

PREVENTING AND RESPONDING TO  
BULLYING: A GUIDE FOR SCHOOLS

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Version One

This document is available online at <http://pb4l.tki.org.nz/Deter-bullying>

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## FOREWORD

Bullying behaviour harms children and young people and contributes to a range of poor educational and life outcomes. Bullying is not new and is an issue that all schools face. We are committed to taking a stand against bullying in our schools.

We have compiled this guide to support schools to create safe and positive environments that help to prevent bullying and to provide practical advice on what to do when bullying occurs. The Secondary Principals' Association of New Zealand symposium in March 2013 provided the impetus for this work when its leadership highlighted the need for additional guidance for schools on bullying.

Following this, the Secretary for Education, Peter Hughes convened a series of cross-sector meetings to begin collaborative, effective cross-sector work to address the serious issue of bullying in New Zealand schools. Our aim in writing *Preventing and responding to bullying: A guide for schools* is to provide practical information for schools to support effective prevention and management of bullying behaviour.

Our agencies and organisations bring a range of perspectives on the issue of bullying. However, we share the strong belief that bullying behaviour of any kind is not acceptable and that combined action is needed to reduce the incidence of bullying in our schools. Whichever approach schools decide to take to address bullying, Boards of Trustees, school leadership and staff, students and their families and whānau all need to work together to be successful. It is in this same spirit of collaboration that we have come together to develop this guide which we hope will be a useful starting point and resource for schools.

School Boards of Trustees are required to provide safe emotional and physical school environments. We hope that this guide will help schools prevent and respond to bullying effectively as part of their overall approach to providing positive and safe environments in which all students can learn and thrive.

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## NOTES ON THE GUIDE

### Purpose

Bullying behaviour between students is a serious and complex issue in all schools. This guide has been developed in response to calls from the education sector and provides information on preventing and responding to bullying for schools and their Boards of Trustees.

### Scope

Bullying behaviour is one particular form of aggression. This guide specifically focuses on bullying behaviour rather than on other forms of aggression, such as violence and sexual abuse. Bullying behaviour may include elements of violence or inappropriate sexual behaviour but not all instances of violence or sexual abuse are bullying.

Bullying can occur between students and other students, staff members, or ex-students. This guide provides schools with information about preventing and responding to bullying behaviour between students.

**All instances of bullying behaviour must be taken seriously and responded to appropriately**

*Bullying incidents vary in their severity and impact. Most minor bullying behaviour can be managed by students themselves with support from classroom teachers. Responding to more severe incidents may require input from senior school staff (see section 22). Any bullying incidents involving serious assault or child abuse **must** be referred to the New Zealand Police and/or Child Youth and Family and should not be investigated by schools.*

### Note on bullying programmes

Bullying prevention programmes are mentioned in this guide and links to information about specific programmes is provided. Each of these programmes and strategies is best thought of as one way to support students to develop healthy social behaviours. We recommend that Boards of Trustees and principals consider the evidence-base and the fit with their school's needs/context prior to implementation of any particular programmes.

### Audience

This guide provides information about bullying for Boards of Trustees, principals and staff, although it may also be useful for students and their families and whānau. Links to resources for families and students are included and it is assumed that schools will work closely with their parents and the wider community to address all forms of bullying behaviour.

### Feedback

We welcome your feedback on this guide at [bullying.prevention@minedu.govt.nz](mailto:bullying.prevention@minedu.govt.nz). Please let us know if you have found the guide useful, have suggestions for future revisions, or have any other comments.

### Acknowledgements

Material in the guide has been drawn from a wide range of resources, toolkits, reports and research articles. We acknowledge the significant contribution this material makes to the guide and are indebted to all the authors. Links to this material have been included wherever possible.

## PRINCIPLES

1. Bullying is an issue that all schools will experience at one time or another.
2. Bullying is a way of behaving and can be changed through effective prevention and response strategies.
3. Preventing bullying requires schools to create safe and positive social and physical environments.
4. Schools need to encourage the expectation that students will report bullying to a member of staff and where students feel comfortable doing this.
5. Nationally consistent data on bullying incidents are needed to enable prevalence rates to be monitored and inform decision-making.
6. All schools need to have policies and procedures in place for responding to bullying.
7. Effective prevention of bullying requires a whole-school approach – staff, students, parents and whānau (ie, the whole school community)
8. Parents and whānau need to have confidence in schools' ability to reduce the likelihood of bullying occurring through the culture, structure and processes they have in place.
9. Parents and whānau need to have confidence in how their child's school will respond when an incident of bullying occurs.
10. Student-led strategies for responding to bullying incidents should be implemented across schools; where staff are involved in responding to an incident they should work together with students to create the desired outcomes (eg, restorative practice approach).

## CONTEXT

Bullying is one particular form of aggressive behaviour and can be covert or overt in nature. Most widely accepted definitions of bullying behaviour are based around the following four characteristics: bullying is deliberate; bullying involves a power imbalance; bullying has an element of repetition; and, bullying is harmful.

Building a school culture where bullying has no place is about modelling and fostering healthy social interactions. Therefore, it is important for schools to have a focus on learning rather than on punishment when addressing bullying behaviour. Schools can choose to treat preventing bullying as an opportunity for learning through proactively investing in building students' abilities to relate well to each other. Studies show that most students grow out of bullying behaviour over time, and that schools can support students to develop more effective ways of relating to others. When addressing bullying is seen as a learning opportunity, it allows everyone to build new understandings and competencies.

Section 1, *Safe and Positive School Environments*, focuses on preventing bullying through creating safe and positive school environments where students interact positively and feel valued and included. Section 2, *Understanding Bullying*, describes what bullying behaviour is, who the students most likely to be bullied are, the effects of bullying, and student perceptions of safety. Section 3, *Bullying Policies and Processes*, outlines schools' responsibilities and the expectation for schools to have policies that include bullying, and advice on developing these. Section 4, *Responding to Bullying*, provides advice on responding to bullying incidents and includes a quick reference response chart and assessment matrix to support response planning.

## SECTION ONE: SAFE AND POSITIVE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTS

### 1. Creating a safe, positive school culture

- 1.1. A safe, positive physical and emotional school environment is important for students' achievement and wellbeing and enables all students to be included. Bullying rates vary considerably between schools with similar demographic profiles, suggesting that school culture powerfully affects the prevalence of bullying. There is good evidence that schools that change their policy and culture have achieved reductions in student-reported bullying. Evidence also suggests that effort has to be sustained, or bullying recurs. (Section Two discusses what bullying is in more detail).
- 1.2. Establishing a school-wide expectation for mutual respect and teaching what that means in practice makes a difference. Real change happens when students, staff, parents and whānau, and members of the school's community share responsibility for making their school a respectful and inclusive environment. Preventing bullying is about having a whole-school approach in place that includes students, teachers, school management and Boards of Trustees, parents and whānau.

### 2. Whole-school approaches to preventing bullying behaviour

- 2.1. Strategies to reduce bullying are most effective when they are part of a whole-school focus on creating a positive climate that is inclusive and supports students' learning. Whole-school interventions establish positive social values that are important to the school community. Enhancing mutual respect, promoting understanding of rights and responsibilities, and fostering a school culture of inclusion that values diversity, are crucial aspects of safe schools. Strong leadership and staff modelling of these positive values are also essential.
- 2.2. Effective whole-school approaches contain strategies that address different aspects of school life. These include:
  - developing opportunities for students to build knowledge and skills in relating to others within the curriculum and wider school activities (including opportunities to practice skills, such as through role plays)
  - creating a climate where diversity is respected
  - providing high social support and opportunities for social civic learning
  - offering professional learning opportunities for staff.
- 2.3. Whole-school approaches should also extend into the local community with local sports groups and youth organisations knowing about and supporting their school's strategies and approach towards bullying across community settings.

#### **Parents, family, whānau and community**

- Parents, whānau and community need to be involved in developing a whole-school approach to preventing bullying
- Parents, whānau and community have a valuable role to play in actively supporting their school's approach to bullying

**Questions for Boards of Trustees, principals, senior leadership teams and teachers:**

- Does our school have a positive and inclusive climate?
- Are we involving the wider community? Are we connected to community groups and services working on bullying issues and do they know what our approach to bullying is?
- If we are not involving the wider community, how can we become better connected and involved?

**Links**

- Ministry of Social Development Te Punanga Haumaru funding for community action that encourages prosocial behaviour and reduces bullying  
<http://www.familyservices.govt.nz/working-with-us/programmes-services/early-intervention/te-punanga-haumaru/index.html>
- Wellbeing at School – a whole-school approach to change and how to create a school climate that deters bullying behaviour
- <http://www.wellbeingatschool.org.nz/sites/default/files/W@S-A-whole-school-approach-research-brief.pdf>
- Wellbeing at School – next step planning modules for ideas about promoting healthy social behaviours and values  
<http://www.wellbeingatschool.org.nz/step-3-next-step-planning>
- PPTA: Change Management – a toolkit containing general principles for implementing successful education change in schools  
<http://ppta.org.nz/index.php/resources/publication-list/2460-change->

**3. Bullying prevention and the New Zealand Curriculum/Te Maturanga o Aotearoa**

- 3.1. For maximum impact, bullying prevention approaches should be aligned with good teaching practice and with the New Zealand Curriculum/Te Marautanga o Aotearoa; for example as part of the *Relating to others* key competency. This includes students interacting effectively with a diverse range of people in a variety of contexts, and being aware of how their words and actions affect others.
- 3.2. As part of the *Health and Physical Education* learning area, students learn to demonstrate empathy and develop skills that enhance relationships under the Relationships with other People strand. Students also learn to take responsible and critical action to contribute to the *Healthy Communities and Environments* strand. The underlying principles of tolerance and respect for others can be woven into all aspects of teaching and learning.
- 3.3. The New Zealand Curriculum/Te Marautanga o Aotearoa require schools to explore how digital technology can supplement traditional ways of teaching and enhance opportunities for students to participate in communities beyond the classroom. Alongside this, there is an increasing focus on developing students' capabilities as

'digital citizens' and teachers' capabilities as guides of the digital society. Digital literacy is a key component of the concept of digital citizenship and aligns with the key competency for students to '... develop, to live and learn today and in the future' (see Links below).

### Digital Citizenship

A digital citizen:

- is a confident and capable user of ICT
- uses technologies to participate in educational, cultural and economic activities
- uses and develops critical thinking skills in cyberspace
- is literate in the language, symbols and texts of digital technologies
- is aware of ICT challenges and can manage them effectively
- uses ICT to relate to others in positive, meaningful ways
- demonstrates honesty and integrity and ethical behaviour in their use of ICT
- respects the concepts of privacy and freedom of speech in a digital world
- contributes and actively promotes the values of digital citizenship.

*NetSafe*

### Links

- NetSafe Digital Citizenship model (2010)  
[http://www.netsafe.org.nz/Doc\\_Library/Digital\\_Citizenship\\_in\\_New\\_Zealand\\_Schools\\_Overview.pdf](http://www.netsafe.org.nz/Doc_Library/Digital_Citizenship_in_New_Zealand_Schools_Overview.pdf)

## 4. Positive approaches and good practice

- 4.1. The difference between 'good' schools and 'not so good' schools in responding to bullying, is not whether bullying occurs, but rather how teachers, principals and Boards of Trustees deal with bullying issues that arise.
- 4.2. Traditionally, bullying incidents have been managed through the use of punishment, with consequences such as stand-downs for students who initiate bullying behaviours. This approach focuses on students reporting incidents to adults, and adults taking action to fix situations, and provides few opportunities for students (or teachers and parents) to learn new ways to manage social behaviours.
- 4.3. These approaches do not take account of research findings showing that many bullying incidents are not reported, that students perceive schools are not addressing their concerns or that reporting bullying to teachers can make the bullying worse.
- 4.4. Preferred approaches involve addressing bullying incidents through the use of "social problem-solving" that involves students, parents and whānau, actively working with school staff to create solutions. These approaches are likely to result in fewer stand-

downs and expulsions from school – which in the long-term supports better outcomes for vulnerable young people. These approaches take the view that supports and strategies need to be in place for both targets and initiators of bullying.

- 4.5. Effective bullying prevention approaches and programmes involve the following elements:
- commitment to a whole-school approach (as described in *para 2.2*)
  - a focus on developing healthy social behaviours and strategies (rather than solely addressing bullying behaviours)
  - provision for planning and regular monitoring and evaluation of outcomes
  - a long-term sustainable approach
  - professional development for all staff.
- 4.6. Several programmes and approaches for preventing and responding to bullying are available in New Zealand. The effectiveness and sustainability of a bullying prevention programme will depend on schools having:
- on-going commitment to, and focus on, fostering a positive, inclusive and respectful school environment which values diversity
  - good data systems to collect relevant information
  - efficient progress monitoring tools
  - skilled and competent staff
  - on-going and embedded professional learning and development for all staff
  - formal coaching and coordination supports
  - systems to sustain meaningful outcomes alongside accurate implementation
  - effective community connections
  - engaging learning opportunities.
- 4.7. As well as developing students' abilities to manage social situations and relate well to each other, schools need to actively promote a culture of 'safe telling'. That is, all students (whether they are a target, an initiator, or a bystander) should be encouraged to disclose bullying behaviour, and acknowledgement that they have done the right thing should be provided when they do. To promote a culture of safe telling schools may:
- establish a confidential reporting system
  - encourage two-way communication between home and school about bullying behaviour
  - ensure all students know that if they do speak up they will be listened to
  - ensure that teachers take all incidents reported to them seriously and know how to, and do, respond appropriately.

