsetting to those involved, they do not constitute bullying:

- mutual arguments and disagreements (where there is no power imbalance)
- not liking someone or single acts of social rejection
- one-off acts of meanness or spite
- isolated incidents of aggression, intimidation or violence.

While these behaviours would not be considered bullying (because they do not involve deliberate and repeated harm and a power imbalance) they need to be addressed in the same way as other inappropriate student behaviours.

### **A Declaration of the rights of Kingaroy State School Community**

Every adult and child has the right to feel respected and safe. Bullying is a violation of this basic human right. Individuals have the right to be listened to and provided with support when a bullying incident occurs. Students have the right to know they will be listened to and receive support when needed.

### **Statement of responsibilities of Kingaroy State High School Community**

The task of countering bullying is **everybody's** business.

#### ***It is the responsibility of all staff at Kingaroy State High School:***

- to gain knowledge and understanding of what constitutes bullying and the various forms of bullying so they can recognise bullying behaviours and work together with colleagues, parents and students to help counter bullying.
- to educate **all** students about bullying, including how to report bullying
- to listen attentively to students and parents who report bullying
- to know how to respond to bullying instances
- to hold bullies accountable for their behaviour and the harm they have caused through appropriate disciplinary measures and learning programs
- to regularly review their actions in response to bullying
- to ensure supports are in place to prevent and respond to bullying
- to provide specific support and education to bullies, victims and bystanders when a bullying instance occurs.
- to address environmental issues, promote safe play and be constantly vigilant in supervision of students
- to record bullying instances and report the issue to administration who will then share relevant information with all staff to create an awareness of what's happening and joint responsibility to support the students.
- to actively discourage bullying and model appropriate social behaviour.

***It is the responsibility of Kingaroy State High School administration:***

- to ensure all staff are provided with professional development in regards to bullying
- to ensure new staff and supply teachers receive training and are made aware of the Bullying Policy through induction meetings.
- to ensure reports of bullying are taken seriously and addressed promptly and in an appropriate manner
- to ensure reporting systems are maintained, easily accessible and checked regularly
- to ensure students, parents and staff are supported when bullying occurs.

It is the responsibility of Kingaroy State High School students:

- to learn about bullying
- to abstain from bullying behaviours
- to actively discourage bullying behaviours
- to report bullying.

It is the responsibility of parents and carers:

- to be aware of the anti-bullying policy and procedures used to address bullying behaviour
- to be aware of ways they can support the school to counter bullying behaviour
- to know how to support their child if he/she is a bully, victim or bystander
- to report known bullying instances to the school

**Reporting Bullying**

Reporting systems will only be effective if students and parents have the confidence their concerns will be treated seriously, with respect and promptly and that action taken will not make the situation worse.

The *Australian Covert Bullying Prevalence Study (ACBPS)* found that students who had been covertly bullied sought help from their friends most often, closely followed by seeking help from their parents/carers. The study found students also sought help from a teacher or staff member. A third of males and 23% of females did not ask anyone for help (Cross et al., 2009).

Kingaroy State High School will endeavour to give students and parents' confidence to report bullying by providing anonymous systems that are easily accessed. These reports will be acted on promptly and taken seriously. This system can be accessed via Stymie. [www.stymie.com.au](http://www.stymie.com.au)

**How Kingaroy State High School will deal with bullying**

All teachers will explicitly teach to their class what bullying is and is not.

All teachers will explicitly teach skills and strategies to call on related to being a victim, bully and a bystander.

All lesson plans will be based on the PBL Expectation Matrix (see Kingaroy State High School's Responsible Behaviour Plan).