

# Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedures

## Values

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The Small School fosters the wellbeing and safety of children.

All adults at The Small School exercise a duty of care and kindness to children.

## Scope

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All students, staff and volunteers.

## Purpose

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Schools and their teaching staff have a duty to take reasonable care for the safety and wellbeing of children while children are at school or are involved in a school activity. They need to be able to foresee possible harms that might arise and take reasonable preventative measures.

A safe environment for children is one where the risk of harm is minimised and children feel secure. Harm relates not only to the dangers in the built environment but also to violence, physical threats, verbal abuse, threatening gestures, sexual harassment and racial vilification.

This policy sets out the process for dealing with these matters at The Small School.

Bullying is an ongoing misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that causes physical and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power over one or more persons. Bullying can happen in person or online, and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Individuals or groups may be involved.

Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders.

## Responsibilities

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### The School Manager:

- Champions child protection and a child-safe culture across the school.
- Coordinates the program described in this policy.
- Takes action according to the school's Behaviour Management Policy as required.
- Maintains relationships with relevant agencies including School Liaison Police.

### Teachers and the School Manager:

- Are role models in word and action at all times.
- Ensure classroom management practices support respect for others .
- Understand and implement the school's Behaviour Management Policy in the classroom and playground.
- Include exploration of friendship and feelings in the curriculum.
- Keep records of behavioural issues in the class and playground (to be kept on the Student File) and report to the School Manager if a pattern of behaviour is noted.
- Are observant and responsive to signs of distress or suspected incidents of bullying.
- Respond and take action on all reported and observed incidents of bullying as set out in this policy.
- Ensure they can see or hear all children during play time.

### Children at The Small School:

- Talk to the adult on duty or a trusted adult if they feel they are being bullied or if they think someone else is being bullied – both at school and on the way to or from school.
- Express their opinions in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

### Parents at The Small School

- Are aware of the common signs a child is possibly being bullied such as unwillingness to attend school, a pattern of headaches, missing equipment, requests for extra money, damaged clothes or bruising.
- Speak to someone on staff (classroom teacher first) at school if they suspect their child is being bullied or have concerns about the change they are noticing in their child.
- Encourage their child to talk to a trusted adult if they are bullied.

- Are informed about behavioural issues concerning their child, eg. attend interview and parent meetings.
- Read the newsletter.
- Support the schools Behaviour Management Policy by discussing The Small School Codes of Conduct with their children and supporting class/school rules.
- Contact the School Manager if they have concern about the welfare of their child in school.

## How the purpose is achieved

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Bullying can take many forms, including

- Physically hitting, kicking, punching, pushing or shoving, spitting, making rude gestures, taking or damaging something which belongs to someone else, forcing others to hand over food, money or something which belongs to them, or making someone do something they don't want to do.
- Verbally name calling, teasing, threatening, making fun of someone because of their appearance, physical characteristics or cultural background, making fun of someone's actions, making fun of people's sporting/music/academic capabilities.
- Online using any information communication technology to carry out deliberate, isolated or repeatedly hostile behaviour that is intended to harm others, or is undertaken recklessly without concern for its impact on others.

Bullying may be indirect such as excluding others from the game or group or spreading stories about others, whether true or not.

If bullying occurs:

- We may feel frightened, unsafe, embarrassed, angry or unfairly treated.
- Our work, sleep and ability to concentrate may suffer.
- Our relationships with our families and friends may be affected and we may feel confused and not know what to do about the problem.

At The Small School we:

- Talk openly about bullying – what it is, how it affects people and what we can do about it.
- Understand that bullying can have complex dynamics and that children who display bullying

behaviour may be experiencing difficulties in their lives outside of school or may be responding or retaliating to another undetected or unreported incident.

- Teach children the skills which will build their self-esteem and empower them to take the responsibility for themselves – and give them the opportunity to practise these skills on a regular basis.
- Read through behaviour records from both the classroom and playground and report to the School Manager if any patterns of behaviour are noticed.
- Run guided Special Circles for children to be able to talk through incidents as described in the Student Leadership Policy. Consideration is given to whether the alleged victim of the bullying feels comfortable participating in a Special Circle with the child alleged to have carried out the bullying. It may be more appropriate in some circumstances to speak to the children involved separately.

### Reporting

Incidents of bullying can be reported to any teacher, or the School Manager, by children and their parents. This is made accessible by clear instruction at the Enrolment sessions, on The Small School Website and through regular daily communication with children.

### Process for addressing bullying

For less serious incidents of bullying children will participate in guided negotiation in a Special Circle, in which all children involved, including bystanders, will meet with the School Manager and teacher to work out how they might act differently. Restorative justice principles are used in Special Circles. The process is designed to be a positive learning experience from which children's skills and confidence will continue to grow.

All parents will receive a written record of Special Circle including the solutions to be worked on. The written record of the Special Circle will be kept on the child's Student File.

All staff members will be made aware of incidents of bullying and the strategies developed to address the behaviour at staff meetings. All staff are responsible for monitoring the relationship between the children involved and making sure the strategies have been implemented.

A date for review is set and should be noted in the record of the meeting. The children involved will be required to return to meet with the School Manager or teacher to evaluate how their solutions are working.

If further incidents occur, the School Manager and teacher will meet with individual parents involved and their child with an aim to developing a Support Plan in line with the school's Behaviour Management Policy. Counselling may be recommended for a child.

Further action will be at the prerogative of the School Manager in accordance with the Behaviour Management Policy.

The Small School will contact School Liaison Police through Tweed Heads Police or by email: [harr1mar@police.nsw.gov.au](mailto:harr1mar@police.nsw.gov.au) if we need further support with ensuring a safe environment.