### **Parents, family, whānau and community**

- Parents, family, whānau and community need to be aware of, and involved in, school bullying prevention programmes
- Parents, family, whānau and community should be part of solution-focused responses to bullying incidents
- There needs to be good communication between home and school so that any reported bullying can be responded to effectively

### **Questions for Boards of Trustees, principals, senior leadership teams and teachers:**

- Are we committed to a focus on using social learning approaches rather than relying on punishment when dealing with bullying in our school?
- Have we considered what supports and strategies need to be in place for targets and initiators of bullying?

### **Links**

- Wellbeing at School  
<http://www.wellbeingatschool.org.nz/sites/default/files/wellbeing-at-school-booklet.pdf>
- NetSafe Digital Citizenship model (2010)  
[http://www.netsafe.org.nz/Doc\\_Library/Digital\\_Citizenship\\_in\\_New\\_Zealand\\_Schools\\_Overview.pdf](http://www.netsafe.org.nz/Doc_Library/Digital_Citizenship_in_New_Zealand_Schools_Overview.pdf)
- NetSafe Learn Guide Protect website  
<http://www.mylgp.org.nz/>

## **5. Examples of approaches and programmes**

### **5.1. Wellbeing@School**

*Wellbeing@School* is an evidence-based approach that supports schools to develop safe, positive physical and emotional school environments that deter bullying. Schools can generate reports that explore the extent to which different aspects of school life (school-wide climate and practices; teaching and learning; community partnerships; pro-social student culture and strategies; aggressive student culture) are promoting a safe and caring climate. Schools can use these reports to plan actions and monitor results. The website also contains a series of research briefs and other information for schools.

### **5.2. PB4L:School-Wide**

*PB4L: School-Wide* is based on the premise that all students should have access to supports to prevent the development and occurrence of problem behaviour, including bullying behaviour. *PB4L: School-Wide* emphasises what a student does and where it occurs. Instead of labelling a student as a 'bully', 'victim', 'perpetrator', or 'aggressor',

the emphasis is on labelling what the student does (eg, name-calling, intimidation) so that the behaviour can be addressed. Supplementary material is available to teach staff and students:

- what bullying behaviour looks like
- what to do before and when bullying behaviour is observed
- how to teach others what to do
- how to establish a positive and preventative environment that reduces bullying behaviour.

5.3. *Kia Kaha*

Kia Kaha is a school-based programme by the New Zealand Police that helps schools create environments where all members of the community feel safe, respected and valued, and where bullying cannot flourish. Kia Kaha contains a series of programmes for children of varying ages including: Building a Safe Happy Classroom (Year 0-3), A Bully-Free Zone (Years 4-5); Safer Communities Together (Years 5-8); and, Our Place (Years 9-13). Kia Kaha has resources for teachers to use in the classroom, and for parents and whānau to help their children develop positive social skills.

5.4. *Confident Kids*

Confident Kids is a New Zealand Police safety skills programme. It uses interactive activities and gives children opportunities to practise safety skills in the classroom. Confident Kids teaches the essential safety skills: *I am confident and alert, I take charge, I set boundaries, I protect myself, and I get help.*

5.5. *Restorative practice*

Restorative practice is an approach that can be used in response to behaviour such as bullying. Restorative practice can be part of a wider approach which teaches students positive skills for relating to others, rather than relying only on punishment. Restorative practice proactively emphasises building and restoring relationships in order to improve students' social and emotional learning, increase engagement with school, lessen risky behaviour and enhance their success at school.

**Parents, family, whānau and community**

- To maximise their effectiveness, approaches and programmes to address bullying need to involve parents, family, whānau and community at all stages of implementation

**Questions for Boards of Trustees, principals, senior leadership teams and teachers:**

- Have we considered implementing any of these programmes or approaches?
- If we are already implementing one of these programmes or approaches, do we need to review how this is going?
- Have we considered using Wellbeing@School tools to review where we are at in terms of developing a safe, positive physical and emotional environment?

**Links**

- Wellbeing at School  
<http://www.wellbeingatschool.org.nz/sites/default/files/wellbeing-at-school-booklet.pdf>
- New Zealand Post Primary Teachers Association  
<http://www.ppta.org.nz/index.php/resources/publication-list/2201-school-anit-violence-toolkit>
- New Zealand School Trustees' Association  
<http://www.nzsta.org.nz/nzsta-services/sta-helpdesk/>

**6. Students with special education needs**

- 6.1. Students with special education needs (including those with physical, developmental, intellectual, emotional and sensory disabilities) are at greater risk for being bullied. Many factors, such as physical vulnerability, social skill challenges, or intolerant social environments can contribute to this increased risk. Some students with special education needs may also bully others. Individualised approaches to preventing or responding to bullying behaviour can be included in individual education plans for students with special education needs. An emphasis on including all students and valuing diversity are powerful ways to lessen the risk that students with special education needs will experience bullying.
- 6.2. As noted in the next section (see paragraph 15.2) a range of students are at greater risk of being bullied, not only those with special education needs. Whole-school bullying prevention and response strategies will apply to all students in a school, including those with special education needs. However, responding to bullying behaviour effectively involves taking students' individual circumstances and support needs into account – whether they are the targets or initiators of bullying behaviour.

### Parents, family, whānau and community

- Parents, family and whānau of children with special education needs play a key role in developing effective individualised approaches to bullying. They will know their child's strengths and needs and will be able to help reinforce strategies their child can use to prevent and respond to any bullying that occurs.

### Questions for Boards of Trustees, principals, senior leadership teams and teachers:

- Have we considered the added vulnerability of our students with special education needs in terms of bullying?
- Have we got individualised plan in place to enable our students with special education needs to respond to bullying appropriately.
- Are our policies and processes around bullying inclusive? Do we take individual needs and circumstances into consideration when dealing with bullying?

### Links

- Wellbeing at School  
<http://www.wellbeingatschool.org.nz/sites/default/files/wellbeing-at-school-booklet.pdf>

## 7. Students' rights and responsibilities

- 7.1. Bullying behaviour compromises the ability of students to learn and achieve in school. Addressing bullying effectively is about developing school cultures that:
- are inclusive
  - value diversity
  - promote positive, healthy social relationships
  - ensure everyone understands their rights and responsibilities (and can quickly solve problems and disputes that arise).
- 7.2. Students don't go to school to be bullied. All students have rights and responsibilities. In the context of bullying, the most important rights of students are:
- the right to personal security and protections from physical, emotional and sexual harassment or abuse from peers or others in the school environment
  - the right to be treated with respect and dignity by other people
  - the right to be disciplined in ways which are positive, consistent with the child's human dignity
  - the right to express their views and have a say in matters which affect them
  - the right to be free from discrimination

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- the right to privacy
- the right to education.<sup>1</sup>

*A school which allows bullying or other violent or exclusionary practices to occur is not one which meets the requirements of Article 29(1) or UNCROC.*

United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child (UNCROC, 2001)

### **Parents, family, whānau and community**

- Parents, family and whānau should be aware of students' rights and responsibilities
- All parents, families and whānau should feel they are valued and respected members of their school community

### **Questions for Boards of Trustees, principals, senior leadership teams and teachers:**

- Are we actively enabling all of our students to understand their rights and responsibilities so they can treat others and themselves with respect?
- How does our school value diversity and ensure all students are included, so they can thrive and achieve?
- Do we treat all parents, families and whānau as respected and valued members of our school community?

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child [tbc]

**Links**

- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child  
<http://www.hrc.co.nz/international-human-rights-new/new-zealands-international-obligations/united-nations-convention-on-the-rights-of-the-child>
- United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child, General Comment No. 13 – *The right of the child to be free from all forms of violence*  
[http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/docs/CRC.C.GC.13\\_en.pdf](http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/docs/CRC.C.GC.13_en.pdf)
- Unicef Innocenti Research Centre, Innocenti Digest No. 13: *Promoting the rights of children with disabilities*,  
[http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/documents/children\\_disability\\_rights.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/documents/children_disability_rights.pdf)
- Unicef Innocenti Research Centre, *Protecting Children from Violence in Sport: A Review with a focus on industrialized countries*  
[http://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/violence\\_in\\_sport.pdf](http://www.unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/violence_in_sport.pdf)
- UN Cyber School Bus  
<http://cyberschoolbus.un.org/index.shtml>

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## SECTION TWO: UNDERSTANDING BULLYING

### 8. Defining bullying

- 8.1. Bullying is one particular form of aggressive behaviour and can be covert or overt in nature. Other forms of aggression that schools may need to address are sexual abuse and physical violence; however, as the definition of bullying below makes clear, these are not the focus of this guide.<sup>2</sup>

There will always be an element of professional judgement at play in determining whether specific incidents constitute bullying. However, most widely accepted definitions of bullying behaviour emphasise the following four characteristics:

- *bullying is deliberate* – there is an intention to cause physical and/or psychological pain or discomfort to another person
  - *bullying involves a power imbalance* – there is an actual or perceived unequal relationship between the target and the initiator which may be based on physical size, age, gender, social status, or digital capability and access
  - *bullying has an element of repetition* – bullying behaviour is usually not one-off and is repeated over time, with the threat of further incidents leading to fear and anxiety. Repetition of bullying may involve single acts with different targets as well as multiple acts with the same target
  - *bullying is harmful* – there is short or long term physical or psychological harm to the target (eg, as a result of coercion or intimidation).
- 8.2. Bullying behaviour is not an individual action. It is influenced by the actions and values of peer groups, schools, families and whānau, communities and societies. Therefore it is important to explore how the system around students might impact on their behaviour. For example, whether all staff and school leaders model inclusive values and respectful ways of communicating; and, whether students are consulted about their concerns and possible solutions and taught effective ways of relating to others.
- 8.3. It is also important to acknowledge that bullying behaviour can be ‘effective’ from the perspective of the initiator, in that it can increase their social status, while lowering the social status of their target. However, the culture of the school will strongly influence the extent to which this occurs.

### 9. Types of bullying behaviour

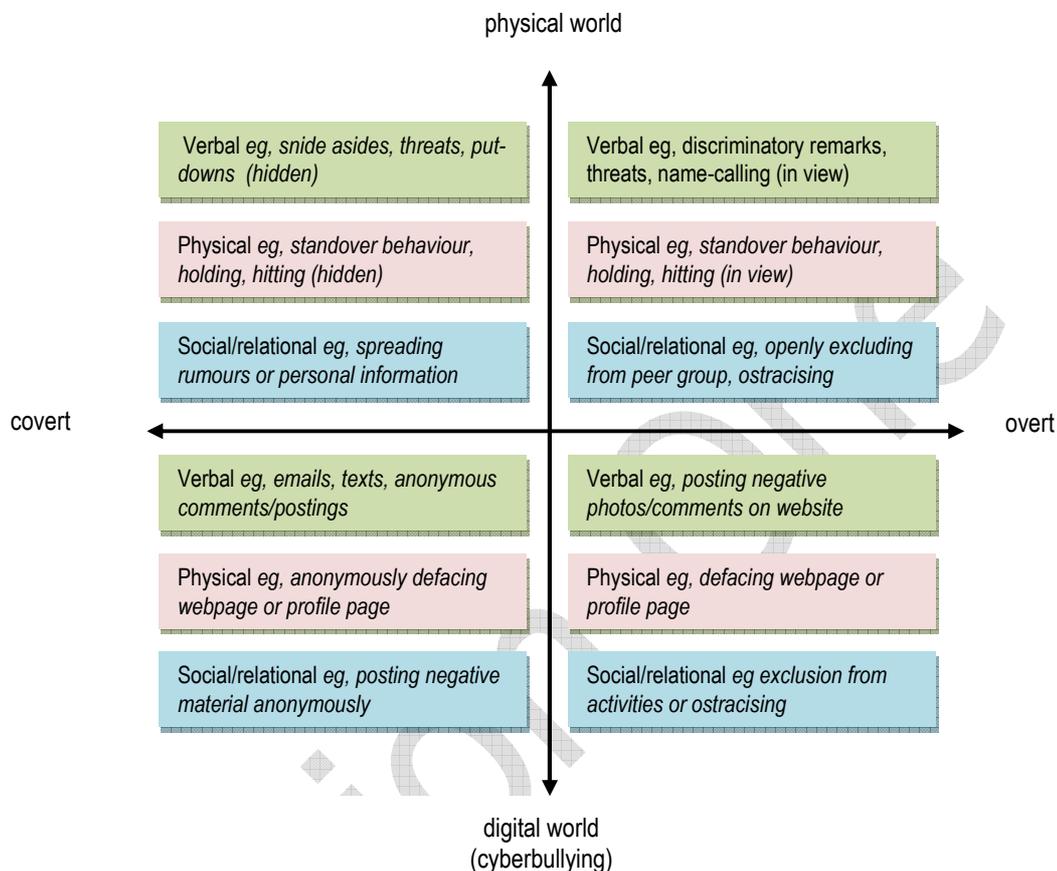
- 9.1. As noted earlier, the focus of this guide is on information about preventing and responding to bullying behaviour between students (rather than between students and teachers or others). Bullying behaviour is complex and can take many forms, including physical, verbal, and social (or relational) bullying. All of these forms of bullying can take place in the physical environment and/or in the digital environment. As shown in *Figure 1. Types of bullying* below, bullying behaviour can be overt (direct and easily observed) or covert (indirect and hidden or less easily observed). A great deal of

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<sup>2</sup> For more information see <http://www.mentalhealth.org.nz/file/M-H-Promotion/PDFs/resp-schools-printversion.pdf>  
Responsive Schools, Carroll-Lind (2010) Office of the Children’s Commissioner, pp20-21.

bullying is covert and bullying behaviour rarely occurs in front of adults. This increases the need to take *all* allegations of bullying seriously and to investigate thoroughly.

