



Education &
Communities

2011

Reviewed

2015

Anti-bullying Plan

OATLANDS PUBLIC SCHOOL





Bullying:

Preventing and Responding to Student Bullying in Schools Policy (2011)

The NSW Department of Education and Communities rejects all forms of bullying. No student, employee, parent, caregiver or community member should experience bullying within the learning or working environments of the Department.

Bullying

Bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons. Cyber bullying refers to bullying through information and communication technologies.

Bullying can involve humiliation, domination, intimidation, victimisation and all forms of harassment including that based on sex, race, disability, homosexuality or transgender. Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long term effects on those involved including bystanders.

Conflict or fights between equals or single incidents are not defined as bullying.

Bullying behaviour can be:

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

The term “bullying” has a specific meaning. The school’s Anti-bullying Plan sets out **the processes for preventing and responding to student bullying**. The school has a range of policies and practices, including welfare and discipline policies that apply to student behaviour generally.

Schools exist in a society where incidents of bullying behaviour may occur. Preventing and responding to bullying behaviour in learning and working environments is a shared responsibility of all departmental staff, students, parents, caregivers and members of the wider school community.

School staff have a responsibility to:

- respect and support students
- model and promote appropriate behaviour
- have knowledge of school and departmental policies relating to bullying behaviour
- respond in a timely manner to incidents of bullying according to the school’s Anti-bullying Plan.

In addition, teachers have a responsibility to:

- provide curriculum and pedagogy that supports students to develop an understanding of bullying and its impact on individuals and the broader community.

Students have a responsibility to:

- behave appropriately, respecting individual differences and diversity
- behave as responsible digital citizens
- follow the school Anti-bullying Plan
- behave as responsible bystanders
- report incidents of bullying according to their school Anti-bullying Plan.

Parents and caregivers have a responsibility to:

- support their children to become responsible citizens and to develop responsible online behaviour
- be aware of the school Anti-bullying Plan and assist their children in understanding bullying behaviour
- support their children in developing positive responses to incidents of bullying consistent with the school Anti-bullying Plan
- report incidents of school related bullying behaviour to the school
- work collaboratively with the school to resolve incidents of bullying when they occur.

All members of the school community have a responsibility to:

- model and promote positive relationships that respect and accept individual differences and diversity within the school community
- support the school’s Anti-bullying Plan through words and actions
- work collaboratively with the school to resolve incidents of bullying when they occur.

Oatlands Public School Anti-Bullying Plan

This plan outlines the processes for preventing and responding to student bullying in our school and reflects the *Bullying: Preventing and Responding to Student Bullying in Schools Policy* of the New South Wales Department of Education and Communities.

This Anti-Bullying Plan has been developed in consultation with staff and community members of Oatlands Public School as well as the Principals' from the Parramatta Learning Community of Schools (PLC). This plan is underpinned by the *Oatlands Public School Anti-Bullying Policy*. This plan will be tabled at a meeting of the *Oatlands P&C* to inform the school community of the requirements of the plan as well as to seek input into its development and implementation. This Anti-Bullying Plan will be reviewed at least every three years in consultation with the school community.

Statement of purpose

Students attend school to participate in quality education that will help them to become self-directed, lifelong learners who can create a positive future for themselves and the wider community.

At Oatlands Public School we do 'Our Best Always' to be safe, respectful learners. Bullying is not acceptable at any time in any form. Students have the right to expect that they will feel safe and cared for in the school community while on school grounds as well as while travelling to and from school. Students, teachers, parents, caregivers and members of the wider school community have a shared responsibility to create a safe and happy environment, free from all forms of bullying.

The Department of Education (DoE) is committed to ensuring all staff, students and visitors are treated with dignity and respect. It takes action to prevent and respond to bullying in its workplaces in accordance with statutory and regulatory obligations and corporate objectives (DET Prevention of Bullying in the Workplace Policy, 2005).

