

Practice examples



How to read this document

This document should be read in conjunction with the NSW Anti-Bullying Framework:
nsw.gov.au/education-and-training/nesa/school-regulation/nsw-anti-bullying-framework
All examples in this document are optional.

Practice examples outline ways in which the Framework's components and sub-components could be translated and applied in different school contexts. A wide variety of examples have been included in recognition of the diversity of schools, so that every school can find something useful that will work in its context.

It is not intended that all schools aim to incorporate all practice examples. The examples are provided to stimulate school and community discussion and determine the most effective strategies for the specific school context.

Components

The four components present the key elements of an effective whole-school anti-bullying approach. Together, the four components represent a best-practice and evidence-informed approach to preventing and addressing student bullying in schools.

Sub-components

Each of the components comprises several sub-components. The 15 sub-components identify aspects to consider when implementing the component to effectively address bullying in schools.

Practice examples

Practice examples outline ways in which the Framework's components and sub-components could be translated and applied in different school contexts. The practice examples are most effective when embedded into the school's culture and supported by strong leadership, collaboration with families, and a commitment to continuous improvement tailored to the needs of the school community.

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PREVENTING

Building a whole-school culture promoting positive relationships, inclusion, safety and kindness, creates school environments where every student feels valued, connected, and supported. When these values and social and emotional skills are consistently modelled and reinforced across the school, the school community is more likely to treat each other with respect, resolve conflicts peacefully, and contribute to an environment where bullying is less likely to occur or persist.



Student wellbeing and safety

- Displaying clear, age-appropriate behaviour expectations co-developed with students in classrooms and common areas.
- Using shared language when addressing behaviour and applying consistent consequences.
- Teachers intentionally building strong, respectful relationships with students through regular check-ins, active listening, and inclusive classroom practices.
- Recognising and rewarding students' positive behaviour.
- Implementing initiatives like buddy systems, peer mentoring, and student wellbeing ambassadors.
- Leaders promoting respect for diversity through inclusive language, cultural celebrations, and anti-discrimination policies.
- Providing emotionally warm, calm and safe spaces for higher risk students.
- Training staff to recognise signs of distress and respond with empathy, ensuring students feel understood and supported.
- Wellbeing teams providing confidential support, early intervention, and referrals when needed.



Positive and inclusive whole-school culture

- Using circle time or community meetings to build trust, share experiences, and resolve issues.
- Using cooperative learning strategies that promote teamwork and mutual respect.
- Displaying student work and cultural artefacts around the school to reflect the diversity of the community.
- Encouraging students to share their stories and traditions through classroom projects and assemblies.
- Training staff to model respectful, inclusive language and behaviour in all interactions.
- Hosting multicultural days, inclusive assemblies, and classroom discussions that highlight different cultures, identities, and perspectives.
- Using consistent school-wide language around values like kindness, respect, and inclusion.
- Celebrating acts of kindness publicly through kindness walls, shout-outs, or student awards.
- Providing accessible facilities and environments, for example quiet zones, to support the diverse physical, sensory and social and emotional needs of all students.
- Providing inclusive play equipment and structured activities that invite participation from all students.
- Providing visual cues, multilingual signage, and student work that reflects diverse cultures and identities to help students feel seen and valued.
- School leaders modelling inclusive values and ensuring that decision-making reflects the voices of diverse students, families, and staff from diverse backgrounds.
- Collaborating with local cultural, disability, and advocacy organisations to enrich learning and support inclusion.
- Establishing student-led groups that meet regularly with staff to raise issues, propose ideas, and co-design wellbeing initiatives.
- Providing physical or digital suggestion boxes to enable students to anonymously report bullying or share other concerns privately and safely.
- Using homeroom, pastoral care, or equivalent to allow students to express concerns and feel heard.



What is bullying?

The following definition distinguishes bullying from other forms of aggressive or unkind behaviour.

Bullying behaviour is typically:

- ongoing and deliberate
- a misuse of power in relationships
- repeated covert/overt verbal, physical and/or social
- online and/or offline
- individual or group-based
- intended to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm
- difficult for the target to stop it from happening to them
- a violation of the right to dignity, safety, and education.