Figure 1. Types of bullying



## 10. Cyberbullying

- 10.1. Digital technology is central to young people's lives. The vast majority (93%) of 15-24 year old New Zealanders are internet users. By far the most prevalent online activity engaged in by young people is the use of social media (90%) and young people are increasingly using multiple devices (eg desktops, laptops, tablets, smart phones, games consoles and smart phones).<sup>3</sup> Digital technology brings both opportunities and challenges. It is inherently neither positive nor negative and can be used to deter bullying behaviour as well as for carrying out cyberbullying.
- 10.2. Cyberbullying is just one particular form of bullying. Essentially, it is bullying that is enabled, enhanced, or in some way mediated through digital technology. Digital technology can be a medium for all kinds of bullying behaviour - physical, verbal and social/relational. Cyberbullying is becoming more prevalent and involves using email, cell phones, chat rooms, social networking sites and instant messaging to bully others verbally, socially or psychologically.

<sup>3</sup> Statistics New Zealand (2013) Household Use of Information and Communication Technology: 2012

- 10.3. The characteristics of bullying behaviour described in para 8.1 above may be less apparent in the case of cyberbullying. For example:
- repetition can be influenced by the ability of a single action to spread and be repeated rapidly to a wider audience, and with a degree of permanence
  - power imbalance can also be a function of anonymity, or of an individual's ability to use technology (as opposed to traditional views of power like age, physical strength and social status)
  - cyberbullying may involve people who have never physically met and/or people who share no common acquaintances.
- 10.4. Examples of cyberbullying include:
- sending abusive texts or emails
  - posting negative or inappropriate messages or images on social networking sites
  - taking and sharing private images, including sexual images
  - forming bullying groups on social networking sites
  - assuming the identity of a target online and representing them in a way that may be harmful to them or cause them distress.
- 10.5. In many ways, cyberbullying is like any other form of bullying. However, bullying via digital technology can:
- include large numbers of bystanders
  - occur at any time of the day or night
  - leave a permanent record (eg, photos posted on the internet).
- There may also be overlap with bullying in digital environments occurring alongside bullying in physical environments, thus intensifying the effects. One study found children who were bullied offline were 15 times more likely to be bullied online.<sup>4</sup>
- 10.6. Covert bullying behaviours which intimidate or coerce others are powerful in both physical and digital environments. However, digital technology increases opportunities for covert bullying due to the ease of acting anonymously.
- 10.7. Significant and rapid change is challenging preconceived ideas and assumptions about cyber risk. Increased access and activity enables schools and their students to benefit in more ways (opportunity) from digital technology while increasing the frequency of exposure to an evolving range of risks (challenge). Aggression and bullying are among the many challenges that young people encounter online. Most students are able to manage such challenges for themselves most of the time.

## 11. Effects of bullying

- 11.1. **Bullying has detrimental effects on students' health, wellbeing and learning. Both targets and initiators of bullying are at increased risk for adverse longer term outcomes, including early school leaving. Although most research in this area focuses on impacts on initiators and targets it seems plausible that bullying may also impact negatively on bystanders, ie, those who witness bullying.**

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<sup>4</sup> Hasebrink, U., Livingstone, S.I, & Haddon, L. (2008). Comparing children's online opportunities and risks across Europe: Cross-national comparisons for EU Kids. Online article.

- 11.2. Students who are bullied are more likely to experience symptoms of depression and anxiety and to avoid going to school. Bullying that is particularly sustained, severe or intense may be linked to severe physical and mental health outcomes, including increased risk of suicide. Addressing bullying effectively has benefits for the future of both targets and initiators of bullying.

**Links**

- Wellbeing at School research brief: *What Bullying Is* talks about the effects of bullying:  
<http://www.wellbeingatschool.org.nz/sites/default/files/W@S-What-bullying-is-research-brief.pdf>

12. Prevalence of bullying

- 12.1. Bullying can occur with students of any age and is experienced by both primary and secondary school students. Several studies have looked at the prevalence of bullying in New Zealand schools using a range of definitions and methodologies (see Links). However, more rigorous and systematic data collection is needed to gain a clearer picture of the prevalence of bullying in our schools. The Youth 2000 surveys have found little change in rates of bullying in New Zealand schools over the past decade, with the exception of cyberbullying which is on the rise.

**United Nations Economic, Social and Cultural Committee recommendation for New Zealand (2012)**

*The Committee recommends that the State party (a) systematically collect data on violence and bullying in schools; (b) monitor the impact of the student mental health and well-being initiatives recently introduced on the reduction of the incidence of violence and bullying, and (c) assess the effectiveness of measures, legislative or otherwise, in countering violence and bullying”*

<http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cescr/cescrs48.htm>

**Links**

- Youth '12 (New Zealand secondary school students)  
<http://www.fmhs.auckland.ac.nz/faculty/ahrg/survey2012.aspx>
- TIMMS (International data on primary aged students)  
<http://timssandpirls.bc.edu/>
- Internet Safety Technical Task Force (US data)  
[http://cyber.law.harvard.edu/sites/cyber.law.harvard.edu/files/ISTTF\\_Final\\_Report.pdf](http://cyber.law.harvard.edu/sites/cyber.law.harvard.edu/files/ISTTF_Final_Report.pdf)

### 13. Students' perceptions of safety

13.1. Notwithstanding the lack of nationally consistent data, it is the prevalence of bullying in a particular school that matters. The best way to find out how safe students feel in school is to ask them directly, preferably through an anonymous survey. Results of regular (eg, annual) surveys can also be used to assess the effectiveness of a school's bullying policy over time. Student surveys have been developed for New Zealand schools as part of *Wellbeing@School* and *Kia Kaha*. Parents and whānau may also know about their children's experience with bullying and should know how they can report this through appropriate and effective avenues.

#### 13.2. *Wellbeing at School*

The *Wellbeing@School* tools support schools to engage in a review process to create safe and caring climates that deter bullying, and include two student surveys (one for primary students and one for intermediate and secondary students). There is also a self-review process to support schools to promote inclusive practices for all learners. Specifically, *Wellbeing@School* tools support schools to:

- get started on preparing for change
- gather data (student and teacher surveys and school self-review tool)
- plan (action plan template and modules with practical ideas and resources)
- take action
- review progress.



Schools can also benchmark themselves against national data and access additional analysis of their results if needed.

#### **Parents, family, whānau and community**

- Parents, family and whānau can have a reasonable expectation that their child feels safe in their school environment
- Parents, family and whānau should know how to report any concerns about their child's safety at school and feel confident that these will be dealt with effectively

**Questions for Boards of Trustees, principals, senior leadership teams and teachers:**

- Do we know how many students are being bullied in our school? How do we know – do we have a reliable way of measuring bullying in our school?
- Have we considered using the Wellbeing@School tool or the Kia Kaha survey?
- Do we record bullying incidents in our school and monitor these on an ongoing basis to help us to address the issue?
- Do students in our school feel safe to talk to school staff about bullying?
- Do students trust staff to deal appropriately and effectively with incidents of bullying that they report to them?
- Is our school environment safe and inclusive for all students?

**Links**

- Wellbeing@School (includes student surveys, planning tools, resources and information sheets)  
<http://www.wellbeingatschool.org.nz/>
- New Zealand Council for Educational Research (NZCER)  
<http://www.wellbeingatschool.org.nz/>
- NZ Police (Kia Kaha)  
<http://www.police.govt.nz/kia-kaha>
- New Zealand Police Kia Kaha primary workbook p36  
<http://www.police.govt.nz/sites/default/files/services/yes/kia-kaha/publ151-12-kia-kaha-primary-working-booklet.pdf>

## 14. Settings and the physical environment

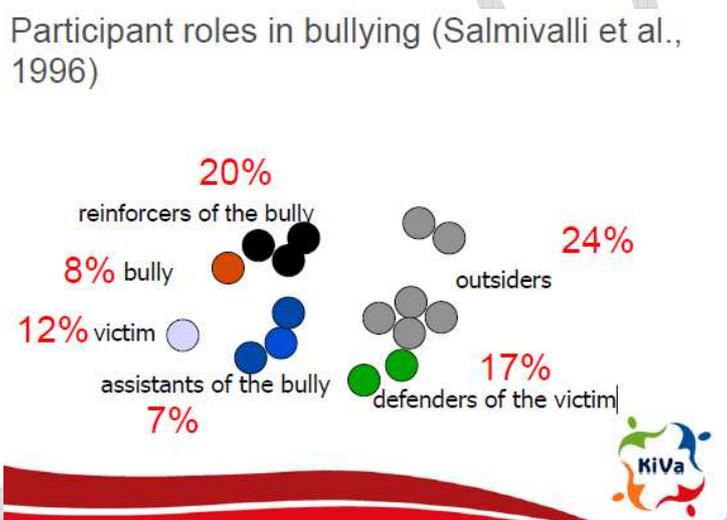
- 14.1. Bullying behaviour occurs in a range of settings, both visible and hidden. These locations include areas such as hallways, bathrooms, classrooms, meeting places (eg, school assemblies), in the playground, in the wider school grounds (eg, at the school gates, sports fields and venues), in text messages, and in the online environment.
- 14.2. A school's physical environment can be a factor in reducing bullying. For example, ensuring areas are easily accessible, well-lit, and regularly supervised/monitored (including closed-circuit television) will help reduce the likelihood of bullying occurring. This includes the physical environment on the way to and from school, including on the school bus etc. The atmosphere and climate set within the school, and the expectations established around safety and inclusion of all students, are essential so students know what is and isn't acceptable (see Section 2 for details).

**Questions for Boards of Trustees, principals, senior leadership teams and teachers:**

- Are there areas in our school where students feel unsafe (eg, give students a map of the school and ask them to shade areas according to how safe they feel in each)
- What steps could we take to address this (eg, increased supervision, lighting)
- Are there any other factors (apart from those to do with the physical environment) that make students feel unsafe in our school?

### 15. Initiators, targets and bystanders

- 15.1. Bullying behaviour involves three parties: initiators (those doing the bullying), targets (those being bullied), and bystanders (those who witness the bullying). The diagram below indicates the typical relative proportions of roles for students who are involved in bullying incidents *[to be clarified pending sourcing article]*.



- 15.2. Students of all ages can be at relatively greater risk of being bullied (ie, being targets) for a whole host of reasons including:

- being unassertive or withdrawn (eg, isolated students with low self-esteem)
- differing from the majority culture of a school in terms of ethnicity, cultural or religious background, sexual orientation, gender identity, or socio-economic status
- having a disability, special education needs, or mental health issues
- academic achievement (perceived as high or low achiever)
- having recently transitioned into a school (through natural progression through schools, changing to a new school due to behavioural issues at a previous school, or moving to the area from another city or country).

- 15.3. Students who bully others often do so to gain status and recognition from their peers. Their bullying behaviour is reinforced when they intimidate the targets of their behaviour and when the peer group colludes by not challenging the initiator or reporting the bullying to staff.
- 15.4. Bystanders (ie, witnesses to bullying behaviour) can have a powerful effect on either encouraging or inhibiting bullying behaviour. There are three main types of bystanders:
- followers (assistants) – do not initiate, but do take an active role in the bullying behaviour
  - supporters (reinforcers) – support the bullying behaviour (overtly or covertly eg, by ‘turning a blind eye’) but don’t take an active role in the bullying behaviour
  - defenders – dislike the bullying and try to help the target by intervening, getting teacher support (safe telling), or providing direct support.
- 15.5. All students have the potential to be in at least one of these categories (target, initiator, or bystander) at some point in their school life. For example, all students will transition to a new school at least once – placing them at higher risk of being bullied. This is why it is important to involve all students in bullying prevention strategies and to ensure they are aware of their rights and responsibilities.

*Research shows intervention by bystanders can be very effective in stopping bullying quickly. For this reason, it is important to provide students with a sense of agency through actively teaching the skills they need to relate well to others and strategies for responding to any bullying behaviour they may witness.*

*Research also shows that bystanders may react aggressively unless they have other, more appropriate, strategies at their disposal. This is another reason it is important to teach students effective strategies for managing social situations.*

- 15.6. Students can move in and out of the roles of initiator, target and bystander at different times. Therefore, it is important not to label particular students as ‘bullies’. Because all students may be initiators, targets or bystanders at some time, they all need to take part in strategies to learn about bullying and how to respond to it. Whole-school approaches, such as *Positive Behaviour for Learning (PB4L): School-Wide, Kia Kaha*, and others, take this approach and involve all staff and students.

**Parents, family, whānau and community**

- Parents, family and whānau need to know if their child is at greater risk of being bullied for any particular reason so they can work with the school to manage this
- Parents, family and whānau need to have an understanding of all three roles involved in bullying behaviour, and the powerful part that bystanders play

**Questions for Boards of Trustees, principals, senior leadership teams and teachers:**

- Do our staff and Board members have a good understanding of why *all* students need to be included in our school's approach to bullying?
- Are we committed to a whole-school approach to ensure a positive, safe and inclusive school environment that includes all staff and students?