Expectations

Students, teachers, parents, caregivers and members of the wider school community can expect:

- that students will be safe at school, free from fear of bullying, harassment, intimidation and victimisation
- to be involved in the collaborative development of the Oatlands Public School Anti-Bullying Plan
- to know what is expected of them and others in relation to the Oatlands Public School Anti-Bullying Plan
- that all students will be provided with appropriate support when bullying occurs

Responsibilities

Students, teachers, parents, caregivers and members of the wider school community have a responsibility to:

- promote positive relationships that respect and accept individual differences and diversity within the whole school community
- contribute to the development of the *Oatlands Public School Anti-Bullying Plan* and support it through words and actions
- actively work together to resolve incidents of bullying behaviour when they occur

Students have a responsibility to:

- always do their best to be a safe, respectful learner;
- act to ensure the safety of themselves and others;
- show respect to others at all times, in all situations;
- actively participate in school programs such as Peer Support, Kids Matter and Social Skills lessons, and to learn and implement taught strategies where applicable;
- refuse to take part in any bullying;
- when bullying occurs, take some form of preventative action;
- report all incidents or suspected incidents of bullying

Teachers and support staff have a responsibility to:

- model appropriate behaviour for the students at all times;
- teach co-operative learning, play skills and conflict resolution skills through the class personal development program (as part of the PD/H/PE syllabus);
- provide students with strategies to respond positively to incidents of bullying behaviour, including responsibilities as bystanders or observers;
- be observant for signs of distress and suspected incidents of bullying;
- actively supervise students to minimise opportunities for bullying;
- intervene to assist students being bullied by removing sources of distress without increasing the students' exposure;
- support students who speak out and report incidents of bullying;
- consult with students (e.g. individuals and SRC) to identify issues which give rise to concern;
- report all incidents and suspected incidents to an executive staff member who will follow procedures in the *Oatlands Public School Behaviour Policy*

Parents/Caregivers have a responsibility to:

- be role models;
- be aware of the *Oatlands Public School Anti-Bullying Policy* and the *Oatlands Public School Behaviour Policy*;
- watch for signs of distress in their child e.g. unwillingness to attend school, a pattern of headaches, missing equipment, requests for extra money, damaged clothes or bruising;
- encourage their child to adopt learnt strategies to deal with bullying (whether a victim, an onlooker or a bully);
- encourage their child to tell a staff member about bullying incidents;
- inform the school if bullying is suspected whether to or by their child;
- not encourage their child to retaliate;
- encourage open communication about bullying;
- be willing to attend interviews at school if their child is involved in any bullying incident;
- be willing to inform the school of any cases of suspected bullying even if their child is not directly affected

The Oatlands Public School PBL Team and all Oatlands Public School staff have a responsibility to:

- through the use of a range of means of communication, send very clear messages to students as to what is acceptable behaviour
- consistently apply the *Oatlands Public School Behaviour Policy* to incidents of bullying
- advertise to the students, parents and community that they have an 'open-door' policy in regards to the reporting of bullying behaviours and incidents
- assist staff in the development of teaching resources used to improve the students' skills in conflict resolution and resilience in bullying situations
- establish links between the school and the community so that everyone knows the content of the *Oatlands Public School Anti-Bullying Policy*
- develop an *Oatlands Public School Anti-Bullying Plan* through consultation with parents, caregivers, students and the community, which clearly identifies both the behaviours that are unacceptable and the strategies for dealing with bullying in the classroom and playground
- provide parents, caregivers and students with clear information on strategies that promote appropriate behaviour, and the consequences for inappropriate behaviour
- communicate to parents and caregivers that they have an important role to play in supporting the resolution of bullying behaviour involving their children
- inform students, parents, caregivers and the community about the *Oatlands Public School Behaviour Policy* and the *Oatlands Public School Anti-Bullying Policy*

Protection

The school community understands that bullying can be physical, verbal or psychological and can occur face to face, in written form or through the use of technology in the form of cyber bullying.

- **Verbal** eg name calling, teasing, abuse, putdowns, sarcasm, insults, threats;
- **Physical** eg hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting;
- **Social** eg ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating, making inappropriate gestures; and
- **Psychological** eg spreading rumours, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions, malicious SMS and email messages, inappropriate use of camera phones, inappropriate use of social networking sites.

Conflict or fights between equals or single incidents are not defined as bullying.