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PREVENTING (CONTINUED)

Social and emotional skill development

- Embedding the teaching of social and emotional skills into daily classroom routines and school-wide events.
- Training teachers to embed social, emotional, and respectful relationship skills into everyday teaching from Kindergarten to Year 12.
- Providing professional learning communities of practice for teachers to share strategies, reflect on practice, and align the teaching of social and emotional skills across year levels.
- Using the NSW PDHPE Curriculum to teach social and emotional skills in a structured and age-appropriate way.
- Providing students with opportunities to practise how to respond to bullying, ask for help or support a peer using assertive language, body posture, and tone.
- Teaching emotional regulation strategies like deep breathing, journaling, or positive self-talk to help students manage anger, frustration, or anxiety.
- Teachers modelling and reinforcing social and emotional skills formally and informally through consistent language and routines across classrooms and playgrounds.
- Consistently reinforcing respectful behaviour and emotional regulation through school-wide expectations and recognition systems such as through the Positive Behaviour Support program.
- Implementing cross-year initiatives such as peer mentoring, buddy programs, and whole-school kindness challenges to reinforce social and emotional skills across age groups.
- Offering information on the school portal or education sessions to help families reinforce social and emotional skills at home.
- Designating areas where students can take a break, use sensory tools, or practise breathing exercises to self-regulate when needed.
- Teaching students how to safely intervene or support someone being bullied.
- Training student leaders to promote kindness, inclusion, and offer peer mentoring for those affected by bullying.

Positive relationships

- Using regular moments of connection and conversation with students such as positive meet and greet rituals.
- Using visual tools to help students identify and rate their emotions, helping staff to monitor student wellbeing and spot patterns of distress.
- Tracking attendance, behaviour, and engagement to identify students who may need support.
- Teachers, allied health teams, and other wellbeing staff meeting regularly to discuss students experiencing difficulties and collaboratively manage support.
- Training students to support peers and alert staff when someone seems distressed or isolated.
- Providing opportunities for students to build positive peer and cross-age relationships and encourage students to stand up for one another.
- Using team tasks and cooperative games to encourage students to build trust and communication with peers.
- Learning about students' interests, strengths, and challenges, and weaving these into informal conversations, classroom discussions and tasks.
- Implementing peer-led clubs and initiatives (such as art, public speaking, robotics, chess) based on student interest to help students connect over shared passions and foster friendships.
- Observing students' friendships, group dynamics, and collaboration styles to understand their social-emotional needs.
- Pairing older students with younger students to support transitions, model positive behaviour, and build a broader group of friendships.
- Using student leadership groups to support younger students, for example through leading assemblies, facilitating activities, or providing support during recess and lunch.

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RESPONDING

Responding effectively and reducing harm from bullying demands a whole-school approach where every incident is consistently reported, recorded and responded to with urgency and care. When school staff effectively manage bullying incidents and support students who experience bullying in a coordinated and timely way, it builds trust, ensures accountability, and helps prevent further harm.

Transparent, coordinated and prompt response

- Developing and sharing comprehensive bullying prevention and response policies that are accessible and understandable for students, staff, and families.
- Providing multiple ways for students to report bullying, such as online forms, suggestion boxes, direct staff contact.
- Developing personalised safety plans for targeted students, including supervision adjustments, safe zones, and trusted adult contacts to ensure they feel secure during and after school hours.
- Responding to students who bully with a tailored mix of disciplinary actions, learning opportunities, and support interventions, adjusted according to the severity and frequency of the behaviour and the student's needs.
- Training staff in trauma-informed care, including conducting regular, non-intrusive check-ins with affected students, using calm, validating language and offering choices to restore a sense of control.
- Developing individualised plans for students who bully others including goals for respectful behaviour, regular check-ins, and skill-building activities (such as mentoring, empathy training or anger management).
- Teaching students who bully others alternative ways to express emotions, resolve conflict, and build relationships through targeted social and emotional engagement.
- Using guided discussions to help students who bully others to understand the impact of their actions and commit to change.
- Tracking student behaviour and offering structured opportunities for reflection and growth, avoiding punitive-only approaches.
- Using consistent, respectful language when discussing incidents, focusing on student behaviours and needs rather than using labels like “bully” or “victim”.
- Coordinated teams (such as school psychologist, counsellor, head of year/house) meeting regularly to assess student needs and provide wraparound support.

Structured triage systems and ongoing support for students involved

- Staff responding to a bullying incident within two school days, ensuring the targeted student's safety and initiating a care plan that may include supervision changes, safe zones, and trusted adult contacts.
- Categorising bullying incidents into levels (for example, low, moderate, and high risk) based on factors like physical harm, emotional impact, and recurrence, triggering a specific response protocol - from classroom interventions to leadership involvement and external referrals.
- Using available frameworks (such as STEPS [Support, Talk, Explore, Plan, and Sustain]) to guide fair, consistent and coordinated responses to bullying incidents.
- Using standardised forms or digital platforms to record details, assess risk, and flag urgent cases that prompt staff to consider emotional impact, safety concerns, and history of similar behaviour.
- Tracking incident trends, flagging repeat cases, and evaluating the effectiveness of responses.
- Scheduling regular check-ins with students involved in bullying to monitor wellbeing and ensure interventions are working.
- Using a multidisciplinary team (for example the counsellor, psychologist, head of year/house) to review serious incidents and coordinate follow-up care, ensuring both the targeted student and the student who bullied receive appropriate support.
- Ensuring families are informed respectfully and promptly of school actions, with clear updates and opportunities to contribute to their children's care plans.
- Embedding triage systems in school policies and sharing them with the community to enhance transparency and trust.
- Teaching students how to report incidents and what to expect from the school's response.