**Links**

- PB4L: School-Wide  
<http://pb4l.tki.org.nz/>
- Kia Kaha  
<http://www.police.govt.nz/kia-kaha>
- Health Promoting Schools  
<http://hps.tki.org.nz/>
- PPTA: Safe Schools  
<http://ppta.org.nz/index.php/communities/glbti-teachers>
- PPTA: Change Management  
<http://ppta.org.nz/index.php/resources/publication-list/2460-change-management>

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## SECTION THREE: BULLYING – POLICIES AND PROCESSES

### 16. NAG 5 responsibilities

- 16.1. Under National Administration Guideline 5 (NAG 5), each Board of Trustees is required to:
- (a) *provide a safe physical and emotional environment for students; and*
  - (c) *comply in full with any legislation currently in force or that may be developed to ensure the safety of students and employees.*
- 16.2. NAG 5 covers a number of aspects of school life apart from bullying; however, developing and implementing a bullying policy will help schools ensure they are meeting their obligations in relation to providing a safe environment for students.

**Questions for Boards of Trustees, principals, senior leadership teams and teachers:**

- How well are we doing on NAG 5? How do we know?
- Do we maintain a safe physical and emotional environment in our school?

### 17. School bullying policies

- 17.1. Bullying behaviour occurs in all schools, whether or not they are aware of it, and there is no room for complacency. In order to meet the NAG 5 requirements for a safe physical and emotional school environment, **all schools should have a policy that addresses bullying**. This can be a standalone policy or part of an overarching behaviour or safe school policy.<sup>5</sup> Such a policy will include cyberbullying and will be part of a school's wider approach to promoting social well-being and positive student interactions. It should clearly state the school's position with regard to the unacceptability of bullying.
- 17.2. **Teachers, students, parents and whānau should all have an opportunity to have input into their school's policies around bullying** (as well as the strategies in place to build students' social competencies). A sample policy which addresses bullying has been developed by members of the Secondary Principals' Association of New Zealand and is attached in Appendix 2 (p.41). A school's policy will support decision-making and will need to be reviewed regularly to ensure its effectiveness. As part of their role, the Education Review Office will review the alignment of a school's policy with their practice around bullying (see ERO self-review questions below).
- 17.3. School *policies* around bullying should encompass both prevention and response through:
- acknowledging that bullying behaviour is a risk to be managed

<sup>5</sup> Schools also need to consider how other forms of aggression, such as sexual abuse or harassment and physical violence, will be addressed in policies (see para 8.1).

- documenting policies and procedures outlining how the school is proactively preventing bullying behaviour through building students' social skills and creating a safe school environment
  - including a quick guide for all adults on immediate actions and steps to take when bullying incidents occur
  - involving carrying out student surveys about student safety (including bullying behaviour) and maintain systematic collection of this information which is used to identify areas for improvement
  - ensuring training is provided for staff in recognising and responding to bullying
  - providing for appropriate guidance and counselling for students
  - implementing strategies to prevent and manage bullying
  - monitoring the success of strategies that have been implemented.
- 17.4. School processes around bullying should:
- emphasise the importance of fostering an inclusive and respectful school environment for all students
  - define minor, moderate, major and severe incidents
  - identify who is responsible for responding to each type of incident and how these will be addressed
  - be responsive to information gathered from surveys and other tools
  - consider how student management systems (SMS) can be used to support data collection.
- 17.5. School bullying policies need to be widely advertised and readily accessible to all students, parents, family and whānau – including those with disabilities. This means policies need to be:
- available in multiple formats (print, web, school notices, excerpts in school newsletters)
  - written in plain English (and translated into other languages where necessary)
  - concise.
- 17.6. Boards of Trustees need to know what questions to ask to assure themselves that they have an effective bullying policy. This includes knowing what steps their principal and staff are taking to:
- develop an understanding of bullying behaviour in their school
  - develop a school-wide culture of inclusion and respect for diversity
  - actively develop students' abilities to relate well to others and use social problem-solving strategies
  - create a safe school bullying prevention and response procedure which includes information about how to address incidents of different severity
  - survey students and teachers to obtain information on wellbeing (eg, Wellbeing@School and Kia Kaha student surveys)
  - identify actions to be taken and relevant strategies or programmes to support these (ie a plan of action)
  - implement the planned actions, programmes or strategies across the school

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- monitor and report on the results of these actions from the principal to the Board of Trustees and from the Board of Trustees to the community.

17.7. [to insert flowchart setting out prevention/response cycle]

### Education Review Office (ERO) self-review questions:

Does the Board:

- meet the requirements under NAG 5:
- through the principal and teaching staff, currently provide anti-bullying programmes for students?
- do those programmes include a focus on
  - racist bullying?\*
  - bullying of students with special needs?
  - homophobic bullying?\*
  - sexual harassment?

\* Note: racist bullying refers to bullying based on culture or ethnicity and homophobic bullying refers to bullying based on sexual orientation or gender identity. The term 'transphobic bullying' is preferred by the transgender community to refer to bullying of transgender people.

### Parents, family, whānau and community

- Parents, family and whānau should have opportunities to have input into the development of this
- Parents, family and whānau need know about their school's bullying policy and be able to access this in an appropriate format/language

### Questions for Boards of Trustees, principals, senior leadership teams and teachers:

- Are we confident that we have an effective bullying policy in place as set out in paragraph 17.6 above?
- Have we communicated our policy to our wider school community?

### Links

- Post Primary Teachers' Association (PPTA) School Anti-violence Toolkit (April 2012) p.16  
<http://www.ppta.org.nz/index.php/collective-agreements/health-a-safety/1031-violence-bullying>
- Responsive schools, Carroll-Lind (2010), p.19  
<http://www.mentalhealth.org.nz/file/M-H-Promotion/PDFs/resp-schools-print-version.pdf>
- Education Review Office checklists for Boards of Trustees  
<http://www.ero.govt.nz/Review-Process/For-Schools-and-Kura-Kaupapa-Maori/Review-Documentation-for-Schools>
- New Zealand Police Bullying Information for Schools – including a suggested 'safe school policy'  
[http://www.police.govt.nz/service/yes/nobully/bullying\\_info.pdf](http://www.police.govt.nz/service/yes/nobully/bullying_info.pdf)

## 18. Cyberbullying

- 18.1. To ensure effectiveness, all forms of bullying should be integrated within the context of school safety and cyberbullying should not be dealt with in isolation from other forms of bullying. Boards of Trustees have responsibility for cybersafety under NAG 5 which is central to establishing and maintaining a 'cybersafe' learning environment. Schools may wish to use NetSafe's school cybersafety policy template as a guide in this area (see *links* below).

### **Parents, family, whānau and community**

- Parents, family and whānau need to be informed about the opportunities and challenges that digital technology brings and know how to support their children to manage these (see links below).

### **Questions for Boards of Trustees, principals, senior leadership teams and teachers:**

- Does our school's bullying policy include cyberbullying? Have we considered using the NetSafe cybersafety policy template?

### Links

- NetSafe Digital Citizenship policy template  
<http://www.netsafe.org.nz/the-kit/policy-and-use-agreements>
- NetSafe 0508 638723  
<http://www.netsafe.org.nz/>
- Netsafe kit for schools  
<http://www.netsafe.org.nz/the-netsafe-kit-for-schools/>
- At a Distance cyberbullying video and Let's Fight it Together video  
<http://www.cyberbullying.org.nz/>

## 19. An effective complaints process

- 19.1. Managing complaints appropriately, fairly and consistently, is an important part of school operations. Schools should have a process in place to manage all complaints, including those about bullying. This will include steps for acknowledging, investigating and following up on complaints.

Managing complaints appropriately, using fair and consistent practice is an important part of school operations. Complaints may escalate rapidly if they are not managed in a timely and appropriate manner.

It is good practice to ensure that your school has a clearly articulated complaints procedure, and that it is followed.

It is important that parents, students, teachers, school staff and board members know how to access the school complaints procedure easily.

*Adapted from: Good practice guidelines for principals and boards of trustees for managing behaviour that may or may not lead to stand-downs, suspensions, exclusions or and expulsions (Ministry of Education).*

- 19.2. Organisations such as the Office of the Ombudsman, the Human Rights Commission, the Education Review Office, and the New Zealand School Trustees Association provide information for Boards of Trustees about good practice for managing complaints. The Human Rights Commission offers an Enquiries and Complaints Service (including disputes resolution) which is based on mediation (also see *Links*).
- 19.3. If an instance of school bullying occurs on one of the grounds of unlawful discrimination in the Human Rights Act 1993 (eg, race, sexual orientation, or disability) a complaint of unlawful discrimination may be progressed through the Human Rights Commission. A complaint might also be progressed if it is alleged a school responded inadequately to a bullying complaint based on one of the grounds of unlawful discrimination in the Human Rights Act 1993.

### Parents, family, whānau and community

- Parents, family and whānau should know how to make a complaint to their school if they are unhappy about how a bullying incident has been responded to. They should also know about other avenues available if they are unable to resolve the issue through the school.

### Questions for Boards of Trustees, principals, senior leadership teams and teachers:

- Do we have a complaints process in place? Is it being followed consistently?
- Are copies available on our website/in our enrolment pack/at our office?
- Are all our staff and parents familiar with how to access the process?

### Links

- New Zealand School Trustees Association  
<http://www.nzsta.org.nz/board-as-governors/conflict-and-complaints/>
- Office of the Ombudsman  
<http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz/resources-and-publications/documents/good-complaints-handling-by-school-boards-of-trustees>
- Human Rights Commission  
<http://www.hrc.co.nz/enquiries-and-complaints-guide/what-happens>
- Human Rights Commission Infoline (enquiries and complaints)  
*0800 496 877 or Infoline@hrc.co.nz*
- Education Review Office  
<http://www.ero.govt.nz/Review-Process/For-Schools-and-Kura-Kaupapa-Maori/Review-Documentation-for-Schools>

## 20. Bullying that occurs outside school

- 20.1. Bullying often occurs off school premises, after school hours, or online – out of the direct view of parents and teachers. However, students may report these bullying incidents to teachers and counsellors (in secondary schools), or the effects of such bullying may show up in absenteeism or other behaviour in school. Bullying behaviour which occurs outside school may well continue in school and vice versa.
- 20.2. The very notion of behaviour that occurs ‘outside school’ is being rendered increasingly meaningless by the ubiquity of ICT. Our ability to determine with certainty where and when an event happened is being challenged on a daily basis. We are getting to the point where asking ‘*where and when did this behaviour occur?*’ is becoming less

relevant than asking 'what effect is this bullying behaviour having on the student/s concerned and will we respond?'

- 20.3. There are no hard and fast rules about the extent of schools' responsibility for bullying that occurs off school premises. However, where bullying outside school is reported to school staff, it should be investigated and acted on.
- 20.4. Schools that take a whole-school approach to bullying that encompass the school community will respond to all bullying behaviour students report – whether this takes place in or out of school. Safe and inclusive school environments may also result in more positive student behaviour beyond the school setting.

**Parents, family, whānau and community**

- Bullying incidents need to be managed and responded to wherever they occur. If bullying is affecting a student negatively, both family and whānau and schools need to be informed of this so it can be effectively addressed.

**Questions for Boards of Trustees, principals, senior leadership teams and teachers:**

- Are we well informed about cyberbullying?
- Have we considered what our approach will be to cyberbullying where we may not be able to establish where and when the bullying occurred?

**Links**

- Ministry of Education: Jurisdiction out of school hours  
<http://www.educationleaders.govt.nz/Problem-solving/Education-and-the-law/Students/Jurisdiction-out-of-school-hours>
- Ministry of Education responsibilities to students outside school  
<http://www.educationleaders.govt.nz/Problem-solving/Education-and-the-law/Students/Responsibilities-to-students-outside-school>

**21. Legal considerations**

- 21.1. Legislation and guidelines that schools and Boards of Trustees need to be aware of in relation to bullying include:
- Health and Safety in Employment Act, 1992
  - Employment Relations Act, 2000
  - National Education Goals
  - National Administration Guidelines
  - State Sector Act, 1988
  - Secondary Teachers' And Area School Teachers' Collective Agreements

- Victims' Rights Act, 2002
- Education Act, 1989
- Crimes Act, 1961
- Human Rights Act, 1993
- Privacy Act, 1993
- Children, Young Persons and their Families Act, 1989
- Films, Videos and Publications Classifications Act, 1993 [tbc]

Explanation of the implications of many of these Acts for secondary schools is provided in the PPTA School Anti-Violence Toolkit (see link below).

- 21.2. Proposed new laws concerning the harmful use of digital technology were announced in April 2013. These are likely to impact on how schools manage such incidents and we will provide information as it becomes available.
- 21.3. Boards of Trustees may wish to seek legal advice when responding to bullying incidents. This advice will depend on the specific circumstances involved. School Boards of Trustees can contact the New Zealand School Trustees Association (NZSTA) for advice on any legal matters (including working with insurance lawyers). NZSTA Helpdesk advisors can be contacted at: **0800 782435**.