The school and its community do not accept or condone bullying behaviour in any form. When the school does become aware of such behaviours, action will be taken in-line with the DEC and *Oatlands Public School Anti-Bullying Policy* and the policy for *Good Discipline and Effective Learning (NSWDSE, 1996)*.

Strategies for dealing with bullying are linked to the *Oatlands Public School Behaviour Policy* and encompass the range of options available to deal with unacceptable behaviours, including suspension and expulsion. In dealing with bullying behaviour, we recognise the repeated and recurring nature of bullying and have mechanisms in place to identify patterns of repeated offending.

Students, their parents and caregivers are encouraged to be proactive in dealing with bullying, so that appropriate support can be provided to those students involved in any incident.

Oatlands Public School is a PBL school. As a result, the school has developed a range of initiatives and strategies for ensuring students understand what is required for them to be *Safe, Respectful Learners*. Teachers maintain systems for rewarding and praising positive behaviour and teaching programs include lessons that address behaviour expectations for different locations around the school and within classrooms. Quality student behaviour and achievement are recognised through merit awards at fortnightly assemblies and published in the school newsletter. As well, PBL awards for targeted behaviours are awarded to students who have demonstrated that they are *Safe, Respectful Learners*.

Prevention

A range of co-ordinated strategies will be implemented annually to teach positive behaviours and interaction skills with the intention of reducing and even totally preventing bullying behaviours at Oatlands Public School.

Classroom strategies

- Posters of the school definition of bullying behaviour will be displayed in each classroom and learning space (Appendix 4)
- Regular classroom discussions are held about bullying, referring students to the school definition of bullying
- Positive interpersonal relationship skills, co-operative learning and play skills and conflict resolution skills will all be explicitly modelled and taught as part of the PD/H/PE syllabus
- Student behaviour records are maintained by all classroom teachers
- Students are reminded of their responsibility to report bullying behaviours
- Each year, students in each class will be appropriately exposed to the *Oatlands Public School Anti-Bullying Policy* by their class teacher

Whole school strategies

- An annual survey of bullying behaviour will occur
- Negative behaviour referral cards incorporate a section for bullying notification
- The *Peer Support Program* with different modules operating annually
- The *Oatlands Public School Playground Leaders* program operates annually and students involved in leadership are encouraged to report incidents of bullying to the co-ordinating teacher
- The *PBL Team* advertises an 'open-door' policy to encourage parents to report bullying behaviours and incidents to be investigated.
- Professional development for staff related to bullying and strategies to counteract it
- Community awareness and input related to anti bullying, its characteristics, school anti bullying programs and response (eg. newsletters, parent forum)

- Provision of programs that promote resilience, life-skills and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and effective communications skills (eg. Positive Behaviour for Learning, Values Education, Child Protection, Drug Education)
- Consistent staff supervision of designated playground areas
- Assurance that students know and understand what behaviours are acceptable within the school (i.e consistent class/school rules are displayed)
- Maintenance of staff commitment to acknowledge victims of bullying and deal with bullying incidents
- Staff use and refer to the *Oatlands Public School Suggested teacher and support staff strategies to prevent the likelihood of bullying* document (Appendices 1 & 2)

Early Intervention

Early identification of bullying behaviours is vital if schools are to be most effective in managing bullying. It is important that schools respond in a timely fashion when issues are identified as it is understood that those who are engaged in bullying and are bullied can experience long-term effects. Oatlands Public School's PBL principles underpin the *Oatlands Public School Behaviour Policy*, which outlines clear procedures and systems to prevent bullying or inappropriate behaviour.

