

School Bullying Strategies

Students at Macquarie Primary School have been solving various social problems during the year. One issue the Kindergarten children discussed was about 'what to do when you're angry'.

If someone is doing something you don't like, say "Stop – I don't like it."

If they are still annoying you, walk away.

If it's still happening, tell the teacher.

If you're still upset, sit in a space near the teacher to cool off.

What is the school doing about bullying?

The school aims to reduce bullying by developing a safe and supportive school climate by:

consistent and immediate consequences for aggressive behaviour;

generous praise for pro-social and helpful behaviour by students;

co-operative learning activities in the school, teaching of social skills;

specific class meetings and rules against bullying;

serious individual talks with bullies and victims and their parents;

having a curriculum which promotes communication, friendship and assertive skills;

listening respectfully to bullying concerns raised by students, parents and school staff;

avoiding sex-role stereotyping;

avoiding emphasis on competitiveness at school.

Classroom Strategies

Teachers may use the following strategies:

A class code of conduct with regard to treatment of other students, with specific reference to bullying and exclusion of other students.

Both desirable and unacceptable behaviour is simply and clearly defined and written down, with student input e.g.

Everyone included in group activities.

No hitting, punching or kicking.

No name-calling or put downs.

Following up with immediate, consistent, non-violent consequences for all bullying and aggressive behaviour.

Recognising and praising positive, friendly and supportive behaviours of students toward one another on a frequent basis.

Teaching social skills including communication, making friends, accepting feedback from others, conflict resolution, appropriate assertiveness and problem solving.

Modelling by the teacher of positive, respectful and supportive behaviour by the teacher towards students.

Using co-operative learning groups to include less popular, more timid children in small, positive and accepting social groups.

Developing friendship skills

Without the skills to play constructively and develop friendships with age-mates, children become excluded from opportunities to develop additional and more complex skills important for future peer interaction. Children who are socially competent are able to do more than merely behave in positive ways. They show responsiveness and sensitivity to the social context and to others. They are able to maintain positive contact and counter play rejections with alternative options.

Joanne Keighley, School Counsellor at Macquarie Primary School.