*The standards which assist education providers in eliminating bullying are extensive, and practical steps to diminish bullying are well documented. To minimise the risk of expensive litigation and to meet legal and ethical obligations, the challenge is for schools to commit to school wide policies, and to 'walk the talk' in a consistent and steadfast way.*

Kazmierow and Walsh in citation to come

**Questions for Boards of Trustees, principals, senior leadership teams and teachers:**

- Do we know where to seek legal advice if needed?
- Do we have effective policies and processes in place and are we

**Links**

- New Zealand Post Primary Teachers Association  
<http://www.ppta.org.nz/index.php/collective-agreements/health-a-safety/1031-violence-bullying>
- New Zealand School Trustees' Association  
<http://www.nzsta.org.nz/nzsta-services/sta-helpdesk/>

## SECTION FOUR: RESPONDING TO BULLYING INCIDENTS

**All instances of bullying need to be taken seriously and responded to appropriately.**

Some bullying may reach the level of serious assault or child abuse. Schools should not investigate such incidents themselves and **must** refer these to the New Zealand Police and/or Child, Youth and Family for follow-up (see Quick Reference Guide).

### 22. Responding to minor, moderate, major and severe bullying behaviour

- 22.1. Bullying incidents vary widely in their severity, impact on the target, and frequency. Most bullying behaviour is hidden from adults' view, and as such all allegations need to be taken seriously and investigated thoroughly. This means getting an understanding of exactly what happened, considering it in relation to the definition of bullying and then implementing the school's bullying policies and processes. The disposition that a school or teacher brings to responding to bullying behaviour is critical – policies and processes alone are not enough.
- 22.2. Most minor incidents of bullying behaviour can be responded to effectively by students (targets and bystanders) themselves, or with minimal support from teachers. However, more serious instances of bullying behaviour will require a proportionately greater response.
- 22.3. A quick reference guide is attached to help schools respond appropriately (see pp.50-51). The bullying assessment matrix (see pp. 52-54) is intended to help schools assess the severity and impact of a particular incident so they can respond appropriately

### 23. Involving other agencies and organisations

- 23.1. In some instances of bullying, schools may need to seek input from other agencies such as Child, Youth and Family (CYF) or the New Zealand Police. The New Zealand School Trustees Association (NZSTA) has a memorandum of understanding with CYF called Breaking the Cycle (see *Links*).
- 23.2. If schools are unsure whether a bullying incident requires further investigation by these agencies they should seek advice from their School Community Officer (Police) or call the CYF Ed Assist line for schools 0508 332 774 (or email [edassist@cyf.govt](mailto:edassist@cyf.govt)).
- 23.3. **In case of emergency schools should call 111 for advice. All staff should be aware of these processes and when it is appropriate to liaise or make a referral to Child, Youth and Family or the NZ Police (see p.51).**
- 23.4. The two key considerations when deciding whether CYF should be involved are the impact on the child and parents' ability to provide support. Schools should notify CYF if they believe a child or young person may be:

- unsafe or in danger of harm
- suffering from ill-treatment, abuse or neglect.

Signs to look for in children and young people include:

- regular unexplained absences or are not engaged in school
- poor social skills (withdrawn, bullying or being bullied, relationship difficulties)
- behaviour is affecting their learning and/or the learning of others
- uncharacteristic changes in their achievement or behaviour.

Possible indications that families may need support are:

- parents seem stressed or not coping
- signs of drug or alcohol problems
- family violence
- mental health issues that are affecting the care of children
- families and whānau who are isolated and don't have support networks.

#### **Children, Young Persons, and their Families Act 1989**

The definition of a child or young person in need of care or protection according to section 14 of the Children, Young Persons, and their Families Act 1989 as it would relate to bullying is:

- (a) A child or young person is being, or is likely to be, harmed (whether physically or emotionally or sexually), ill-treated, abused ...
- (b) the child's or young person's development or physical or mental or emotional well-being is being, or is likely to be, impaired or neglected, and that impairment or neglect is, or is likely to be, serious and avoidable ...
- (d) the child or young person has behaved, or is behaving, in a manner that:
  - (i) is, or is likely to be, harmful to the physical or mental or emotional well-being of the child or young person or to others; and
  - (ii) the child's or young person's parents or guardians, or the persons having the care of the child or young person, are unable or unwilling to control.

- 23.5. The New Zealand Police operates with a Prevention First strategy and employs School Community Officers who facilitate prevention-based interventions and services in collaboration with whole school communities.

#### **Questions for Boards of Trustees, principals, senior leadership teams and teachers:**

- Do we have good links with our School Community Officer and is he/she aware of our policies and processes around bullying?

### Links

- New Zealand Police Prevention First Strategy  
<http://www.police.govt.nz/about/strategy>
- Breaking the Cycle, see 5-1 to 5-5 of :  
[http://www.nzfvc.org.nz/sites/nzfvc.org.nz/files/btc-abuse-management\\_0.pdf](http://www.nzfvc.org.nz/sites/nzfvc.org.nz/files/btc-abuse-management_0.pdf)

## 24. Cyberbullying incidents

- 24.1. In general, schools' bullying policy and procedures should apply equally to cyberbullying, given that cyberbullying is just one form of bullying. Policies and procedures should make specific mention of cyberbullying and set out clear prevention and response strategies (eg promoting digital citizenship and responding to cyberbullying that is having an impact on students). Bullying prevention programmes often include specific strategies for preventing and responding to cyberbullying given its particular characteristics. However, there can be considerable overlap between bullying that occurs in the physical environment and bullying that occurs via digital technology.
- 24.2. From a prevention perspective, teachers can promote good digital citizenship by:
- promoting safe and responsible use of technology in the classroom
  - developing 'class contracts' with students that includes appropriate behaviour online and on cell phones, including outside of school time
  - ensuring all students understand the schools' ICT Use Agreements
  - making sure parents and whānau are informed about cyberbullying.
- 24.3. The Surrender and Retention of Property and Searches Guidelines for schools are currently being updated in light of new legislation which will come into force in January 2014. Under the new legislation, teachers will be able to request students to surrender an item (including an electronic item such as a text, photo, or phone) if they believe that item is likely to:
- endanger the physical or mental safety of others, or
  - detrimentally affect the learning environment.

Teachers will be able to retain these items and return them to students when reasonably practicable. If a student refuses to surrender the item, the school's usual behaviour management and disciplinary policies will apply. **School staff will not be able to search a student under any circumstances.** However, some specified items of outer clothing and bags may be required to be surrendered and then searched. More details about this will be provided in the guidelines for schools.

If schools wish to have online material removed they can take the following steps in the first instance:

- identify the person responsible and ask them to take down the material

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- request a provider (eg Facebook) to remove the page using their 'reporting' options
- seek advice from NetSafe.<sup>6</sup>

For more detailed information for schools and parents, please see the Cyberbullying Frequently Asked Questions.

### Links

NetSafe queries and advice:

- Phone: 0508 NETSAFE (638 723)
- Email: [queries@NetSafe.org.nz](mailto:queries@NetSafe.org.nz)

NetSafe resources for schools:

- At a Distance video and a guide for teachers and principals.  
<http://www.cyberbullying.org.nz/teachers/>
- NetSafe Kit for Schools: Digital Citizenship Policy; Staff Responsible Use Agreement; Student Responsible Use Agreement  
<http://www.netsafe.org.nz/the-kit/policy-and-use-agreements>

## 25. Stand-downs, suspensions, exclusions and expulsions

- 25.1. Students who experience stand-downs, suspensions, exclusions and expulsion from school are more likely to experience negative longer-term educational and health outcomes.
- 25.2. Therefore it is important to use these options carefully and to balance the safety of those who are the targets of bullying behaviour with the need to support all young people to develop the skills needed to have healthy social relationships.
- 25.3. It is also critical to respect the educational and health (including mental health) outcomes of both the targets and initiators of bullying behaviour when considering imposing stand-downs, suspensions, exclusion and expulsions.
- 25.4. In cases where stand-downs and exclusion processes need to be used these should always be part of a more comprehensive response. Detailed information on stand-downs, suspensions, exclusions and expulsions is available from the Ministry of Education website (see Links below).

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<sup>6</sup> We are continuing to develop advice for schools on a wider range of issues around cyberbullying and will update the guide as this work progresses.

### Parents, family, whānau and community

- Parents, family and whānau need to be part of developing wider supports for their child if they are initiating bullying behaviour.

### Questions for Boards of Trustees, principals, senior leadership teams and teachers:

- Do we have processes in place to ensure initiators of bullying behaviour also receive the support they need?
- Where we do use disciplinary procedures are these part of a more comprehensive response?

### Links

- Ministry of Education guidance on stand-downs, suspensions, exclusions and expulsions  
<http://www.minedu.govt.nz/NZEducation/EducationPolicies/Schools/StanddownsSuspensionsExclusionsExpulsions.aspx>
- Office of the Ombudsman  
<http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz/resources-and-publications/documents/good-complaints-handling-by-school-boards-of-trustees>
- Human Rights Commission  
<http://www.hrc.co.nz/enquiries-and-complaints-guide/what-happens>
- Education Review Office  
<http://www.ero.govt.nz/Review-Process/For-Schools-and-Kura-Kaupapa-Maori/Review-Documentation-for-Schools>

## 26. Interacting with the media

- 26.1. There may be significant media interest following a serious bullying incident. It is essential that schools anticipate this and have guidelines in place for liaising with the media.

*I'm a principal of a school... so I'm accountable to my community. Being accountable is being available ... to consult and to listen. And the media in a sense reflect the wider community. It's a matter of actually working alongside them.*

*When you are dealing with the media, you say: 'Yes, we can work with you, but here's how we would like to do it'. You give them, but you also tell them there has to be ...a boundary around it. The staff knew that I was the only one speaking to the media, and they deferred all media comment to me.*

New Zealand Education Gazette 25 February, 2013

- 26.2. As a quick guide, schools should take the following steps following a bullying incident (for more detailed information see *Links*):
- appoint one media spokesperson to field enquiries, usually the principal or chair of the Board of Trustees (and a back-up person)
  - develop and agree 3-5 key messages based on what people will want to know and questions you expect to be asked
  - establish a process for when the media contact the school. For example, when a call is received it is referred to the principal who contacts the Board of Trustees chair before responding to the caller
  - ensure the school community (staff, students, parents and whānau) are kept as informed as the media
  - if asked for an interview, ask what the topic is, and what the nature of the questions will be. Establish the key points you want to make before the interview.
  - consider accessing media training for people (eg principals or Board chairs who are likely to liaise with the media).
- 26.3. The appointed media spokesperson should:
- give the facts – be accurate, clear and truthful
  - repeat the key messages when speaking to the media
  - if you don't know, say so
  - if information can't be shared, say why not
  - be clear (seek advice if necessary) about your rights and responsibilities in protecting the privacy of children.

Questions for Boards of Trustees

- *Do we have clear media guidelines in place for our school?*
- *Have we considered the feasibility of having at least one person who has received media training?*
- *Have we identified who our media spokesperson would be?*

Questions for principals and staff

- *Does everyone know and understand our school's media guidelines?*
- *Do staff know what to do if approached by the media?*

Questions following an incident:

- *Has our school community (staff, parents, students) been briefed?*
- *Does everyone know who to refer media enquiries to?*
- *Have clear statements been prepared?*

**Links**

- New Zealand School Trustees Association helpdesk  
*Phone: 0800 782435*  
<http://www.nzsta.org.nz/nzsta-services/sta-helpdesk/>

Ministry of Education

- *Managing Emergencies and Traumatic Incidents – the Guide* p.23 and pp.31-33 for media-related tools and resources  
<http://www.minedu.govt.nz/~media/MinEdu/Files/EducationSectors/PriarySecondary/EmergencyManagement/TheGuideSm.pdf>  
<http://www.minedu.govt.nz/~media/MinEdu/Files/EducationSectors/PriarySecondary/EmergencyManagement/TheResourcesNT.pdf>

## APPENDICES

### 1. Sample outline of safe school, bullying prevention and response policy and procedures

#### **Our safe school bullying prevention and response policy and procedures:**

Section One (policy): Our school's expectations, the principles underlying this policy and our school's agreed definition of bullying behaviour.

Section Two (policy): Our school's bullying prevention activities:

*For example:*

- surveys and self-review across the components of a whole-school approach (eg, Wellbeing@School)
- action plan based on gaps and issues identified as part of self-review
- professional learning and development
- teaching and learning programmes, student-led initiatives, parent/whānau involvement, collaborative community providers.

Section Three (procedure): What we will do when bullying behaviour occurs:

*For example:*

- responding to the incident (how do we identify and address incidents of different severity? What do we do if the behaviour occurs outside of school?)
- getting support and advice
- working with the targets of bullying behaviour
- working with the bystanders of bullying behaviour
- working with the initiators of bullying behaviour
- escalating incidents to senior management and other agencies
- review and/or institute specific prevention activities

Section Four (procedure): What we will do to keep everyone informed:

*For example:*

- regular communications to the wider school community

Section Five (policy): How we will know how well this policy is working:

*For example:*

- gather data and review (eg, Wellbeing@School)

2. Sample policy: Secondary Principal's Association of New Zealand (SPANZ)

[intro para to be added and possibly primary school sample policy]

## BULLYING PREVENTION AND RESPONSE POLICY

### Rationale

The \_\_\_\_\_ Board seeks to develop high standards of behaviour in order to fulfil the charter expectation and the requirements of NAG5 of developing a safe, physical, emotional, caring and inclusive environment so that effective teaching and learning can take place.

As part of the National Administration Guidelines requirements it is recommended that schools have a bullying prevention policy in place. It is about having a whole school approach in place that includes staff, students, school management, BOT, parents and whānau.

