WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is when a child, or a group of children, deliberately and repeatedly upset or hurt another child. The person/people doing the bullying will have some form of power over the target. Bullying is not one-off incidents of name calling or physical abuse, it is only bullying when it is repeated, deliberate and there is an imbalance of power involved. Bullying can happen anywhere and can involve both staff and students. It can happen at school, in the community and online.

HOW CAN I TELL IF MY CHILD IS BEING BULLIED?

Sometimes children who are bullied do not talk about it with parents/carers or teachers. They are concerned that “telling” will make matters worse. Some signs that a child may be experiencing bullying may include:

- loss of confidence, fearfulness or anxiety
- changes in eating or sleeping habits, bedwetting
- health problems, vague headaches or stomach aches
- unhappiness, tearfulness or mood swings, sudden temper tantrums
- reluctance to go to school, changes in academic performance
- lack of friends
- missing belongings or torn clothing.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF MY CHILD TELLS ME THEY ARE BEING BULLIED?

- Help your child to identify the bullying behaviour and ask them:
  - What has been happening?
  - Who has been involved?
  - Where have the incidents occurred?
  - Has anyone else seen the bullying behaviour?

- Discuss with your child some immediate strategies. Make a plan to deal with the bullying. Encourage them to:
  - talk with the teacher
  - walk away
  - use other strategies to diffuse the situation (see ‘fogging’ technique in intervention strategies section)
  - firmly say “No!”

- Become familiar with the school’s anti-bullying policy. Copies can be obtained from the school or school website.
- Contact the school to check that your child has spoken to someone about the problem and arrange a meeting to find out what the school will do to address the situation.
- Be clear about what you expect the school to do to help your child.
- Use some of the additional internet resources listed below to assist you and your child to learn more about bullying and prevention.
WHAT WILL THE SCHOOL DO?

In situations where bullying occurs, staff at the school may:

- apply disciplinary consequences
- assist students to develop more appropriate social skills
- implement a behaviour management plan or playground plan for individual students
- explicitly teach about conflict and bullying
- implement resilience and anti-bullying programs
- conduct mediation sessions
- address bullying in their curriculum.

The school will not give you any of the personal details of other students involved. They will not give you any details of consequences given to other students involved because of privacy requirements.

WHAT CAN I DO IF I FEEL THE SCHOOL IS NOT ADDRESSING THE BULLYING?

- make an appointment to meet with the school principal, then if all else fails
- contact your local district office or the P&C. They will endeavour to work with you and the school to try and solve the problem.

WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFORMATION ABOUT BULLYING?

- **KidsMatter**: a school based framework that aims to improve the mental health and wellbeing of children. [http://www.kidsmatter.edu.au/](http://www.kidsmatter.edu.au/)
- **ReachOut**: an online resource that assists young people by providing information to improve understanding of the issues that relate to mental health and wellbeing. Reach Out also has information on how young people can get the best help from services, as well as opportunities to connect with other young people. [http://au.reachout.com](http://au.reachout.com)
- **National Centre Against Bullying**: a peak body working to advise and inform the Australian community on the issue of childhood bullying and the creation of safe schools and communities, including the issue of cyber safety. [http://www.ncab.org.au/](http://www.ncab.org.au/)

NORTH ARM STATE SCHOOL DOES NOT TOLERATE BULLYING