

BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE-BULLYING RESPONSE PROCEDURE

There are many types of bullying, but all can have the same negative effects on children. Bullying often occurs when there is a lack of supervision, or at times throughout the day when the educator's focus is on something else, such as busy transition times. Note that 'one-off' occurrences of aggression or negative behaviours alone do not constitute bullying. Bullying is when the actions are repeated and/or ongoing.

Working in conjunction with the *Behaviour Guidance: Bullying Policy*, this procedure provides detailed steps for educators to respond promptly to bullying and actively support children to develop positive relationships between children and their peers.

Education and Care Services National Law or Regulations (R.155, 156) NQS QA 5 Element 5.1.2, 5.2.1 Relationships with Children, NQS QA 6 Element 6.1 Partnerships with Families and Communities
Related Policy: *Behaviour Guidance- Bullying Policy*

TYPES OF BULLYING	
VERBAL BULLYING	Teasing, threatening harm, putting someone down, and name-calling
PHYSICAL BULLYING	Hitting, poking, pinching, punching, spitting, tripping or pushing, or breaking or taking someone's possessions
SOCIAL BULLYING	Spreading rumours, lying, purposely leaving someone out, embarrassing someone in public, or playing nasty jokes
CYBER BULLYING	Using technology to purposely hurt someone by sending hurtful messages or photos

(Source: Kids Helpline, 2018: <https://kidshelpline.com.au/teens/issues/bullying>)

STEP 1: PROCEDURE WHEN A CHILD DISCLOSED ALLEGED BULLYING	
1	Listen carefully to any attempts a child may make to tell you about other children's behaviours that may indicate bullying is occurring, either to that child or another child
2	If you feel it necessary to take notes, ask the child's permission

3	Try to identify who is involved in the bullying and exactly what has happened/is happening	
4	Try to summarise what the child is telling you, <i>“So, you were sitting on your own playing. Then (name) came up and took the truck and punched you”</i> .	
5	Reassure the child that it is not their fault. <i>“It’s not OK for (name) to treat you like that.”</i>	
6	Advise the child of what you intend to do about the situation, including that you will need to speak to the child alleged to be using bullying behaviour	
7	Avoid describing the child who is using inappropriate behaviour as the ‘bully’	

STEP 2: FOLLOWING THE DISCLOSURE

1	Talk to the alleged bully or bullies and any witnesses separately to gain as much detailed information as possible	
2	If possible, ascertain a reason from the alleged bully as to why the behaviour is taking place. Fill out as much of the <i>Bullying Incident Report</i> as possible at this stage	
3	Follow the procedure below: <i>Following any suspicion of bullying</i>	

STEP 3: PROCEDURE WHEN STAFF SUSPECT POSSIBLE BULLYING

1	Closely supervise the children and use the <i>Behaviour Guidance ABC Observation Record</i> to document any suspicions of bullying	
2	Speak to the bullied child if they have not been forthcoming with a disclosure and encourage them to tell you what has been happening	
3	Encourage the bullied child to come to you if there are further incidences and/or if they are feeling unsafe	
4	Discuss the observed behaviours with the alleged bully- how has their behaviour affected the other child? (see below)	
5	Fill out as much of the <i>Behaviour Guidance-Bullying Incident Report</i> as possible at this stage	
6	Follow the procedure below: <i>Following any suspicion of bullying</i>	

STEP 4: FOLLOWING ANY SUSPICION OF BULLYING

1	Advise the Director/Nominated Supervisor and any educators in the child’s room	
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2	Schedule a meeting with involved educators and staff to discuss possible strategies to address the issue	
3	Fill out the <i>Bullying Incident Report</i> with as much detail as possible	
4	If necessary, at this stage advise the parents of the incident/s and encourage them to assist in planning strategies to prevent further incidences	
5	Adhere to <i>Privacy and Confidentiality Policy</i> and do not divulge names of other children involved in the incident to other parents/guardians	
6	Continue to closely supervise and observe the children involved, using the <i>Behaviour Guidance- ABC Observation Record</i>	
7	Address any changes required that may become apparent from the <i>Behaviour Guidance ABC Observation Record</i> . For example, is the environment contributing (e.g., not enough age-appropriate and stimulating experiences available)? Do the behaviours occur during times the children are bored or required to wait for a long period of time with nothing to do (e.g., transitions or waiting for lunch)? Is the alleged bully being unintentionally supported through what happens immediately after the incident (e.g., having one-on-one time with an educator, or being taken out of a group time that they don't enjoy)?	
8	DO NOT force the alleged bully and child being bullied to participate in a group meeting, as this may be extremely intimidating for the bullied child	
9	Support the bullied child in developing friendships with other children	
10	Help all children learn strategies to respond to bullying	
11	Continue to observe and document	
12	Continue to communicate concerns with the Director/Nominated Supervisor so that strategies can be implemented to effectively address bullying behaviours and developing emotional literacy. This may include involving parents/families of children who are consistently bullying other children at the Service.	

Resources

Bullying. No Way! <https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/>

Kids Helpline <https://kidshelpline.com.au/teens/issues/bullying>

Raising Children Network <https://raisingchildren.net.au/preschoolers/behaviour/bullying/bullying-signs>