Wellbeing@School
Wellbeing@Schools Toolkit
Netsafe.co.nz – Surveys
Kia Kaha – NZ Police
PB4L -Schoolwide
ERO – Wellbeing for Schools

Bullying is one particular form of aggressive behaviour. It can be covert or overt in nature.

Most widely accepted definitions of bullying are based on four characteristics: bullying is deliberate, harmful, involves a power imbalance, and has an element of repetition.

Building a school culture where bullying has no place involves modelling and fostering healthy social interactions. While studies show that most students grow out of bullying behaviour with time, schools have a valuable role in supporting students to develop effective ways of relating to others. Bullying prevention can be seen as a learning opportunity, which enables everyone to develop their understanding of bullying and their ability to respond to and address it.

Definition

This guide is based on the widely-accepted definitions of bullying behaviour that emphasise the following four characteristics.

- Bullying is deliberate – there is an intention to cause physical and / or psychological pain or discomfort to another person.
- Bullying involves a power imbalance – there is an actual or perceived unequal relationship between the target and the initiator that may be based on physical size, age, gender, social status or digital capability and access.
- Bullying has an element of repetition – bullying behaviour is usually not one-off. It is repeated over time, with the threat of further incidents leading to fear and anxiety.
- Repeated acts of bullying may involve single acts with different targets, as well as multiple acts with the same target.
- Bullying is harmful – there is short or long-term physical or psychological harm to the target (eg, as a result of coercion or intimidation).

For example, a school seeking to positively influence student behaviour might: ask staff and school leaders to model inclusive values and respectful ways of communicating ensure students are consulted about their concerns and possible solutions to bullying ensure students are taught effective ways of understanding and relating to others foster engagement with families, whānau and the wider community in addressing the issues.

WELLBEING@SCHOOL
The best way to find out how safe students feel in school is to ask them directly, preferably through an anonymous survey. Results of regular (eg, annual) surveys can also be used to assess the effectiveness of a school's bullying policy over time.

Surveys will give schools a snapshot of how safe their students feel. Safety issues for individual students will still need to be followed up as needed.

Parents, family and whānau can have a reasonable expectation that their child feels safe in their school environment.

Parents, family and whānau should know how to report any concerns about their child's safety at school and feel confident that these will be dealt with effectively.

Questions for Boards of Trustees, principals, senior leadership teams and teachers:

- Do we know how many students are being bullied in our school? How do we know – do we have a reliable way of measuring bullying in our school?
- Have we considered using the Wellbeing@School tools or the Kia Kaha survey?
- Do we record bullying incidents in our school and monitor these on an ongoing basis to help us to address the issue?
- Do students in our school feel safe to talk to school staff about bullying?
- Do students trust staff to deal appropriately and effectively with incidents of bullying that they report to them?
- Is our school environment safe and inclusive for all students?
- Do we understand how our students use digital technology? Do we know what experience they have had with online challenges?

- Do our staff and board members have a good understanding of why all students need to be included in our school's approach to bullying?
- Are we committed to a whole-school approach to ensure a positive, safe and inclusive school environment that includes all staff and students?
- How does our school manage change to improve policies related to bullying?
- Do we understand what 'bystanding' may look like online, and how this relates to the real world?
- Do we have an understanding of the culture of use of digital technology at our school?

- Does our school have a positive and inclusive climate? Do we include the online environment when we think about being positive and inclusive?
- To what extent do we have a shared vision of what we want our school culture to look like, sound like, and feel like? Do we know how to achieve this vision?
- Are we involving the wider community? Are we connected to community groups and services working on bullying issues and do they know what our approach to bullying is?
- If we are not involving the wider community, how can we become better connected and involved?
- How do we use digital technology to engage students, parents, families and whānau in issues related to the positive use of digital technology at our school?

- Are we confident that we have an effective bullying prevention policy in place? Does it
- specifically include digital technology?
- Are the policy and procedures used consistently and fairly with all students?
- Have we consulted with our wider school community in developing our policy?
- Have we communicated our policy to our wider school community?
- Have we integrated the management of digital technologies across strategies?