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RESPONDING (CONTINUED)

Active engagement with students and families

- Training staff to respond to reports of bullying with empathy, confidentiality, and consistency helping students feel safe to speak up.
- Multi-disciplinary teams (such as wellbeing staff, teachers, leadership) co-designing support plans with students and families to address academic, social, and emotional needs.
- Using structured frameworks to involve families in decision-making related to their children's needs, such as goal-setting meetings, feedback loops, and shared care plans to build trust and ensure support reflects home and cultural contexts.
- Providing support strategies that can be adapted based on student voice, family input, and lived experience, avoiding one-size-fits-all approaches.
- Using interpreters, translated materials, and culturally respectful engagement strategies to ensure families from diverse backgrounds feel heard and included.

Consistent, timely and accessible reporting and recording

- Analysing data to review trends in bullying behaviour, locations of incidents (such as playground areas, online platforms), repeat cases, initial responses and tracking follow-ups and the effectiveness of interventions.
- Commencing record-keeping procedures and documentation as soon as the school becomes aware of a bullying incident.
- Analysing bullying incident data by year level, gender, cultural background or other relevant factors, to understand how bullying affects different student groups.
- Regularly reviewing bullying incident data to identify priorities, update anti-bullying policies, allocate resources, adjust supervision strategies, and refine staff training programs.
- Wellbeing teams conducting weekly or fortnightly meetings to review documentation, identify emerging concerns, and adjust student support plans.
- Staff consistently using agreed-upon terminology (such as definitions of mean or rude behaviour and bullying) to ensure clarity of data collected.
- Training staff in data literacy, trauma-informed documentation and analysis, privacy protocols, and how to record incidents objectively and respectfully.
- Ensuring documentation is stored securely and only accessible to authorised personnel, protecting student privacy.
- Conducting regular anonymous surveys to gather student perceptions of safety, bullying prevalence, and effectiveness of school responses.
- Encouraging teachers and support staff to record informal observations of student behaviour, peer dynamics, and emerging concerns.
- Embedding data-use protocols into school wellbeing and anti-bullying policies to ensure consistency and sustainability.
- Sharing documentation protocols with families and explaining how incidents are recorded and followed up to enhance their understanding and trust in the process.
- Creating mechanisms for students and families to respond to data findings and suggest improvements, reinforcing shared responsibility.

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PARTNERING

Active partnerships with the school sector, within the school and with families and community services that build a strong network of support around students, are essential to reducing the harm caused by bullying. When the education sector and whole-school community work together in a coordinated and caring way, students feel safer, more connected, and confident that bullying will be taken seriously and addressed effectively.

Student voice and decision making

- Using surveys, suggestion boxes, and classroom discussions to gather student input on wellbeing, bullying prevention and response, safety, and school culture.
- Establishing diverse student leadership roles (such as student councils, wellbeing ambassadors) that allow students to influence school decisions and initiatives related to bullying prevention and response.
- Involving students in decision-making through leadership roles, peer mentoring, and wellbeing committees, helping shape a respectful school culture.
- Involving students in co-designing classroom behaviour charters and anti-bullying campaigns to promote ownership and connection.
- Hosting Harmony Day, NAIDOC Week and other cultural celebrations that recognise and honour students' diverse backgrounds.
- Integrating diverse perspectives, histories, and identities into lessons to reflect and validate students' lived experiences.
- Encouraging staff to engage with students' interests and check in regularly to build emotional trust.
- Selecting and training students to become cyber safety ambassadors to promote respectful online behaviour, educate peers about digital risks, and support anti-bullying campaigns.
- Teachers encouraging students to create videos, podcasts, or social media content that showcase positive digital behaviour and promote anti-bullying messages.
- Involving students in shaping school policies, reporting systems, and wellbeing initiatives to ensure they reflect actual needs and concerns.