### Policy

All bullying behaviour, including verbal, physical, emotional and cyber bullying is completely unacceptable in our School. All instances of bullying (alleged or observed) will be taken seriously and followed up in line with this policy.

The School is committed to ensuring that all staff and students are able to work and learn in an environment free from harassment so that they are able to meet their potential.

### Definition

Bullying covers a range of behaviour which is unwelcome, unsolicited and non-reciprocal.

- Non-sexual harassment may take many forms including: intimidation or bullying of individuals or groups verbally and/or
- Physically, including threats of harassment or discrimination against others on the basis of their race, colour, culture or religious/spiritual beliefs, discrimination against others on the basis of gender or sexual orientation, indirect harassment such as spreading rumours, harmful gossip, exclusion or deliberate rudeness that is intended to harm, ridicule, diminish or marginalize others.
- Inappropriate use of emails, mobile phones or social media.
- The creation of pages or websites that encourage or facilitate any form of harassment.
- Sharing images of others (manipulated or not manipulated) without explicit consent.

### Education, Publicity and Prevention [Rf: MOE Guidelines; Wellbeing@school]

A whole-school approach is required to ensure a safe school environment. The approach is to be long-term and sustainable.

All members of the school have a responsibility to recognise bullying and to take action when they are aware it is happening.

The School's philosophy about harassment and the range of remedies available will be made explicit to students, staff and parents in the following ways:

#### Students, through:

- the Health programme
- special guidance programmes such as Anti-Bullying through Assemblies

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- clear and explicit standards set by teachers in their individual classrooms
- Homeroom Activities
- Awareness of digital citizenship and acceptable use of ICT Policy that they are required to sign prior to use.
- Peer Support, Prefects and other student lead groups.
- Through these programs students will be encouraged to report harassment / bullying that occurs inside or outside the school (when it impacts on safety and learning in the school)  
They will be given clear options as to who they can approach including staff, senior students and parents.
- Observers of harassment will be encouraged to report incidents

### **Staff, through:**

- using good data systems to collect relevant information
- staff training [Rf: PB4L; Wellbeing@school]
- dealing with students with Special Needs
- professional development
- a staff meeting will be held annually to discuss the issue and to review strategies and remedial approaches.
- monitoring the adherence to the 'Use of ICT Policy'

### **Parents/Caregivers, through:**

- school communication eg, Newsletter, Website, Facebook page
- parent meetings
- parent courses.

### **Board of Trustees, through**

- meetings and associated reading, staff contact
- professional development/training
- results of student and parent / caregivers surveys
- ERO Audit check on Health and Safety.

Responsibility for education and training will be borne by:

- the Senior Leadership Team and the student Pastoral Care and Guidance Team who will evaluate and continually review the operation of this policy, reporting to the Principal and Board as required
- the Physical Education / Health Department which will coordinate teaching about harassment with the aim of increasing understanding and awareness of the issue and the procedures for dealing with it.
- the Staff Professional Development program, which will include training and information about the effects of harassment and the many ways of dealing with it.
- Annual Surveys will be carried out in relation to student safety.

## **RESPONSE**

All staff should treat any report of bullying, including cyberbullying, seriously and take appropriate action as outlined in this policy.

All personal assault / harassment / bullying complaints, including those involving digital technology, will be dealt with speedily, fairly and in confidence, as much as is appropriate.

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It is imperative that every effort is made to ensure that confidentiality be maintained for all parties during and after the investigation.

It is important to “label” what the student has done, rather than labelling the student.

If the matter when first reported is “low level” harassment the target and initiator are to be interviewed by the Dean separately. Written notes are to be taken. The target is to be encouraged to report any further incidents and the initiator is to be warned that if it does not stop, it will be reported and more serious action will be taken. Restorative Justice may be an option at this time.

### **Note 1:**

#### **If the Complaint is of a serious nature that threatens the Health and Safety of Others:**

On receiving the complaint the Dean, School Guidance Counsellor or Senior Leadership person will determine the seriousness of the harassment. If it is of a violent nature or an immediate safety issue (including emotional/psychological harm) the Principal is to be informed immediately and all key personnel who have been involved with the target and / or the student doing the harassing are to be called together. Where possible written evidence is to be produced.

At this meeting decisions are to be made in relation to:

- Contact with the student doing the bullying
- Negotiating a pathway forward through restorative processes, parent meeting and/or discipline procedures
- Contact with Parents of Initiator and Target
- Contact with Outside Agencies
- Contact with Police (School Community Officer)
- Stand down / Suspension or other disciplinary procedure
- Contacting the Board of Trustees.

Students breaching this policy while under the jurisdiction of the School will be dealt with in accordance with the school's discipline procedures and may be liable to stand-down, suspension, exclusion and/or expulsion in accordance with the Education Act and the Education (Stand-Down, Suspension, Exclusion and Expulsion) Rules 1999.

### **Outside School**

Students breaching this policy while **not** under the jurisdiction of the school but whose action impacts on safety and learning within the school may also be dealt with according to this policy. This, in particular but not exclusively, relates to cyberbullying which is located in the digital environment, rather than in a physical location.

### **Specific Responses:**

**Note: If the complaint is of a serious nature where health and safety is a potential issue refer to Note 1.**

When a staff member is approached by a student with a complaint of harassment by another student, she / he must first listen to the student or students, and make such enquiries as may be necessary to clarify exactly what has been happening.

The student(s) should be assured that they have acted correctly in reporting the bullying. They are to be given appropriate support.

The staff member should make a written summary of the information and pass it on to the Homeroom teacher, Dean, Counsellor or Senior Management Team member as appropriate.

The emphasis must be on changing the behaviour of the bullying student(s), while providing support for the student(s) whom has been harassed.

The staff member now dealing with the complaint is to attempt to give advice on how to deal with any repeat incidents that may happen again before the intimidation can be dealt with. (eg, Report any further incidents immediately).

**The Dean / SLT shall:**

- ascertain / confirm the details of the alleged harassment
- depending on the seriousness or the on-going nature of the complaint decide whether or not to inform the Principal [Rf. Note1] and/or outside agencies (CYFS; Police etc)
- advise the alleged initiator that s/he is the subject of a complaint
- in cases where the facts are clear and acknowledged, resolution may be achieved informally by discussion between the parties without the need for initiating disciplinary procedures. (Restorative Justice)
- notify the parents/caregivers of the complainant of the complaint
- notify the parents/caregivers of the alleged initiator of the complaint
- record the incident on the Student Management System
- arrange counselling of the complainant and/or alleged initiator if necessary
- where circumstances warrant options may include:
  - (i) transfer the complainant and/or alleged initiator to another class
  - (ii) allow the complainant to remain at home
  - (iii) Impose disciplinary procedures on the initiator
  - (iv) other appropriate action

Follow up should be discussed with the student. It is important that the staff member checks a week or so later with both the student and the person whom the information was sent.

**Other courses of action**

If "in School" remedies fail to address the reported concerns, the following courses of action are available to the complainant:

- seek to make a complaint through the Human Rights Commission
- a complaint to the Police.
- a referral to Netsafe (bearing in mind that the School can contact NetSafe for advice about cyberbullying at any time - not only following an incident).

### 3. Resources and information

#### Information for Boards of Trustees, Principals, senior leadership teams and teachers

##### **Ministry of Education**

- Information and resources on a range of topics for Boards of Trustees  
<http://www.minedu.govt.nz/Boards.aspx>
- Te Kete Ipurangi (TKI) – Positive Behaviour for Learning  
<http://pb4l.tki.org.nz/Deter-bullying>
- Managing bullying and promoting positive behaviour  
<http://www.minedu.govt.nz/NZEducation/EducationPolicies/SchoolEmployment/Employers/ManagingStaff/Bullying.aspx>
- Class disruption and bullying  
<http://www.minedu.govt.nz/NZEducation/EducationPolicies/SpecialEducation/PublicationsAndResources/ResourcesForEducators/AQuickGuideToExtraSupport/Behaviour/ClassDisruptionAndBullying.aspx>

##### **Education Review Office**

- NAG 5 self-audit checklist for Boards of Trustees  
<http://www.ero.govt.nz/Review-Process/For-Schools-and-Kura-Kaupapa-Maori/Review-Documentation-for-Schools>

##### **NetSafe**

- NetSafe kit – helps schools to address cybersafety and support digital citizenship, includes step-by-step guide to developing a cybersafety policy  
<http://www.netsafe.org.nz/the-netsafe-kit-for-schools/>
- At a Distance cyberbullying video and Let's Fight it Together video  
<http://www.cyberbullying.org.nz/>
- Information and advice on cyberbullying for teachers  
Phone: 0508 638723  
Email: [queries@netsafe.org.nz](mailto:queries@netsafe.org.nz)  
<http://www.cyberbullying.org.nz/teachers/>

##### **Ministry of Social Development**

- Te Punanga Haumarū - funding for community action that encourages prosocial behaviour and reduces bullying  
<http://www.familyservices.govt.nz/working-with-us/programmes-services/early-intervention/te-punanga-haumaru/index.html>

##### **New Zealand Council for Educational Research**

- What bullying is and is not (research brief)  
<http://www.wellbeingatschool.org.nz/sites/default/files/W@S-What-bullying-is-research-brief.pdf>
- Whole-school approach to change  
<http://www.wellbeingatschool.org.nz/sites/default/files/W@S-A-whole-school-approach-research-brief.pdf>
- Building a safe and caring school climate  
<http://www.wellbeingatschool.org.nz/sites/default/files/W@S-Building-a-safe-and-caring-climate-research-brief.pdf>

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- Addressing conflicts in ways that build social competence (research brief)  
<http://www.wellbeingatschool.org.nz/sites/default/files/W@S-Addressing-conflicts-building-competence-research-brief.pdf>

### **New Zealand School Trustees Association**

- Information on the Breaking the Cycle memorandum of understanding with CYF (Chapter 5)  
[http://www.nzfvc.org.nz/sites/nzfvc.org.nz/files/btc-abuse-management\\_0.pdf](http://www.nzfvc.org.nz/sites/nzfvc.org.nz/files/btc-abuse-management_0.pdf)
- Links to Kia Kaha material (note Stop Bullying 0800 number is no longer active)  
<http://www.nzsta.org.nz/board-responsibilities/health-and-safety/bullying/>

### **Wellington Community Law Centre**

- Schools and the right to discipline - Chapter 9: Bullying in schools  
<http://www.wclc.org.nz/wp-content/uploads/Schools-and-the-Right-to-Discipline-20111.pdf>

### **Post Primary Teachers' Association (PPTA)**

- School Anti-violence Toolkit – legal requirements, anti-violence policy guidelines  
Accessible via:  
<http://www.ppta.org.nz/index.php/collective-agreements/health-a-safety/1031-violence-bullying>
- PPTA: Safe Schools  
<http://ppta.org.nz/index.php/communities/glbti-teachers>
- PPTA: Change Management  
<http://ppta.org.nz/index.php/resources/publication-list/2460-change-management>

### **Office of the Ombudsman**

- Information about complaints process for Boards of Trustees  
[http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz/system/paperclip/document\\_files/document\\_files/533/original/good\\_complaints\\_handling\\_by\\_school\\_boards\\_of\\_trustees.pdf?1358988178](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz/system/paperclip/document_files/document_files/533/original/good_complaints_handling_by_school_boards_of_trustees.pdf?1358988178)

## **Information for parents and whānau**

### **Ministry of Education**

- Is my child a bully  
<http://www.minedu.govt.nz/Parents/AllAges/UsefulInformation/IsMyChildABully.aspx>
- Is my child being bullied  
<http://www.minedu.govt.nz/Parents/AllAges/UsefulInformation/IsMyChildBeingBullied.aspx>

### **NetSafe**

- Information and advice on cyberbullying for parents  
Phone: 0508 638723  
Email: [queries@netsafe.org.nz](mailto:queries@netsafe.org.nz)  
<http://www.cyberbullying.org.nz/parents/>

### **New Zealand Police**

- Youth education information for parents and link to information on Kia Kaha  
<https://www.police.govt.nz/new-zealand-police-youth-education-information-parents>

### **United Nations**

- Cyber School Bus (human rights)  
<http://cyberschoolbus.un.org/index.shtml>

## Information for students

### **Ministry of Education**

- Resource for students  
<http://www.minedu.govt.nz/~media/MinEdu/Files/Parents/Teens/StepUpSecondaryWebFINAL.pdf>

### **NetSafe**

- Information and advice on cyberbullying for young people  
*Phone: 0508 638723*  
*Email: [queries@netsafe.org.nz](mailto:queries@netsafe.org.nz)*  
<http://www.cyberbullying.org.nz/youngpeople/>

### **Youthline**

- Information, support and telephone counselling for young people  
*0800 376633 or free text 234*  
<http://www.youthline.co.nz/images/stories/Bullying%202011.pdf>  
<http://www.youthline.co.nz/>

### **YouthLaw**

- Information on bullying (note No Bully 0800 line referred to has been discontinued)  
*YouthLaw information line 0800 UTHLAW*  
<http://www.youthlaw.co.nz/information/school/bullying/>

