Policy Statement:

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.

Statement of Purpose:

Umina Public School accepts that students have a right to learn in a safe and happy environment. Bullying should it occur needs to be dealt with swiftly and with due thought to procedural fairness. Bullying and anti-social behavior is not acceptable at this school under any circumstances.

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

- Promote positive relationships that respect, protect and accept individual differences and diversity within the whole school community;
- Prevent bullying through education to embed anti-bullying messages;
- Provide Early Intervention through monitoring of incidents, identifying students at risk; and
- Actively work together to resolve and respond to incidents of bullying behaviours when they occur.

PROTECTION:

“What is bullying?”

“Bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behavior 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 the 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.

“Conflicts or fights between equals and single incidents are not defined as bullying.”

(*Bullying; Preventing and Responding to Student Bullying in Schools Policy, DEC: 2011*)

Bullying behavior 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;
- **cyberbullying** – is an intentional, repeated behavior by an individual or group to cause distress or undue pressure to others using technology eg: email, chat room, SMS/texting, social networks, video clips, phone calls.

Umina Public School - Anti-Bullying Plan – 2012
Schools exist in a society where incidents of bullying behavior may occur. Preventing and responding to bullying behavior in learning and working environments is a shared responsibility of all departmental staff, students, parents, caregivers and members of the wider community.

Umina Public School's Anti-Bullying Policy has been worked on collaboratively with staff, students and parents. Our school’s policy will be presented at staff meetings, school council meetings and P&C meetings.

Our school’s Anti-Bullying Plan is promoted through the newsletter, P&C meetings, School Council, classroom lessons and the implementation of the Positive Behaviour for Learning Program (PBL).

**PREVENTION**

At Umina Public School we minimize bullying by implementing the following strategies:

- Embedding Anti-bullying lessons in HSIE Units of Work - Friends, People and Their Beliefs, British Colonisation, Government, Gold.
- Organising special days and events throughout the year, eg. Harmony Day, Reconciliation Day.
- Teaching Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) lessons.
- Embedding Indigenous Education programs and Cultural Awareness Programs.
- Teaching Child Protection program, NO, GO, TELL.
- Buddy system between classes to encourage positive relations between students across the grades.
- Monitoring student behaviour in both classroom and playground settings.
- Teaching student resilience by modeling and role playing.
- Dealing with “hotspots” in the playground.
- Visiting performances eg: Bully busters
- Reviewing our playground procedures to make sure that they are effective
- Regular Student Engagement and Learning Support Team meetings.
- Professional Learning for staff around bullying and cyber bullying.
- Closely monitoring the use of technology and act upon student or parent reports.
- During computer lessons or in class, students should be made aware of cyber bullying and its implications.
- Contacting the police and the school Safety and Response Unity where incidents of cyber bullying include possible criminal behavior.
- Developing an understanding of the role of bystanders. “When a bystander does act there is a good chance (around 50%) that the bullying will stop. Reconciliation is more likely when bystanders intervene than when teachers intervene.”(p 2 Cyber bullying – Information for staff and students. DEC 2011)
**EARLY INTERVENTIONS**

At Umina Public School we undertake the following programs when students are experiencing difficulties with social relationships:

- Playground Activities That Create Happiness (PATCH) and Classroom Activities That Create Happiness (CATCH) programs during lunch and recess which promotes positive social skills.
- Students who display at risk behaviours are identified and monitored by both classroom and playground teachers.
- Transition programs for Kindergarten and Year 6 to 7.
- Learning Support Team, School Counsellors, Student Welfare Officer (SWO), Itinerant Support Staff, Government Agencies work collaboratively with school staff.
- Risk assessments and behaviour management plans.
- Individual conferences with victims and bullies and families if necessary.
- Friendship group sessions and social stories from Learning Support Team and School Counsellor.

**RESPONSE**

At Umina Public School we undertake the following strategies in response to bullying behaviour:

- Students are to tell a teacher (preferably class or playground teacher) immediately. Students may also tell School Counsellor, Student Welfare Officer or a member of the executive team.
- Teachers proactively intervene to prevent/stop bullying.
- Teachers investigate bullying incident with all parties, including bystanders.
- Teachers respond with appropriate combination of interventions.
- Students who continue to bully will be subject to systemic intervention and support, including counselling, time out, detention, long time out, Individual Behaviour Improvement programs, Restorative Conferencing and suspension.
- Students who are bullied are coached on how to deal with bullying and provided with strategies to build resilience and self esteem.

At Umina Public School we have clear procedures on reporting incidents of bullying:

- Students and staff are informed of the policies and procedures of the school which includes anti bullying procedures.
- Teachers are trained in anti-bullying procedures.
- Teacher completes an Incident Report (ASAP or within 24 hours) which identifies name, time and date of incident and incident detail.
- Executive staff reviews Incident Report.
- Serious incidents are referred to the Deputy Principal/Principal by classroom teacher, parents or students for resolution.
At Umina Public School we notify the appropriate external bodies when bullying is of a more serious nature:

- In cases involving assault, threats, intimidation or harassment the School Community Security Directorate and police are notified.
- Incidents involving Child Protection the school will contact the Child Wellbeing Unit and/or Community Services where appropriate.

At Umina Public School we will identify patterns of bullying behaviour by the following data analysis:

- Incident Reports will be reviewed – nature, number and location
- Sentral data reviewed
- Parent complaints about student bullying
- Student feedback
- Staff feedback
- Monitoring of student attendance issues that are linked to bullying behaviour
- Referrals to the Learning Support Team for students who are identified as being at risk of developing long-term difficulties with social relationships or have experienced bullying or engaged in bullying behaviour.

IN CONCLUSION

Bullying exists at all levels in our society. Addressing bullying and cyber-bullying is a whole school community responsibility.

School staff have a responsibility to:

- Listen to students and be empathetic to reports of possible bullying by respecting and supporting students,
- Model and promote appropriate behaviour, and
- 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 support 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.
- Say No to bullying and teasing. Tell the person bullying that you do not like to be treated this way. If you feel unable of uncomfortable in doing this report the incident to the teacher.
- Report the incident to the teacher on duty or your classroom teacher firstly. The teacher can follow up by passing the information to the Assistant Principal, Deputy Principal or Principal if they feel it is necessary.
• Behave as responsible bystanders. Walk away from the bullying situation. If you see, or know of others being bullied, report it to a teacher.
• Be confident that reported incidents will be acted upon by those you reported it to and not to fear any repercussions.
• Report any misuse of technology either in or out of school.

Parents and caregivers have a responsibility to:

• Be aware of the school’s Anti-bullying plan and assist their child in understanding bullying behaviour.
• Support their children in developing positive responses to incidents of bullying consistent with the school Anti-bullying Plan.
• Encourage children to discuss any incident and advise them to report it to staff members.
• Advise the school of suspected incidents of bullying and work collaboratively with the school to resolve incidents of bullying when they occur.
• Support their children to become responsible citizens and to develop responsible online behaviour.

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.

The plan will be reviewed by the Student Engagement Team, School Council, students and staff to evaluate its effectiveness.
USEFUL WEBSITES:

Bullying No Way! (Bystander behaviours and games)
www.bullyingnoway.com.au

Mindmatters

Kidsmatter
http://kidsmatter.edu.au

Digital Citizenship (Stages 2-3)

Cybersmart Teachers Gateway and kids portal (all stages)
www.cybersmart.gov.au

Teacher Resources – Cybersmart (also for students)

Net Alert
www.netalert.gov.au

Think U Know
www.thinkuknow.org.au

Click – a technology guide
www.click.edu.au

Friendly Schools Friendly Families
www.friendlyschools.com.au