Partnerships with families and communities

- Teachers and school leaders routinely contacting families to share good news, celebrate student achievements, or acknowledge positive behaviour - not just when issues arise.
- Hosting orientation sessions, morning teas, or cultural celebrations to build relationships with families from the start of the school year.
- Hosting forums for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families to identify culturally safe practices, shape school-wide initiatives (such as yarning circles, cultural mentors), build trust and two-way communication.
- Offering multiple ways for families to engage with the school such as online forums, drop-in sessions and translated materials, to reduce barriers and increase accessibility.
- Creating forums where families can provide input on school policies, wellbeing initiatives, and bullying prevention strategies.
- Establishing shared expectations with families and students for respectful behaviour, communication, and collaboration
- Establishing clear guidelines for how and when staff should contact families, and families should contact staff, to ensure consistency and follow-through.
- Providing translated materials and interpreter services to ensure all families can engage meaningfully.
- Providing newsletters, updates, and policy documents in the main languages spoken by families in the school community.
- Tailoring communication to families to reflect their cultural, linguistic, and social contexts, such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, CALD, and LGBTQIA+ communities.

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PARTNERING (CONTINUED)



Partnerships with families and communities (continued)

- Appointing staff or community members as cultural liaisons to bridge communication gaps and ensure culturally respectful engagement.
- Seeking input from diverse parent groups to contribute to school policies, wellbeing programs, and anti-bullying strategies.
- Integrating diverse histories, perspectives, and values into lessons to reflect students' identities and reduce marginalisation.
- Embedding respectful practices such as Acknowledgement of Country and celebrating cultural events, such as NAIDOC Week, Harmony Day, Lunar New Year, Ramadan, Easter and Passover.
- Encouraging parent groups to co-lead or participate in anti-bullying events, awareness campaigns (such as Wait Mate), or community forums to foster shared ownership.
- Co-developing shared values statements with families and local organisations (such as sports clubs, youth groups) to promote respectful behaviour in all settings.
- Helping families use tools to monitor and guide online behaviour, including how to model respectful digital interactions, report cyberbullying, and seek help.
- School leaders and staff maintaining approachable, welcoming attitudes and encouraging families to raise concerns without fear of judgment.



Integrated school-community partnerships

- Partnering with local libraries, councils, and youth services to deliver consistent messaging about kindness, inclusion, and standing up to bullying.
- Developing formal agreements outlining roles, responsibilities, and communication protocols between schools and local health services, mental health providers, youth support agencies, and Aboriginal Medical Services to define roles, referral pathways, and shared responsibilities.
- Joining or creating local interagency networks where schools, health professionals, and community organisations meet regularly to coordinate care and share insights.
- Partnering with agencies to provide access to psychologists, social workers, speech therapists, or nurses on school grounds or through scheduled visits.
- Enabling school staff to consult with external specialists (such as trauma therapists, child protection officers, cultural liaison workers) when responding to complex bullying cases.
- Working with community leaders and cultural organisations to ensure support is inclusive, respectful, and accessible.
- Partnering with agencies to deliver tailored programs for students at higher risk of bullying, such as those with disability, from culturally diverse backgrounds, or in out-of-home care.
- Establishing rapid-response systems with external services to intervene in high-risk bullying situations or when students disclose serious harm.
- Participating in local wellbeing networks to align school actions with broader community efforts.

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IMPLEMENTING

Effective implementation of whole-school, evidence-informed multi-tiered systems of support¹ provides a coordinated, consistent approach to preventing and responding to bullying across all levels of the school community. When supported by aligned policies, ongoing teacher professional learning, and regular monitoring, these systems create safer environments where student wellbeing is actively protected, and harm is significantly reduced.



Whole-school, evidence-informed and multi-tiered approach

- Involving staff in creating a tailored plan that outlines the school's specific goals, whole-school strategies, and indicators for promoting wellbeing and preventing bullying.
- Ensuring that respect, empathy, and inclusion are explicitly taught and modelled in all areas of learning and school routines.
- Developing and implementing a school-wide behaviour matrix that outlines clear, positive expectations for all settings (such as classrooms, playgrounds, online).
- Ensuring anti-bullying policies reflect multi-tiered approaches and use language that can be understood by students, staff, and families.
- Involving staff in shaping school culture and initiatives to reinforce shared ownership and commitment.
- Disaggregating data by student background such as cultural identity and gender to ensure support is directed where it is needed most.
- Working with Aboriginal Medical Services, disability advocacy groups, and youth agencies to co-design inclusive supports.
- Embedding anti-bullying themes into lessons such as PDHPE, English, and Humanities, and reinforcing them through daily routines, classroom charters, and school-wide events.
- Involving the whole school community in reviewing and updating anti-bullying and wellbeing policies to reflect current student needs and feedback.