For maximum impact, bullying prevention approaches should align with good teaching practice and the New Zealand Curriculum / Te Marautanga o Aotearoa, for example as part of teaching the key competencies: managing self – this competency is associated with self-motivation, a can-do attitude, and students seeing themselves as capable learners relating to others – this competency is about interacting effectively with a diverse range of people in a variety of contexts participating and contributing – this competency is about being actively involved in communities.

14.1. Bullying behaviour compromises the ability of students to learn and achieve in school. Addressing bullying effectively is about developing school cultures that: are inclusive, value diversity, promote positive, healthy social relationships, ensure everyone understands their rights and responsibilities (and can quickly solve problems and disputes that arise).

14.2. All students have the right to be treated with respect and dignity. In order for this to happen, it is important that students also understand they have a responsibility to treat other students with respect and dignity. Students also have rights and responsibilities relating to: personal security and protections from physical, emotional and sexual harassment or abuse from peers or others in the school environment freedom from discrimination participation, to express their views and have a say in matters which affect them an education that nurtures them to their full potential owning property and having it treated with respect being taught, and having demonstrated to them, respect for the rights of others.

Students have a right to have their family / whānau informed and involved in matters that affect them. Bullying incidents should be dealt with in a fair manner that protects the dignity and privacy of all parties. Resolution should be aimed at achieving, where appropriate, a positive outcome for all parties with particular emphasis on ensuring that the wellbeing of the target of the bullying behaviour is restored and that any underlying issues behind the bullying behaviour are positively addressed.

16.2. Teachers, students, parents and whānau should all have an opportunity to have input into their school's policies on bullying (as well as the strategies in place to build students' social competencies). A school's policy will support decision-making that takes place when bullying occurs, but will need to be reviewed regularly to ensure its ongoing effectiveness. As part of its role, the Education Review Office (ERO) will review a school's bullying policy and practice using self-review questions to make sure school policies and practice align.

16.3. School bullying policies should encompass both prevention and response by:
- acknowledging that bullying behaviour is a risk to be managed
- recognising the prevalence, risks and dangers of cyberbullying
- documenting policies and procedures outlining how the school is proactively
- preventing bullying behaviour through building students' social skills and creating a safe school environment including a quick guide for all adults on what steps to take when bullying incidents occur
- regularly surveying students on safety (including bullying behaviour) and using the information to identify areas for improvement
- providing for ongoing professional development to train staff to recognise and respond to bullying
- providing appropriate guidance and counseling for students
- implementing strategies to prevent and manage bullying
- integrating the management of digital technologies across strategies
- monitoring the success of strategies that have been implemented.

Education Review Office (ERO) self-review questions:

'Does the Board:
- meet the requirements under NAG 5
- through the principal and teaching staff, currently provide anti-bullying programmes for students?
- do those programmes include a focus on
- racist bullying? *
- Bullying of students with special needs?
- homophobic bullying? *
- sexual harassment?'

* Note: racist bullying refers to bullying based on culture or ethnicity. Homophobic bullying refers to bullying based on sexual orientation or gender identity. The term 'transphobic bullying' is preferred by the transgender community to refer to bullying of transgender people.

18.2. Sample bullying prevention and response policy:
This sample policy can be used to develop a school bullying prevention and response policy. It has been provided as a sample only and should be adapted to suit the school environment.

Policy Name: Bullying Prevention and Response Policy

Policy Date:

Rationale or Purpose
The _____ Board of Trustees seeks to take all reasonable steps to develop high standards of behaviour in order to fulfil the charter expectation and the requirements of NAG 5. The Board of Trustees seeks to foster and develop a safe, positive physical and emotional school environment that creates a climate of trust. Students, staff, parents and whānau share the responsibility for making _____ school a respectful and inclusive environment.

The rationale or purpose section explains "why" the policy is being written.
It will include an agreed statement and confirmation of your school community's expectations about creating a safe, positive environment and the principles underpinning your policy including legal requirements (NAG 5).

Policy Statement
We are committed to ensuring that our school provides an environment free from bullying behaviours. All members of our school community – Board of Trustees, school leaders, teachers, staff, students and parents and whānau should have an understanding of what bullying is; and know what to do when bullying does occur.