Targeted early intervention strategies could include:

- students to be encouraged to report bullying incidents involving themselves or others;
- teachers to regularly remind students to report incidents;
- students to be reminded that reporting is not dobbing;
- parents to be encouraged to contact the school if they become aware of a problem;
- students recognised for positive behaviours;
- executive staff alerted to incidents of bullying;
- bullying surveys conducted on a class or stage basis as the need arises;
- bullying incidents recorded in the school's behaviour monitoring system

Oatlands Public School will continue to provide relevant personal development programs to target bullying and develop students' self-esteem, for example:

- Peer Support program;
- Positive Behaviour for Learning;
- SRC;
- Child Protection;
- Drug Education;
- Buddy Classes;
- Harmony Day Celebrations;
- Learning Support Team;
- Referral to School Counsellor and other consultants, eg Itinerant Support;
- Anti-bullying posters displayed in all rooms;
- Possible relevant performances with targeted messages to students, eg anti-bullying, developing self esteem;

Response

All incidents of bullying will be handled in accordance with the *Oatlands Public School Behaviour Policy* (see esp. '(Major) Negative Behaviours & Consequences' matrix). It is crucial that allegations of bullying are properly investigated and as such consequences should be delayed until a thorough investigation can be carried out. This should be initiated by the staff member who is contacted at the first instance and referred to an Executive staff member for further investigation.

Identifying bullying behaviours

- Teaching and support staff will use the agreed Oatlands Public School definition of bullying. Staff will regularly engage in professional dialogue about hypothetical and real situations of bullying to develop a consistent understanding of what it is (and is not).
- Students engage in classroom discussions and learning activities to develop an understanding of what constitutes bullying.
- Parents and the community are informed of the definition of bullying through a range of communication means.
- Staff report situations of concern to the executive member.

Students who are being 'bullied'

Students who are being bullied will be supported by their teacher, the executive and, if requested, the school counsellor. Parents will be involved and a support strategy will be developed jointly to suit the needs of the student. Support could involve:

- the class teacher discussing strategies to prevent situations arising;
- discussing options available to the student and class if bullying does occur;
- the teacher/executive conducting group meetings to resolve an issue or develop personal skills required to deal effectively with the issue;
- counselling sessions with the school counsellor;
- involvement in meetings with the students who are bullying to establish ground rules so that the students can co-exist;

Ongoing monitoring and follow-up will take place.

Students who bully others

- In the initial stages intervention will be participative, focusing on the student developing and implementing solutions to the problem. Parents will be informed at the first instance of confirmed bullying.
- Students who continue to bully others, will be involved in intensive intervention with full parental involvement.

Intervention may include:

- behaviour management plans supported by itinerant support teacher behavior;
- participation in specialised group programs (e.g. Social Skills programs);
- intensive, individual or group counseling;

Intervention will be consistent with the *Oatlands Public School Behaviour Policy* and *DoE Suspension and Expulsion of School Students – Procedures*. A suspension may be imposed at any time.

Principles for Reporting & Management of Bullying

- The *Oatlands Public School Behaviour Policy* outlines appropriate procedures and consequences for inappropriate behaviour in the classroom and the playground.
- It is vital that the teacher who the student reports to follows up the incident, informs the student that they have investigated and followed up the incident, and checks back with the student to monitor. Consequently, it is anticipated that a culture of trust will develop where students are confident that they will be listened to.
- Effective reporting and management must be supported by thorough communication to all parties involved.
- When an incident is reported, investigation will commence promptly.

When An Incident is Reported by a Student (or Students)

Teachers will:

- refer to the *Oatlands Public School Strategies in managing bullying behaviour* document (Appendix 3);
- refer to the *Oatlands PS Reporting Bullying Incidents Matrix* (Appendix 5);
- note any details offered in the first instance;
- let the students know that you will be speaking to the suspected bully/bullies;
- ask what has happened to them and who was involved (Appendix 6);
- ensure that a record of the student's name, class and date of the report is kept;
- empathise with the student, acknowledge how they are feeling and reassure them that you will be speaking to them again once the incident has been investigated

Before investigating

Teachers will:

- wait until all parties involved are calm, allowing time for cooling off if needed;
- allow all students involved the opportunity to have a say;
- not send students who are involved in the incident to call for other students who may be implicated

Post Intervention

The *Oatlands Public School Behaviour Policy* outlines appropriate procedures of the consequences for inappropriate behaviour in the classroom and in the playground.