Alignment of the school anti-bullying policy with other school policies

- Conducting regular audits to ensure that anti-bullying policies align with behaviour management, wellbeing, digital safety, and student engagement policies, and consider inclusion and equity.
- Involving staff in co-developing and reviewing procedures to build ownership and ensure relevance to the school's context.
- Using consistent terminology across all documents and communications (including clear definitions of bullying, harassment, and conflict) to avoid confusion and misinterpretation.
- Providing clear documentation defining all staff members' roles and responsibilities in bullying response, escalation processes, behaviour support, and attendance follow-up.
- Involving students and families in reviewing anti-bullying policies and procedures to ensure they reflect lived experiences and community values.
- Integrating anti-bullying strategies into school-wide behaviour expectations, reinforcement systems, and classroom routines.
- Scheduling regular wellbeing briefings and ensure clear handover notes when students transition between year levels or staff teams.
- Regularly holding meetings for staff to review anti-bullying data and co-design student support plans that address multiple concerns holistically.

¹ Multi-Tiered System of Support - is a whole-school, evidence-based framework that provides differentiated academic, behavioural, and wellbeing support to meet the diverse needs of all students. It is proactive, inclusive, and data-driven, ensuring early intervention and equitable outcomes. It typically comprises three tiers of support: Tier 1 – universal support for all students; Tier 2 – Targeted or additional support for more vulnerable students; Tier 3 – Intensive, individualised support for students with complex or persistent needs.

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IMPLEMENTING (CONTINUED)

Ongoing professional learning and resources

- Training staff to explicitly teach skills like empathy, emotional regulation, conflict resolution, and responsible decision-making.
- Training all staff in trauma-informed practice to recognise signs of distress, respond with empathy, and avoid re-traumatisation.
- Offering staff workshops on the needs of diverse student groups, such as culturally responsive pedagogy, disability inclusion, and LGBTQIA+ safety, to ensure all students feel seen and respected.
- Providing training that helps staff recognise and value diverse cultural identities, adapt communication styles, and avoid unconscious bias.
- Providing professional learning that links bullying prevention with trauma-informed care, social and emotional skills, and inclusive practices.
- Training staff to respond to student disclosures about bullying with sensitivity, including when students are reluctant to disclose bullying, using techniques such as active listening, non-judgmental questioning, and safety planning.
- Scheduling regular differentiated bullying prevention and response sessions throughout the year, such as induction for new staff and refreshers for experienced educators.
- Providing toolkits, lesson plans and teaching materials, and access to external experts (such as psychologists and cultural advisors) to support implementation.
- Encouraging staff to observe each other, provide feedback, and model consistent approaches to bullying prevention and student wellbeing.
- Promoting staff wellbeing through mentoring, supervision/ debriefing and workload management, to provide care and support.
- Tailoring training for different roles (such as teachers, support staff, middle leadership) to ensure relevance and clarity in responsibilities.
- Training staff to build respectful, collaborative relationships with families, including those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
- Involving families and community leaders in shaping professional learning content to reflect local values and lived experiences.
- Partnering with the eSafety Commissioner to deliver staff and family training on online safety, emerging technologies, and digital wellbeing.

Regular review and analysis of anti-bullying approaches and data

- Using data insights to adjust wellbeing programs, supervision schedules, and classroom practices, such as increasing peer mentoring in high-risk year groups or redesigning playground areas.
- Analysing current policies, incident data, student feedback, and staff practices to assess effectiveness and alignment with school goals.
- Reviewing policies regularly in consultation with the school community to ensure relevance and effectiveness and shared with the school community to build trust and transparency.
- Using data (including attendance, engagement, wellbeing surveys) to identify students at risk of isolation and intervene early.
- Using regular surveys or check-ins such as My Mind Check to understand how students feel and respond to their feedback.
- Forming multi-disciplinary teams (including wellbeing staff, year advisors, learning support) to interpret data and recommend targeted actions.
- Training staff to interpret bullying data, recognise trends, and understand how to respond strategically.
- Hosting regular staff meetings to discuss data findings, share observations, and co-design solutions.
- Involving student leaders in reviewing trends and proposing responses, such as awareness campaigns or peer support initiatives.
- Sharing anonymised data trends with families through newsletters or forums to build trust and encourage collaboration.
- Scheduling regular check-ins for school leaders to monitor implementation of the school's anti-bullying policy, track student wellbeing indicators, and adjust strategies as needed.
- Combining quantitative data (such as incident reports, attendance, surveys) with qualitative insights (including student voice, staff reflections, family feedback) to get a full picture of the impact on students.