The Policy Statement is a brief statement of "what" the policy is intended to achieve. That is, the aim(s) of your policy.

Definition
- Bullying behaviour is not an individual action. Our school community agrees that:
- Bullying is deliberate
- Bullying involves a power imbalance
- Bullying has an element of repetition
- Bullying is harmful.
- Bullying behaviours can be physical, verbal, or social, and can take place in the physical world or digitally.
- Bullying is not an individual action. It involves up to three parties; initiators (those doing the bullying), targets (those being bullied) and often bystanders (those who witness the bullying).

Your school's agreed definition of bullying. This should include examples of types of bullying behaviours, how the definition has been developed eg, consulting with staff, parents and whānau and students.

Bullying Prevention
We recognise that real change happens when students, staff, parents, whānau and other members of the community share responsibility for making our school a respectful and inclusive environment. We will:

- Regularly survey our school community through Wellbeing@School and Kia Kaha student or our own survey (for example by using survey monkey)
- Identify areas for improvement through the survey findings and develop a bullying prevention action plan
- Regularly promote our expectations and successes in preventing bullying (eg, in assemblies, newsletters and Facebook, reports to the Board of Trustees) hold termly professional learning and development on our understanding of bullying prevention and response (staff meetings, parent meetings, student council)

- Establish our Bullying Prevention Team to take responsibility for bullying prevention (to include staff, parents and whānau and students)
- Use a range of activities including curriculum based programmes to develop the ability for students to relate to each other (Kia Kaha, peer mediation, social problem solving solutions, role playing)
- Promote digital citizenship throughout ICT and promoting safe use of technology (through our ICT Use Agreements)
- Support the student-led peer to peer initiative.

The above are suggestions only.
The Bullying Prevention section is to outline "how" the policy (eg, what steps) will prevent bullying behaviour. It will include prevention-focused activities and interventions.

Bullying Response, for when bullying occurs
- We recognise the importance of consistently responding to all incidents of bullying that have been reported in our school and ensuring that planned interventions are used to respond to these incidents and support all involved.
- We will support anyone who has been affected by, engaged in or witnessed bullying behaviour.
- All reported incidents of bullying will be taken seriously and followed up as appropriate

An appropriate adult will support the affected students by:
- reassuring that they have done the right thing in reporting the incident using the assessment matrix,
- record a description of what happened and assess the level of severity using the quick reference guide,
- responding to bullying incidents to activate the response and action needed
- We will involve parents and whānau as early as possible and as appropriate
- All more serious incidents will be escalated to senior management and we will seek advice and involvement from outside agencies
- We will provide appropriate support for targets, bystanders and initiators of bullying behaviour
- We will regularly monitor all incidents of bullying and identify patterns of behaviour.

The Bullying Response section is to outline "how" you will respond (eg, what steps you will take) when bullying behaviour has occurred or has been reported. It will include actions and interventions to follow up with initiators, targets and bystanders following an incident.

Raising Awareness
- We recognise the importance of good communication between home and school to promote consistent messages and to ensure that any reported bullying can be recognised and responded to effectively.
- We will regularly raise the awareness of our school community's approach to bullying and celebrate our positive school culture, for example through parent evenings, assemblies, class-based activities, and displays.
- Our interaction with our wider school community will include reports to the Board of Trustees, school newsletters, and information (including the policy) on the school's website.

- We will make the policy available in multiple formats (in print, on the web and in school notices and newsletters) and ensure it is translated into other languages as necessary.

The Raising Awareness section outlines how you will communicate the policy to ensure it is widely known about and readily accessible to all staff, students, parents, family and whānau, and the community.

Evaluation and Review
- We will review and revise this policy annually to ensure that the school's bullying prevention practices are recognised and celebrated. This will include an annual meeting to monitor, review and modify the policy and action plan (to reflect changes with the school, survey findings, incident reviews).
- We will track and monitor all bullying related incidents and regularly report this information to the school community. We will regularly gather data from the school community (eg, Wellbeing@School and Kia Kaha student surveys) and report on the effectiveness of this policy and _____ school community's commitment to bullying prevention and response.

