Leigh Creek Area School bullying prevention and response policy

Last updated: 20 October 2026

Our values

We aim to show respect, responsibility and resilience in how we learn, work together and support one another.

Scope

The purpose of this policy is to:

- support the safe participation of students in our school community
- describe our approach to preventing and responding to student bullying
- support staff to recognise that bullying can be a range of behaviours and exists in a social context that includes other harmful behaviour[i].

Leigh Creek Area School's bullying prevention and response policy aligns with the Department for Education's (the department) 'bullying prevention and response procedure'.

The behaviour support policy addresses the prevention of and response to other harmful behaviour. Leigh Creek Area School's behaviour support policy describes our whole-school approach to behaviour support.

Our approach to bullying

Bullying is a complex social issue that impacts students both within and beyond school settings. Schools can implement prevention strategies, respond to concerns and take action when bullying occurs.

The national definition of bullying for Australian schools says:

> 'Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening.
>
> Bullying can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time (for example, through sharing of digital records).
>
> Bullying of any form or for any reason can have immediate, medium and long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders[ii].
>
> Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.'
>
> National definition of bullying for Australian Schools – developed by the Safe and Supportive School Communities Working Group and endorsed by the Education Council (2018).

Leigh Creek Area School promotes a whole-school positive behaviour support and bullying prevention approach. We work on this with our Governing Council, staff, students, parents and carers. Leigh Creek Area School uses trauma informed practices and aligns its work with the Berry Street Education Model. Our values of respect, responsibility and resilience guide prevention, response and restoration. We work with our Leadership team and an Aboriginal and Adnyamathanha Elder to strengthen culturally responsive support and student wellbeing.

Reporting bullying

At Leigh Creek Area School, staff, parents, carers or students can report bullying to:

- their classroom teacher
- Leadership team
- the Principal or Deputy Principal.

Parents, carers or students can call 08 8675 2062 or email dl.0748.admin@schools.sa.edu.au. You may put your concerns in writing, ask to speak with someone or make a time to meet at a later date.

To prevent and respond to bullying

Leigh Creek Area School will:

Promote

- ensure staff understand their responsibilities to create and maintain a safe and supportive school
- provide staff with access to bullying prevention resources to meet the needs of students, with a focus on priority cohorts[iii]
- establish and communicate explicit behaviour expectations that emphasise inclusion, respect, safety and diversity
- create and communicate accessible pathways for all students to safely report concerns, including bullying.
- share school values, positive behaviour expectations and bullying prevention resources with parents and carers to maintain a supportive and inclusive school culture
- ensure our local behaviour support policy and bullying prevention and response policy are published and easy to access on the school website.
- demonstrate and reinforce behaviours that reflect the school's values, actively support diversity, respect and belonging for all students and community members including those in priority cohorts
- Foster positive relationships with students, families and the wider community to strengthen belonging and support early responses to concerns.
- Promote the school values of respect, responsibility and resilience through shared routines, language and expectations across the school.
- Strengthen a culturally nourishing school environment by valuing Aboriginal perspectives, local culture and connection through the Adnyamathanha Language Program.
- Use morning circles, whole-school communication and regular reminders to keep respectful behaviour, help-seeking and reporting pathways visible to students and families.

- Promote safe, respectful and responsible digital citizenship to help prevent cyberbullying and support positive interactions at school and online.

Teach

- explicitly teach students respectful behaviours and expectations about bullying in the classroom in ways that recognise students' learning needs
- develop staff skills to recognise, prevent and respond effectively to bullying, including cyberbullying
- explicitly teach students how to recognise, prevent, respond and report bullying, including cyberbullying across all year levels
- ensure information, resources and instruction about bullying are culturally responsive and accessible to all students, particularly priority cohorts.
- Teach respectful relationships, emotional regulation and problem-solving through morning circles, class discussion and other planned learning opportunities across year levels.
- Use trauma informed practices and the Berry Street Education Model to support students to build safe relationship skills, help-seeking confidence and strategies for responding to bullying.
- Include culturally responsive learning opportunities, including the Adnyamathanha Language Program to strengthen belonging, identity and respectful behaviour online and offline.

Work with others

- work with parents, carers and families to address bullying and build a culture of shared responsibility and open communication.
- partner with Governing Council to review local strategies to prevent and reduce bullying
- share accessible and culturally responsive information with parents and carers about bullying, including how to recognise and respond when their child is involved in bullying
- communicate promptly and appropriately with parents and carers when a bullying incident happens while considering the supports needed for parents and carers from diverse backgrounds [iv]
- Work with families through respectful conversations, regular communication and follow-up to support early intervention and shared problem-solving.
- Engage with Governing Council to review local bullying prevention strategies and strengthen whole-school responses.
- Work alongside local Aboriginal community connections to support culturally responsive approaches that strengthen belonging, safety and inclusion for students.
- Use school communication channels, including the website and newsletter, to share accessible information about bullying prevention, reporting and support.
- Involve students and staff in reviewing school practices so local responses reflect community needs and support a safe and inclusive learning environment.

