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1.0 Rationale:

Unanderra Public School’s Anti-Bullying Policy has been developed in response to our school and the Department of Education and Training concerns regarding the prevalence of bullying in school communities.

This policy and its related strategies have been developed to support the implementation of the school’s Student Welfare Policy. It is based on the belief that all members of our school community have the right to be safe at school.

The policy is designed to be proactive by systematically presenting students with a series of experiences designed to help them understand and deal more effectively with bullying.

Unanderra’s Anti-Bullying Policy recognises that:

- Schools exist in a society where intimidation and harassment occur. However, bullying is not acceptable in any form.
- Public schools are inclusive environments, where diversity is affirmed and individual differences are respected.
- Quality education is provided for students to meet their learning needs in a secure, ordered and supportive environment. All members of the school have the right to expect that they will spend the day free from the fear of bullying, harassment and intimidation.
- The focus of quality education is for students to learn and grow with confidence. Students develop best in schools where teaching and learning occur in a context of student welfare.
- Partnership with parents, caregivers, students and the wider community is central to the success of this process.
2.0 What is BULLYING?:

2.1 Definition:

Bullying can be defined as intentional, repeated behaviour by an individual or group of individuals that causes distress, hurt or undue pressure. Bullying involves the abuse of power in relationships. Bullying can involve all forms of harassment (including sex, race, religion, disability), humiliation, domination and intimidation of others.

2.2 Bullying behaviour can be:

- **verbal** e.g. name calling, teasing, abuse, putdowns, sarcasm, insults, threats
- **physical** e.g. hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting
- **social** e.g. ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating, making inappropriate gestures
- **psychological** e.g. spreading rumours, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions, prank calling, malicious SMS and email messages, inappropriate use of camera phones.

2.3 If children are bullied:

- They may feel frightened, unsafe, embarrassed, angry or unfairly treated
- Their work, sleep and ability to concentrate may suffer
- Their relationships with family and peers may deteriorate
- They may feel confused and not know what to do about the problem

2.4 Possible indicators of bullying include:

- Under achievement
- Unwillingness to attend school
- Personality change – snappy, withdrawn, tired, crying outbursts, weepiness, loss of appetite
- Lack of confidence, withdrawal from social activities
- Temper flare-ups, abusive language, impulsive hitting out
- Avoidance of specific activities, lessons, days
- Change of routine, e.g. – route to/from school/bus
- Late for school/staying late at school
- Desire to work/play near supervising teacher
- “Mislaid” books, equipment, belongings
- Torn/damaged clothing, belongings
- Bruises, cuts
- Psychosomatic illnesses
- Jumpiness, forgetfulness, distractibility
- Reports from self, peers, school staff, parents

3.0 How to deal with BULLYING:

Bullying is a complex issue involving students in developmental strategies to identify, cope with and prevent bullying occurring.
3.1 Our school **WILL**:  
- Acknowledge that bullying may exist at our school and is a community concern  
- Believe that bullying is a serious problem and that the whole school has a responsibility in dealing with it.  
- Be aware of the effects of bullying at all levels  
- Actively implement the policy, programs and procedures dealing with bullying  
- Remember that all children have a right to be safe in the school environment  
- Keep appropriate records consistent with the school’s student welfare policy  
- Ensure procedural fairness when investigating incidents of bullying and treat each incident in context  

3.2 Our School **WILL NOT**:  
- Accept bullying as a natural part of growing up  
- Underestimate the effects of bullying on the school community  
- Think in stereotypes- bullies and victims do not come in standard shapes and sizes  
- Ignore students’ complaints or problems  
- Expect students to cope alone  
- Be over protective and refuse the student the opportunity to help him/herself  

4.0 **What do we do to prevent BULLYING at Unanderra Public School?**:

As a school community we will not allow cases of bullying to go unreported. Victims and witnesses need to be aware of the critical role they play in intervening or stopping bullying and be encouraged to speak up. Secrecy and silence nurtures bullying.  

