Bias based bullying

Bullying can often be based on bias. This may include bias about socioeconomic status, cultural and linguistic diversity, religion, gender, sexuality, disability, ability or personal characteristics, among other factors.

Who is affected?

Anyone can become the subject of bullying that is based on bias. Bias based bullying needs to be recognised as learned social behaviour that is detrimental to everyone.

School communities need to work together to challenge any bias and to maintain positive, inclusive climates of respectful relationships where diversity is valued and bullying is less likely to occur.

Bullying: Preventing and Responding to Student Bullying Policy

The 2011 Bullying: Preventing and Responding to Student Bullying Policy requires schools to work with their school communities to develop and implement an Anti-bullying Plan which includes protection, prevention, early intervention and response strategies for student bullying.

The school’s Anti-bullying Plan

In the process of developing, implementing, evaluating and reviewing their Anti-bullying Plan schools should identify any issues with bias within the school community.

Schools should include protection, prevention, early intervention and response strategies to address any identified bias in their Anti-bullying Plan.

In this way the whole school community will be working together towards preventing biased based bullying from happening.

Responding to bias based bullying.

When biased based bullying does occur it should be dealt with according to the school’s Anti-bullying Plan.

The school executive, Learning Support Team or Student Welfare Team will decide on the appropriate combination of interventions for the individual circumstances of bullying behaviour.

It is often useful to consult with the affected students about how they wish the situation to be managed. However, the school has the responsibility to manage the situation and to ensure that it is resolved.

It is important, however, that the bias is recognised, named and challenged.

Those involved in responding to incidents of biased based bullying should state that the behaviour is, for example, based on racism, sexism or homophobia and discuss why the behaviour is offensive.

The message that the school community finds bias based bullying unacceptable should be consistently reinforced.

More information

Bullying. No way! website

Bullying: Preventing and Responding to Student Bullying in Schools Policy

National Safe Schools Framework -2011 (includes implementation and resource pack)