### **Barnardos**

- 0800 9428787 telephone support*  
<http://www.whatsup.co.nz/>

## Programmes, strategies and tools

### **Positive Behavioural Interventions and Supports (PBIS)**

- Evidence-based tiered prevention approach known in New Zealand as *PB4L: School-Wide*  
[http://www.pbis.org/common/pbisresources/publications/PBIS\\_Bullying\\_Behavior\\_Apr19\\_2011.pdf](http://www.pbis.org/common/pbisresources/publications/PBIS_Bullying_Behavior_Apr19_2011.pdf)

### **New Zealand Council for Educational Research / Ministry of Education**

- Wellbeing@School self-review tools to support schools for creating a safe and caring school climate that deters bullying (*with New Zealand Council for Educational Research; NZCER*)  
<http://www.wellbeingatschool.org.nz/about-ws-tools>

### **New Zealand Police**

- Kia Kaha: Building a Safe, Happy Classroom for Years 0 – 3; A Bully-free Zone for Years 4 – 5; Safer Communities Together for Years 5 – 8; Our Place for Years 9 – 13
- Skill development for young people - *Confident Kids*  
<http://www.police.govt.nz/kia-kaha>

### **KiVa**

- [\[link to come\]](#)

## Key research and reports

### **Ministry of Education**

- Effective Pedagogy in Social Sciences / Tikanga ā iwi  
<http://www.educationcounts.gov.nz/publications/series/2515/32879/35263>

### **Education Review Office**

- Safe schools: Strategies to prevent bullying  
<http://www.ero.govt.nz/National-Reports/Safe-Schools-Strategies-to-Prevent-Bullying-May-2007>

### **New Zealand Council for Educational Research (NZCER)**

- Wellbeing@School: Building a safe and caring school climate that deters bullying (booklet)  
<http://www.wellbeingatschool.org.nz/sites/default/files/wellbeing-at-school-booklet.pdf>
- Wellbeing@School: Building a safe and caring school climate that deters bullying (overview)  
<http://www.wellbeingatschool.org.nz/sites/default/files/Wellbeing-at-School-overview-paper.pdf>

### **Human Rights Commission**

- School violence, bullying and abuse: A human rights analysis  
[http://www.hrc.co.nz/hrc\\_new/hrc/cms/files/documents/01-Sep-2009\\_14-08-40\\_Human\\_Rights\\_School\\_Violence\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.hrc.co.nz/hrc_new/hrc/cms/files/documents/01-Sep-2009_14-08-40_Human_Rights_School_Violence_FINAL.pdf)

### **Office of the Children's Commissioner**

- Responsive schools, Carroll-Lind (2010)  
<http://www.occ.org.nz/assets/Uploads/Reports/Education/Responsive-schools.pdf>
- School safety: An inquiry into the safety of students at school (2009)  
<http://www.occ.org.nz/assets/Uploads/Reports/Education/School-safety.pdf>

### **Further reading**

- Cushman, P. and Clelland, T. (2001). A health promoting schools approach to bullying. SET 3, pp17-25  
<http://www.nzcer.org.nz/nzcerpress/set/articles/health-promoting-schools-approach-bullying>
- Internet Safety Technical Task Force Report. Enhancing Child Safety and Online Technologies (2008)  
<http://cyber.law.harvard.edu/pubrelease/isttf/>

#### 4. Contacts

For specific information and advice:

- **New Zealand School Trustees Association**  
Helpdesk 0800 782435  
<http://www.nzsta.org.nz/>  
<http://www.nzsta.org.nz/nzsta-services/sta-helpdesk/>
- **Child, Youth and Family (Ministry of Social Development)**  
0508 326459 to report suspected abuse  
<http://www.cyf.govt.nz/keeping-kids-safe/index.html>
- **Ministry of Education**  
Regional and district offices  
<http://www.minedu.govt.nz/NZEducation/EducationPolicies/SpecialEducation/AboutUs/NationalAndLocalOffices.aspx>  
  
Traumatic incident team 0800 848 326  
<http://www.minedu.govt.nz/Boards/SupportForStudents/TraumaticIncidentManagement.aspx>
- **NZ Police**  
Contact your local police station and ask for the School Community Officer.  
<http://www.police.govt.nz/district/phonebook.html>  
In emergencies, dial 111 or your local police station
- **Human Rights Commission**  
Services and information  
<http://www.hrc.co.nz/enquiries-and-complaints-guide/faqs/bullying-harassment-and-or-violence-at-school>  
Infoline (enquiries and complaints): 0800 496877
- **Office of the Children's Commissioner**  
Advice – education; child, youth and family; legal; health; media  
<http://www.occ.org.nz/childrens-rights-and-advice/>

#### 5. Responding to serious bullying incidents – quick reference guide

## RESPONDING TO SERIOUS BULLYING INCIDENTS - QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE (DRAFT)

NOTE: Most incidents of bullying behaviour are minor and can be appropriately responded to by students themselves, or by classroom or duty teachers. This quick reference guide is intended to be used in conjunction with the Bullying Assessment Matrix and only for incidents that require a higher level of response. It focuses on actions schools may need to take **over and above** attending to the immediate needs of students and implementing their relevant policies and processes to respond to bullying incidents and ensure targets of bullying are adequately supported.

REVIEW CYCLE	RATING	WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE ...	RESPONSE / ACTION NEEDED	KEY MINISTRY OF EDUCATION (MOE) CONTACTS	OTHER KEY AGENCY CONTACTS
	Severe (school must seek external support)	<p><i>Bullying incidents are likely to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>involve moderate to serious physical and/or psychological harm</li> <li>involve sexual threats or inappropriate sexualised behaviour</li> <li>have a high likelihood of recurrence and/or of replication via digital technology</li> </ul> <p><i>The target is likely to be:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>vulnerable and require intensive, on-going and/or specialist support</li> </ul> <p><i>The initiator is likely to be:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>vulnerable and require intensive follow-up</li> </ul> <p><i>Note, there may be other aggravating factors that have led to an incident being rated RED.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reassure students that they have done the right thing by reporting an incident</li> <li>Activate school bullying policy procedures for responding to incidents – including engaging Board of Trustees, parents and whānau</li> <li>Refer incident to the Police – call 111 or your local Police station for advice</li> <li><b>DO NOT</b> investigate or interview students before seeking advice from the Police or Child, Youth and Family</li> <li>Contact Child, Youth and Family if you have concerns about possible neglect or abuse</li> <li>Contact NetSafe if you require urgent advice or support around cyberbullying</li> <li>Identify a media spokesperson and activate your school's media protocol</li> </ul>	<p><b>Group Manager, Regional Operations</b> Jill Bond DDI: <b>463 2839</b> Cell: <b>027 4950 282</b> Email: <b>jill.bond@minedu.govt.nz</b></p> <p><i>and, if necessary:</i></p> <p>Traumatic incident team: <b>0800 848 326</b> (24 hrs)</p>	<p><b>NZ Police</b> Call <b>111</b> or your local police station:  <i>(Insert number of your local police station. Info at: <a href="http://www.police.govt.nz/stations">http://www.police.govt.nz/stations</a>)</i></p> <p><b>Child, Youth and Family</b> Line for schools (Ed Assist) <b>0508 332 774</b> <b>edassist@cyf.govt.nz</b> Or general line: 0508 326 459 NZ Police will refer to CYF under the joint Child Protection Policy if a statutory social work response is needed.</p> <p><b>NetSafe</b> <b>0508 638 723</b> (office hours) queries@netsafe.org.nz</p>
	Major (school may seek external support if needed)	<p><i>Bullying incidents rated ORANGE are likely to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>involve little or minor physical harm</li> <li>may include some inappropriate sexual statements or threats</li> <li>have a low likelihood of recurrence or replication via digital technology</li> </ul> <p><i>The target is likely to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>have the resilience to cope with appropriate support in place</li> </ul> <p><i>Note: there may be other aggravating or mitigating factors that have led to an incident being assessed as ORANGE</i></p>	<p>Reassure students that they have done the right thing by reporting an incident</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Activate school bullying policy procedures for responding to incidents – including engaging Board of Trustees, parents and whānau</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Make contact with other agencies if uncertain whether or not their involvement is required.</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Follow media protocol, identify media spokesperson and engage with media as required</p>	<p>If unsure and wish to confirm need for involvement::</p> <p><b>District Manager:</b></p> <p>Region: _____</p> <p>District: _____</p> <p>District manager: _____</p> <p>Phone: _____</p> <p>(insert your region and name and number of your District Manager. Info at: <a href="http://www.minedu.govt.nz/NZEducation/EducationPolicies/SpecialEducation/AboutUs/NationalAndLocalOffices.aspx">http://www.minedu.govt.nz/NZEducation/EducationPolicies/SpecialEducation/AboutUs/NationalAndLocalOffices.aspx</a> )</p> <p>And, if required: Traumatic incident team: <b>0800 848 326</b> (24 hrs)</p>	<p>If unsure and wish to confirm need for involvement:</p> <p><b>NZ Police</b> Call your local police station:  <i>(Insert number of your local police station. Info at: <a href="http://www.police.govt.nz/stations">http://www.police.govt.nz/stations</a>)</i></p> <p><b>Social Workers and Youth Workers in Schools</b> Seek advice from your school's social worker or youth worker if applicable, or Child Matters <a href="http://www.childmatters.org.nz/">http://www.childmatters.org.nz/</a></p> <p><b>NETSAFE</b> <b>0508 638 723</b> (office hours) queries@netsafe.org.nz</p>
	Moderate (school can manage response internally)	<p><i>Bullying incidents rated YELLOW are likely to:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>have occurred never or only rarely before</li> <li>have caused no or only minor physical or psychological harm</li> <li>be very unlikely to recur or be digitally replicated</li> </ul> <p><i>The target is likely to be:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>resilient and not have particular vulnerabilities</li> </ul>	<p>Reassure students that they have done the right thing by reporting an incident</p> <p>↓</p> <p>Activate school bullying policy procedures for responding to incidents – including engaging, Board of Trustees and parents and whānau, and identifying a media spokesperson in case of media interest</p>	<p>Other key contacts in our community:</p> <p>Organisation/service: _____</p> <p>Name: _____</p> <p>Phone: _____</p> <p>Organisation/service: _____</p> <p>Name: _____</p> <p>Phone: _____</p>	

## 6. Responding to serious bullying incidents – bullying assessment matrix

### Bullying Assessment Matrix

The Bullying Assessment Matrix is intended to help guide a school's response to a bullying incident and to be used prior to use of the quick reference guide. It is intended as a supporting resource and *does not replace* decisions based on professional judgment and experience or schools' current policies and processes.

Most incidents of bullying behaviour can be appropriately responded to by students themselves, or by classroom or duty teachers. This bullying assessment matrix is intended only for incidents where a higher level of response is appropriate.

#### INCIDENT DETAILS

Brief description of what happened:

Date:

Assessment completed by:

#### IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

- *your initial assessment may change (eg ORANGE to RED) as new information comes to light*
- *you may decide to assess an incident as RED for reasons **other** than those stated here. Please note these below if this is the case*
- *student vulnerability may be influenced by factors such as mental health, disability, or lack of a social support group*

#### COMMENTS

*(record any other mitigating or aggravating factors that have contributed to your assessment here)*

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**INSTRUCTIONS**

Circle a number (1-3 for severity, impact and frequency. Add ratings to obtain a total score. Give the incident a red, orange or yellow rating as follows:

- total score of 8-9, rate incident **RED**
- total score of 6-7, rate incident **ORANGE**
- total score 3-5, rate incident **YELLOW**

However, if any one domain (severity, impact, or frequency) has been scored a '3' rate the incident as **RED**.

**FACTORS WHICH MAY DECREASE IMPACT:**

- target is resilient and able to manage situation with minimal support
- incident is unlikely to recur or be replicated via digital technology
- initiator willing to cease behaviour

**FACTORS WHICH MAY INCREASE IMPACT:**

- vulnerable target, likely to require significant support
- significant physical and/or psychological or emotional impact on target
- significant impact on other students and the wider school community
- incident replicated or prolonged using digital technology
- similar incident has occurred before (same target and/or initiator)
- incident involves inappropriate sexual behaviour or physical violence
- marked size or age difference between target and initiator

**SEVERITY**

<p><i>1. moderate</i> Eg. minor physical threats or harm, intimidation, social exclusions (no sexual element)</p>	<p><i>2. major</i> Eg. moderate physical threats or harm, serious intimidation, sexual statements or threats</p>	<p><i>3. severe</i> physical harm requiring medical attention; serious sexual threats or any inappropriate sexualised behaviour</p>
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**IMPACT**

<p><i>1. moderate</i> target likely to cope well and require minimal/short-term support</p>	<p><i>2. major</i> target likely to cope well with a period of additional school-based support</p>	<p><i>3. severe</i> target vulnerable and/or likely to need on-going or intensive support from school and/or specialist support</p>
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**FREQUENCY**

<p><i>1. moderate</i> has <i>never or rarely</i> occurred before and is <i>very unlikely</i> to recur or be digitally replicated</p>	<p><i>2. major</i> similar incidents have occurred <i>fewer than 3 times</i> and/or are <i>likely</i> to recur or be digitally replicated</p>	<p><i>3. severe</i> similar incidents have occurred <i>3 or more times</i> and/or are <i>very likely</i> to recur or be digitally replicated</p>
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**ASSESSMENT TOTAL:** \_\_\_\_\_

Is the severity score 3? YES / NO

(if yes, code the incident RED)

**RATING** (please circle)

**YELLOW**   **ORANGE**   **RED**  
minor   moderate   major

Examples:

**An example of an incident that could be assessed as moderate (yellow) might be:**

A student (the initiator) makes inappropriate and derogatory remarks to another student (target) based on his/her ethnicity. One or two similar incidents involving the same students have occurred over the past few weeks and this may also be taking place via Facebook. The target student is confident and assertive. He/she has told the initiator that his/her behaviour is disrespectful and inappropriate and has reported all the incidents to his/her class teacher.