The Evaluation and Review section. You should review your policy on a regular basis. This may be annually or as legislation or regulations change.
18.3. Framework that can be used for developing a bullying prevention and response policy:

Section One: Your School's Culture, the Rationale for the Policy and Definition of Bullying

- A safe, positive physical and emotional school environment is important for student achievement and wellbeing and enables all students to be included.
- Outline your school's expectations, the principles underlying this policy (including NAG 5) and your school's agreed definition of what is and what is not bullying behaviour (including descriptions of the different types of bullying behaviours).

For example:
Agreed statement and confirm your school community's expectations about creating a safe, positive environment
Principles underpinning the policy including legal requirements (NAG 5)
Agreed definition of bullying in your school and how this definition will be promoted
Descriptions of types of bullying behaviours.

Section Two: Preventive Approach and Response

- Real change happens when students, staff, parents, whānau and other members of the community share responsibility for making a school a respectful and inclusive environment.
- Outline your school's approach and activities in place to prevent and respond to bullying when bullying behaviour occurs. Include strategies for developing and implementing whole school bullying prevention programmes.

For example:
- Regularly surveying your school community and using the information to identify areas for improvement (eg, Wellbeing@School and Kia Kaha student surveys)

- Bullying prevention action plan based on gaps and issues identified as part of the survey findings
- Promoting your expectations and successes in preventing and responding to bullying
- Professional learning and development to reach a common understanding of recognising and responding to bullying
- Having staff identified and trained to specifically take responsibility for bullying
- Providing appropriate guidance and counselling for students
- Outlining strategies to prevent bullying e.g., curriculum-based programmes, social problem solving solutions, student-led initiatives, parent / whānau involvement, collaboration with community providers.

Section Three: Responding When Bullying Occurs

- It is important to consistently respond to all incidents of bullying that have been reported and ensure that planned interventions are used to respond to these incidents.
- Outline your school's responses to ensure that support is provided to any student who has been affected by, engaged in or witnessed bullying behaviour. Support the whole school community to recognise and respond appropriately to bullying when it occurs. Provide clear advice on the roles and responsibilities of students, parents, caregivers and teachers for preventing and responding to bullying behaviour.

For example:
- Responding to the incident (how do we identify and address incidents of different severity? What are your procedures for when bullying occurs?
- How do we monitor and identify patterns of behaviour?
- What do we do if the behaviour occurs outside of school?
- When responding to cyberbullying, we focus more on the behaviour involved and less on the digital technology used
- When and who will provide support and advice (both from within the school community and other agencies)
- How we will work with the targets, bystanders and initiators of bullying behaviour
- Escalating incidents to senior management and other agencies
- Communicating with parents and caregivers about the bullying incident/s and promoting your successes in your safe school culture
- Regularly recognise your efforts in bullying prevention and response and review strategies/initiatives.

Section Four: Communicating the Policy

- The school community needs to be aware of, and involved in, school bullying policies. Good communication is needed between home and school so that any reported bullying can be recognised and responded to effectively.
- Outline how you will ensure the policy is widely advertised and readily accessible to all students, parents, family and whānau, and the community.

For example
- Regular activities to raise the awareness of your school approach to bullying and celebrate promoting a positive school culture eg, parent evenings, assemblies, class based activities, displays
- Regular communications to the wider school community, eg, reports to Board of

- Trustees, school newsletters, information (including the policy) on the school's website
- Making the policy available in multiple formats (in print, on the web and in school notices and newsletters)
- Ensuring it is concise and written in plain English (and translated into other languages where necessary).

Section Five: Evaluation and Review

- Regularly review and revise this policy to ensure that the school's bullying prevention practices are recognized and celebrated.
- Outline how your school will undertake to find out if the policy is working.

For example
- Meeting regularly to monitor, review and modify the policy and action plan (to reflect changes with the school, survey findings, incident reviews)
- Celebrating your effectiveness of promoting your school's culture
- Tracking and monitoring of all bullying related incidents and regularly report to school community
- Regularly gathering data from the school community (eg, Wellbeing@School and Kia Kaha student surveys)
- Reporting on the effectiveness of the policy and the school's commitment to bullying prevention and response to the school community
- Seeking continued feedback.