Possible consequences may involve:

- warning
- removal to the executive or principal
- parental contact
- negotiated contract
- ongoing monitoring
- timeout from the class/playground
- community service
- mediation sessions with the victim to reconcile differences
- development of an Individual Behaviour Program (IBP)
- referral to external agencies eg behaviour team
- behaviour guidance program eg anger management, social skills
- suspension
- report to Police
- report to Child Well-Being Unit or Community Services

When an incident is reported, investigation will commence promptly. Where possible, parents/carers will be notified of the investigation's outcome within five working/school days.

In consultation with the school community, Oatlands Public School will review this plan at least every three years. This will be communicated to the school community through the Oatlands parents group, the school website and the newsletter.

The Department of Education and Communities (DEC) has developed appeals procedures to handle complaints. This is located at:

Complaints Handling Policy

https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/policies/general_man/complaints/resp_sugg/PD20020051.shtml?level=

Additional Information

Youth Liaison Police Officer

Constable Elie El-Jammal 98974199

Kids Helpline

<http://www.kidshelp.com.au/> 1800 551800

Principal's Comment

This anti-bullying plan has been reviewed in consultation with staff and community members as well as the principals from the Parramatta Learning Community of Schools. This plan is underpinned by the *Oatlands Public School Anti-Bullying Policy*.

Tony D'Amore Principal

Melissa Jovanovic School Counsellor

Kim Gould Assistant Principal

Angela Dayhew

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Jennene Griffiths

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Appendix 1

Suggested teacher and support staff strategies to prevent the likelihood of bullying.

☐ **Ensure Quality Supervision**

- be punctual to playground supervision or class
- remember our “Duty of Care”
- maintain effective communication
(use the Student Welfare section of K-6 Admin Meetings)
- be aware of identified “risk areas” in the school

☐ **Acknowledge or Follow-Up Incidents**

DON'T

- ignore
- send children away
- overreact to the incident

DO

- be accessible
- give children a chance to explain
- treat each incident seriously

☐ **Follow School Behaviour Policy & Procedures**

- implement consequences consistently according to the negative behaviour matrix
- use the suggested strategies and ideas

☐ **Implement a Personal System for Recording Teasing & Bullying Incidents**

- use the existing classroom behaviour system
- remember to keep Executive informed

*It is vital that as teachers we are being seen to take action
Taking action stops bullying – silence and secrecy nurtures bullying*

Appendix 2

Oatlands Public Schoolsuggested teacher and support staff strategies to prevent the likelihood of bullying.



DON'T

- ✘ ignore student's complaints or problems
- ✘ dismiss students as attention seekers or whingers
- ✘ expect students to sort it out, get tough or cope alone
- ✘ be over protective and refuse to allow students to help themselves
- ✘ overreact to incidents - treat them in context
- ✘ ask why type questions or attempt to assign blame or guilt to the bully
- ✘ play favourites
- ✘ label students / parents
- ✘ make references to other members of the family ie just like your brother
- ✘ give additional chances and warnings to offenders



Oatlands Public School strategies in managing a student involved in bullying behaviours

- Refer** ➤ Refer the student to the school’s three core rules (Safety, Respect & Learning) and the school’s Anti-bullying Policy.
- Remove** ➤ Remove the student to a defined area within the classroom or playground for the remainder of the session.
- Remind** ➤ Remind the student of positive behaviours and strategies they could choose to achieve their goals in a situation.
- Report** ➤ Report the incident to the PBL Team and/or Executive. School-based detention may be applied. The situation will be communicated to all staff to enable consistent monitoring.
- Return** ➤ Return the student to activity or the playground (possible restricted time).
- Remember** ➤ Remember, and continue to monitor the situation.
- Restrict** ➤ It may be necessary to restrict the student’s access to his/her peers for a short period of time. This should only be used to allow time for programs and strategies to be put in place.

it's deliberate

dominate

repeated

Bullying is when someone or a group of people hurt or upset someone else on purpose so that they feel unsafe.