Frequency	2	has happened previously and is likely to be replicated
Impact	1	student is confident and able to cope well with peer/teacher support
Severity	1	comments, although offensive, do not contain threats
Total	4	Moderate: Action - implement school bullying policy

**An example of an incident that could be assessed as major (orange) might be:**

A student (the initiator) makes inappropriate remarks to another student (target) based on his/her ethnicity. One or two similar incidents involving the same students have occurred over the past few weeks and may also be taking place via Facebook. The student is a new migrant and is new to the community and to the school. He/she has not yet developed a strong peer network and is quite isolated. The remarks were particularly nasty and intimidating and the student is feeling threatened and unsafe at school.

Frequency	2	has happened on a few occasions and is likely to be replicated
Impact	3	student is vulnerable
Severity	1	comments are intended to intimidate
Total	6	Major: Action - implement school bullying policy and consider whether external support may be required.

**An example of an incident that would be assessed as severe (red) might be:**

A student (the initiator) makes inappropriate remarks to another student (target) based on his/her ethnicity and pushed him/her to the ground while continuing to threaten and verbally abuse him/her. Several similar incidents involving the same students have occurred over the past few weeks and the student is also being targeted via text and Facebook. As a result of the fear of further bullying, the student's (target) school attendance has dropped and he/she feels very unsafe when at school.

Frequency	3	has happened on several occasions and is being replicated online
Impact	2	student is fearful of further bullying and attendance is being affected
Severity	2	comments intimidating and combined with physical aggression
Total	7	Severe. Action - implement school bullying policy and engage external support as required.

*Note: These examples are intended **only as a guide**. Individual circumstances around incidents of bullying will vary and incidents that appear similar may differ in their impact and seriousness. For example, social/relational bullying may result in just as much emotional and psychological harm to the target as can physical bullying.*

## 7. Cyberbullying – Frequently Asked Questions

*[Note. This section is an initial draft and is under development]*

### **Preventing cyberbullying**

*Parents, whānau and students*

**Q 1. How can parents and whānau help keep their children safe on the internet?**

Children and young people will inevitably face challenges on the internet. Another way to think about safety is for parents, families and whānau to consider how they can support their young people to manage challenges, minimise harm to themselves and others, and ensure they are successful and confident internet users.

Parents can support their child by helping them be responsible digital citizens; for example, being supportive of others and not posting comments that they would not be prepared to say face-to-face. Depending on the age of their child, parents can reduce challenges their children face online by teaching them never to share personal information or passwords with anyone, talking to them about their online life, and monitoring their internet usage. See NetSafe's dedicated cyberbullying website at: <http://www.cyberbullying.org.nz/>.

**Q 2. How can students protect themselves from cyberbullying?**

Students will inevitably face challenges on the internet. Students can take steps to reduce their exposure to risk and minimise harm, so as to maximize the fun and opportunity that the internet provides. Students should be supported to develop strategies to build resilience and be knowledgeable users of the internet. Knowing when and how to react to challenges on the internet will reduce the number and seriousness of any incidents that do occur. Students often have developed their own coping strategies and will deal with most things without needing additional support or guidance.

Parents, families and whānau can support students by encouraging them to activate the privacy settings on social networking sites – so they only let people they know and trust view their profile. Students should also be encouraged to turn their mobile devices off when they go to bed to avoid bullying messages coming in late at night and disturbing their sleep. If a student is concerned or upset about content about them or another student online, they should send the person a private message or tell them face-to-face that they consider the content is not ok.

*Schools*

**Q 3. What is the best way to create a safety culture in a schools including cyberbullying?**

Strategies to reduce all types of bullying are most effective when they are part of a whole-school focus on creating a positive climate that is inclusive and supports students' learning. Whole-school interventions establish positive social values that are important to the school community.

Enhancing mutual respect, promoting understanding rights and responsibilities, and fostering a school culture of inclusion that values diversity, are crucial aspects of safe schools. Schools can use a self-review process, such as *Wellbeing@School*, to help

create a safe and caring climate that deters bullying. Support provided by a NZ Police School Community Officer includes interventions that incorporate an explicit whole school approach.

Q 4. *Are policies available for schools to use?*

Schools need to develop policies in association with staff, students, parents and whānau, and their community specific to the needs of their school. Schools' cyberbullying policies should be incorporated into their overall bullying policy. NetSafe has a *Kit for Schools* available at: <http://www.netsafe.org.nz/the-kit/>.

Q 5. *How can a school block a website? How do we manage permissions effectively?*

However, no software will be one hundred percent effective in preventing access to material available on the internet and blocking websites is just one option. There will always be weaknesses in systems and users may actively try to circumvent the software. Students can access websites from elsewhere while at school, such as their mobile phone. Blocking websites can drive the use of them underground; students will still find ways of accessing them. Another approach is for schools to help students understand and be aware of how to deal with unwanted or inappropriate websites.

Programmes are available to block certain websites and these can be loaded onto your school's computers. Filters are also available from the Ministry of Education to filter content (eg, access to certain websites), as well as emails and spam: <http://www.minedu.govt.nz/NZEducation/EducationPolicies/Schools/Initiatives/ICTInSchools/ICTInitiativesAndProgrammes/ManagedInternetServicesSolutionsForSchools.aspx>. Schools could also consider recommending blocking software to the school parent community in newsletters and facilitate the purchase of specific packages.

Q 6. *Where can we find anti-cyberbullying and internet safety programmes?*

See NetSafe's website for a variety of programmes for different ages, available at: <http://www.netsafe.org.nz/>

Q 7. *What is a reasonable amount of time for schools to spend on cyberbullying education?*

The amount of time spent will depend of the needs of the school and students and the capabilities of staff and students. Digital citizenship and technology capability can be built into all areas of the curriculum and whole school activities. Everyone in the school should be responsible for digital citizenship. NetSafe has a Learn, Guide, Protect site that supports schools in creating a culture of responsible, safe use of digital technologies: <http://www.mylgp.org.nz/>. NetSafe has also produced a document on digital citizenship in schools: [http://www.netsafe.org.nz/Doc\\_Library/Digital\\_Citizenship\\_in\\_New\\_Zealand\\_Schools\\_Overview.pdf](http://www.netsafe.org.nz/Doc_Library/Digital_Citizenship_in_New_Zealand_Schools_Overview.pdf)

Q 8. *How can we stop students from wasting time on social networking sites?*

Social networking plays an important role in the lives of young people. Students should be encouraged to use social networking sites responsibly and schools should have policies about the use of mobile devices during class time or at school.

Q 9. *How can schools cooperate to deal with inter-school bullying?*

Principals can use their existing networks to work with other schools and agree on appropriate responses to bullying, including cyberbullying.

Q 10. *Can a principal inform parents of websites that students should avoid?*

This is up to individual schools to determine if this is appropriate. Principals may wish to inform parents via the school newsletter if the school is having issues arising from a particular website. However, this could just encourage students to visit these sites.

### **Responding to cyberbullying**

*Parents, whānau and students*

Q 11. *What should a parent do if they discover their child is being cyberbullied?*

Online and offline bullying or harassing behaviours are closely linked, with international research showing that those who are bullied offline are 15 times more likely to experience online bullying. Parents should inform their child's school if they become aware their child is being cyberbullied, as they could be being bullied at school as well.

If parents discover their child is being bullied, they should take their child's concerns seriously and reassure them that it's not their fault. Parents can report internet cyberbullying to the website where the bullying took place - usually there is a "Report Abuse" button or "Safety" link as well as a "Block sender/user" link. If the abuse is via text message, contact the phone company and ask them to take action. Parents should talk to their child's school if it appears that the bullying comes from another student at their child's school or if it is affecting their child at school.

Q 12. *What blocking strategies can be made available to the bullied student?*

Children and young people will inevitably face challenges on the internet and will resolve the majority of them by themselves. Teaching students coping strategies and digital citizenship is the best way to minimise exposure to challenges online.

Students can usually report abuse directly to the website concerned, or to their mobile phone company. Many social networking sites such as Facebook have a 'block' or 'report' function where they can enter the user names of people bothering them or people who they want to avoid. Mobile phone companies can also block the number of a person who is sending abusive or threatening messages or phone calls.

Alternatively, students can shut down their own social media page. Young people can find advice and guidance on NetSafe's page:

<http://www.cyberbullying.org.nz/youngpeople/>

Q 13. *Where can immediate help/advice be sought re cyberbullying?*

NetSafe is an organisation that promotes cybersafety and champions digital citizenship by educating advising and supporting individuals, organisations and industry on a range of issues. NetSafe has a toll-free number for queries and advice: 0508 NETSAFE (638723). This number is not 24 hours, but someone from Netsafe will call back as soon as possible if a call is made after hours. Netsafe also has an email address for queries: [queries@netsafe.org.nz](mailto:queries@netsafe.org.nz)

Q 14. *What support exists to help students who are being bullied via mobile phone?*

Inappropriate or abusive text messages should be reported to the student's phone company. Phone companies have an agreement to liaise with each other and take action if appropriate such as blocking or disabling the account where the texts or calls

are originating. Young people can find advice and guidance on NetSafe's page: <http://www.cyberbullying.org.nz/youngpeople/>

Q 15. *How do I recover/take down inappropriate pictures of my children?*

Sharing inappropriate pictures online is the least common form of cyberbullying. Parents and whānau can minimise harm from the sharing of inappropriate pictures by advising their children against posting or sharing any images they do not want disseminated, including via email, pxt and text.

The 'Orb' website has been developed to offer a simple and secure way to report concerns about online incidents: <http://www.theorb.org.nz/>. Reports made to this website will be directed to the organisation best able to investigate or advise on various types of online incidents, including objectionable material and privacy breaches.

### Schools

Q 16. *What can schools do in response to students being bullied on Facebook? What jurisdiction do they have?*

Schools can support the affected student to help them build coping strategies and resilience to prevent the bullying reoccurring; this applies to bullying occurring via any social media. Schools may also choose to approach the owner of the bullying material (for example, the owner of the Facebook page) and ask them to remove it. Schools can seek advice from NetSafe on 0508 NETSAFE.

Q 17. *What can a school do if a student sends an inappropriate photo of themselves to another student who then circulates it amongst his/her friends?*

Schools should ensure the student is supported and deal with an issue such as this through their behaviour/bullying policy. Schools can also call NetSafe for advice on 0508 NETSAFE. Students should be discouraged from sharing inappropriate images of themselves, and should be warned of the dangers if they choose to do so.

Q 19. *What is the process for closing down sites that contain offensive material? How can the offensive material be removed?*

The best and most effective response to the discovery of offensive material on a website is to ask the person who put it there to remove it. Many websites are based overseas, so it's not generally possible or reasonable to get them shut down.

Cyberbullying and abuse can be reported to the website where the bullying took place – usually there is a "Report Abuse" button or "Safety" link. If a social networking page, for example a Facebook page, is offensive or abusive and the page owner refuses to remove it after being approached, this can be reported to the website and may be taken down by the website owner if it breaches the terms and conditions of the site.

Q 20. *Can a school apply disciplinary consequences for comments/images about other students or staff, posted online?*

Schools' bullying and behaviour policies should determine the steps schools take to discipline a student who is cyberbullying. School policies should declare an intention to deal with cyberbullying by making it clear that the school will take steps to respond to cyberbullying behaviour.

Q 21. *Where do schools' responsibilities for cyberbullying and bullying that occurs out of school hours/off school premises begin and end?*

Schools that take a whole-school approach to bullying that encompasses the school community will respond to all bullying behaviour students report – whether this takes place in or out of school.

Q 22. *What is the legal risk around a school taking action or not taking action to respond to bullying they know about?*

Schools are required to provide a safe physical and emotional environment for students. Schools should respond to reports of bullying including cyberbullying by following their bullying policies and procedures. Schools should keep parents informed if their child is bullying or has been bullied.

Q 23. *What role does the NZ Police have and when should schools refer cyberbullying to the NZ Police?*

The New Zealand Police provides both a prevention service (School Community Officer) and a response service for schools. Cyberbullying may be related to a range of criminal and/or civil offences.

If a school or parent believes an offence may have been committed, they should contact the local Police station and provide the Police with as much evidence as possible – save offending text messages and take screen shots of any abuse online or call 111 depending on the seriousness of the incident.

Q 25. *What role are telecommunication companies playing in helping to create a solution to cyber-bullying?*

Many of the telecommunications companies, including Telecom, Vodafone and 2 Degrees, have created cyberbullying resources; these can all be found online:

- <http://www.2degreesmobile.co.nz/bullying>
- <http://www.vodafone.co.nz/help/mobile-safety/advice-for-parents/>
- [http://www.vodafone.com/content/index/parents/get\\_involved/cyberbullying.html](http://www.vodafone.com/content/index/parents/get_involved/cyberbullying.html)
- <http://help.telecom.co.nz/ci/fattach/get/5872515/0/filename/KidsSafe.pdf>

These three companies also have agreements with each other to work together to stop bullying by warning, barring or even deactivating a customer who is bullying another person.