4.1 This requires **School staff** to:  
- Be role models in word and action  
- Educate students to understand bullying and to promote the use of the “High 5” strategy when dealing with a bully  
- Promote resilience strategies to empower students to deal with bullying behaviour  
- Be observant of signs of distress or suspected incidents of bullying  
- Make efforts to remove occasions for bullying by active patrolling during supervision times  
- Take steps to help victims and remove the source of distress without placing the victim at further risk  
- Take steps to educate / counsel “bullies” so that they understand that their actions affect others and that it is unacceptable behaviour  
- Investigate and report incidents in a procedurally fair manner as outlined in the Student Welfare Policy  

4.2 This requires **School students** to:  
- Implement the action the “High 5” steps in response to being bullied  
- Take some form of preventative action if they are a bystander in a bullying situation  
- Refuse to be involved in bullying another child or groups of children  
- Report the incident or suspected incident to help break down the code of secrecy  
- Understand that by speaking out, they help to reduce the environment for “bullying” behaviours to develop
4.3 This requires **Parents and Community Members** to:

- Watch for signs of distress in your child, including patterns of indicative behaviour as outlined in section 2.4
- Take an active interest in your child’s social life and acquaintances
- Advise your child to tell a teacher about the incident
- Encourage your child to react appropriately by using the “High 5” steps of dealing with bullying
- Inform the school if bullying is suspected
- Monitor the use of telecommunication devices including telephone, mobile phone, email and computer use.
- Support the school by ensuring your child wears full school uniform
4.4 **Anti-Bullying Strategies** include:

- Educating students via the “High 5” Bullying Guide (Ignore, Walk Away, Talk Friendly, Talk Firmly, Report)
- Peer Support Programs as appropriate
- Developing understanding of the schools’ student welfare policy across the community
- Implementation of the STOP, THINK,DO Conflict Resolution Program
- The Child Protection Program – NO, GO,TELL strategy
- Creating positive classroom environments with clearly understood rules and routines
- Developing positive Student leadership roles via the SRC
- Harmony Day
- The K-6 Buddy Class system
- The STAR Program
- An active Learning Support Team
- The Life Education Program
- Being aware of vulnerable students who may be
  - New to the school
  - Different in appearance, speech or background
  - Suffer low self-esteem
  - Demonstrate “entertaining” reactions when bullied
  - More nervous or anxious
- Supervising high risk places, times and students
- Being punctual to classes, duties and assemblies
- Being mobile, visible and interactive when on duty
- Informing students that staff are available to discuss any problems
- Being observant both in and out of the classroom
- Encouraging students to be observers and reporters of bullying incidents
- Strongly recommending the adherence to the schools’ uniform policy to avoid the potential for bullying
- Ongoing evaluation of the measures outlined in this policy

**BEING SEEN TO TAKE ACTION IS AS IMPORTANT AS TAKING ACTION – SILENCE AND SECRECY NURTURE BULLYING**

5.0 **Associated Documentation:**

- DET Anti-Bullying Plan for Schools @ [www.det.ns.w.edu.au](http://www.det.ns.w.edu.au)
- DET Student Welfare Policy @ [www.det.nsw.edu.au](http://www.det.nsw.edu.au)
- Unanderra Public School Student Welfare Policy
Unanderra Public School Attendance Policy

Rationale:

Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to maximise their potential. Schools, in partnership with parents, are responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students.

All students between the ages of six and fifteen are required by the Education Act (1990) to be enrolled at a school or registered with the Board of Studies for home schooling.

Guidelines:

- Parents and carers are responsible for enrolling their children in school and ensuring they attend regularly
- Parents and carers are required to explain their children’s absences promptly to the school in written form, verbally or over the phone.
- Teachers are required to keep accurate records of attendance using the correct attendance register codes and provide a caring teaching and learning environment that encourages a sense of belonging to the school community
- Principals will ensure that cases of unsatisfactory attendance are investigated and that appropriate intervention strategies are implemented
- Students are responsible for attending school unless they have a valid reason and parental permission for partial or whole day absences from school.
- Records must be kept of written, electronic and verbal explanations from parents for a period of two years. Attendance registers should be retained for three years. Where a student has an accident necessitating an accident report, all attendance records should be kept until the year the student reaches the age of 24 years.