misuse of power

intimidate

excluding



text messaging

social media

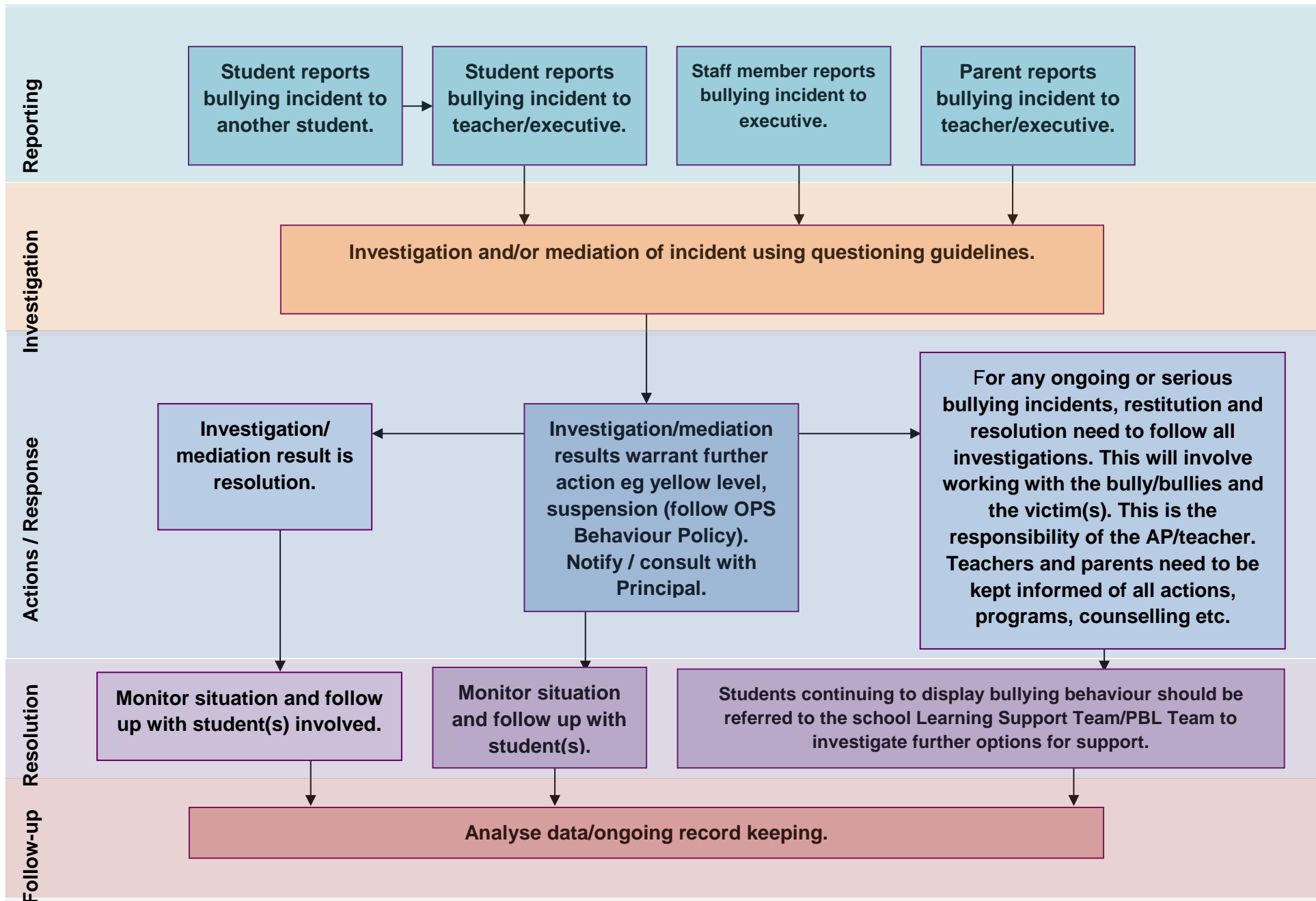
Cyberbullying is when someone or a group of people use ICT to repeatedly and deliberately hurt or upset someone else on purpose.

blogs

email

Internet

Appendix 5 Oatlands Public School Reporting Bullying Incidents Matrix





Appendix 6 Oatlands Public School Bullying Incident Questioning Guide

Date:	Student's Name:	Class:
What happened?		
When and where did it happen?		
Who was involved?		
Were there any witnesses?		
Has it happened before? (Have you had any problems with this student before?) Did you talk to anyone about it?		
Is there anything else you need to tell me?		

Teacher: _____