If a teacher is concerned about a student’s absences they should firstly contact parents (via the phone or a note which is available from the Deputy) for an explanation. If there is no improvement in attendance, the matter needs to be referred to the Principal and then the Home School Liaison Officer for action.

Strategies that can be used to support attendance include:

- Student and parent interviews
- Review of the appropriateness of the student’s educational program
- Referral to the school counsellor or outside agencies
- Support from school based personnel.

These guidelines reflect School Attendance Policies & Procedures (DET 2005)
Unanderra Public School Uniform Policy

Rationale:

Unanderra Public School values the wearing of school uniform as it strengthens our student’s sense of belonging, unity and school identity. School uniforms are consistent with occupational health and safety, anti-discrimination and equal opportunity legislation.

Guidelines:

- The school uniform will reflect school community standards and expectations. It will be developed in consultation with the whole school community.

- The Uniform Committee will be responsible for the purchasing, retailing and introduction of uniform items. It is financially responsible to the school P&C and will report at P&C meetings.

- All students will be expected to wear the school uniform during school hours, while travelling to and from school, and when engaged in school activities out of school hours unless otherwise advised. However, no student should be disadvantaged when uniform items are not available due to circumstances beyond their control.

- Everyone has a role in setting standards for the school. Teachers and other school staff model appropriate standards for students.

- Student enrolment cannot be contingent upon wearing the school uniform and suspension or expulsion solely for non-compliance with uniform requirements cannot occur.

- Positive reinforcement and encouraging behaviour are the preferred approaches to ensuring students wear the school uniform.

- School hats are considered part of the uniform in line with the Sunsmart Policy.

- The following items are not part of the uniform and are unsafe in terms of Occupational Health & Safety requirements – Large or “dangly” earrings, thongs or sandals, oversized jewellery, large amounts of jewellery and body piercing.

These guidelines reflect School Uniform Policies and Procedures (DET 2004)
**Unanderra Public School Sunsmart Policy**

**Rationale:**

The increasing occurrence of skin cancer in Australia is a matter of concern for the whole community, including schools. Much of the sun exposure that causes later skin damage occurs during childhood and adolescence.

Schools have a responsibility to provide a safe environment for students and staff. Effective school action on sun protection will contribute significantly to community efforts to reduce skin cancer and related skin damage.

**Guidelines:**

- Effective teaching and learning programs about the need for sun protection will form part of the school curriculum.
- The promotion of sun protection will be a health and safety issue rather than a matter of discipline.
- Positive role modelling by all members of the school community including staff.
- Outdoor activities will be scheduled with consideration given to the season and weather conditions.
- Students will wear hats to protect the face, neck and ears whenever they are outside.
- Parents will ensure students have appropriate headwear for school.
- Parents will provide and encourage students to use 30+ sunscreen.
- If students don’t have a hat they will sit in the shade.
- Students will be encouraged to use available areas of shade for outdoor play activities.

These guidelines reflect Protection From The Sun (DET 1997)
**Bus Travel**

All students are expected to behave safely, respectfully and responsibly when travelling to and from school on the bus.

A code of conduct is printed on the School Student Transport Scheme application forms. Depending on the seriousness of the misbehaviour, students may have their travel pass temporarily or permanently suspended.

**Conduct When Travelling**

*To ensure their safety and the comfort of other passengers students will:*

- Behave safely at all times.
- Respect the needs and comfort of other passengers.
- Behave appropriately at all times eg. no use of offensive language, fighting, spitting, placing feet on seats or throwing things in or from the bus.
- Protect all property and report any vandalism.
- Show their travel pass or ticket when requested.
- Only use the travel pass for its intended purpose.
- Maintain possession of the travel pass at all times.
- Follow instructions about safety.
- Adhere to the law that bans smoking.
- Not eat and drink in prohibited areas.
- Keep arms, legs and other parts of their bodies inside the bus.
- Only attract the attention of the driver in case of emergency.