Respond

- provide visible, consistent and equitable responses, including fair and logical consequences[v], to bullying that foster trust and confidence in the school community
- take seriously and respond to all reports and observations of bullying accounting for the student's behaviour and needs
- share information with students, parents and carers on how bullying will be responded to including:
    - who and how to report bullying
    - safe and accessible ways for students to report.
    - use restorative practices where appropriate to repair harm, build understanding and support safe relationships moving forward
- gather and document information about reported or observed bullying

Intervene

- intervene in reported or observed bullying behaviour
- ensure that responses are appropriate, consistent and equitable for all students
- assess the incident to determine if it:
    - involves bullying or other harmful behaviour
    - poses an immediate risk to the safety of students or staff.
- use appropriate strategies to address bullying that are trauma-informed[vi], culturally responsive and tailored to the unique circumstances involved
- document a planning process[vii] for any student at ongoing risk or with support needs due to bullying behaviour of another student at the same site.
- Use restorative practices, problem-solving conversations and guided reflection to interrupt bullying behaviour and support safer interactions.
- Consider the student's needs, the context, any previous concerns and the impact of the behaviour when planning an intervention.
- Involve the Leadership team when additional support, coordination or follow-up is needed.
- Provide timely support for students affected by bullying, including opportunities to rebuild confidence, strengthen coping skills and remain connected to learning.
- Use trauma informed and culturally responsive responses that support safety, dignity and inclusion for everyone involved.

If there is an immediate risk to safety, staff must follow processes outlined in the reporting critical incidents, injuries, hazards and near misses procedure (PDF 681 KB) (staff login required), the sexual behaviour in children and young people procedure and guideline (PDF 2 MB) (staff login required) for incidents related to sexual behaviour, or, for incidents related to cyberbullying, the responding to online safety incidents in South Australian schools guideline (PDF 455 KB).

Repair and restore relationships

- take steps to repair and restore relationships that have been harmed by bullying when it has been assessed that it is emotionally and physically safe and in the best interests of everyone involved
- work with students, staff, parents and carers to develop solutions following bullying incidents.
- Use restorative practices, where appropriate, to support reflection, repair harm and rebuild respectful relationships.
- Provide culturally responsive support that recognises student identity, connection and belonging when planning next steps after a bullying incident.

Create safety and wellbeing

- establish safety and wellbeing for people involved in bullying incidents and others who have been impacted
- report criminal behaviour to police in accordance with relevant department policies
- provide targeted social and emotional support for students who need more help after bullying incidents; e.g. a support and safety plan
- embed a whole-school approach to prevent and address bullying
- work with students, parents and carers, staff and the community to develop, implement and review policies and practices that support a safe and supportive learning environment
- develop locally tailored strategies to support all students
- provide targeted strengths-based information and support for those who are at higher risk of experiencing bullying and harassment due to the harmful attitudes and behaviour of others, including:
    - Aboriginal children and young people
    - children and young people in care
    - children and young people with disabilities
    - gender and sexually diverse children and young people
    - children and young people experiencing mental health challenges
    - children and young people from culturally and racially marginalised groups
    - women and girls
    - other groups experiencing additional risk factors.
- Use trauma informed and culturally responsive supports to help students feel safe, connected and ready to continue learning after bullying concerns are raised.
- Strengthen wellbeing and belonging through consistent relationships, morning circles and targeted support for students who may need additional help to feel included and supported at school.

Document and record

- keep confidential documentation of all incidents of bullying and the responses in line with the department's records management procedures

Monitor and follow up

- check on all students involved in a bullying incident making sure:
    - all students are physically, psychologically and culturally safe
    - harm is repaired and relationships are restored, where it is safe and in the best interests of all involved
    - provide alternative supports at school that promote emotional and physical safety where repair is not possible
    - actions taken are discussed with students, parents, and carers with consideration for privacy requirements for all involved
    - effectiveness of actions are monitored and reviewed.

If a student, parent or carer is not happy with the steps taken by school leaders and staff, they will be provided with the details for the local education office and can contact the department's Customer Feedback Team on 1800 677 435.

Initiating a response within 2 school days

Leigh Creek Area School's staff will initiate a response to any reported or observed bullying within 2 school days of becoming aware of the behaviour. Some circumstances will require a quicker or an immediate response to uphold duty of care obligations to keep students safe from reasonably foreseeable harm.

Initial responses[viii] involve early safety and support planning, action to prevent further harm and initial communication. Further time may be required to fully address the bullying behaviour and support needs of all involved.

Communicating actions in response to bullying and maintaining privacy

Leigh Creek Area School will communicate the actions taken in response to bullying and the reason for those actions, to those involved or affected, as much as possible while maintaining privacy and confidentiality requirements.

Without disclosing the identity of those involved, Leigh Creek Area School's staff will reassure parents and carers that a plan is in place for ensuring the safety, support and wellbeing needs of all.

Roles and responsibilities

Leigh Creek Area School's staff will:

- model and promote positive behaviour, value diversity, demonstrate respect and include all students and their parents, carers and families.

- provide and regularly take part in professional development to build the skills, knowledge and confidence required to prevent, recognise and respond to bullying
- collect and use data to plan how they will prevent and respond to bullying
- assess bullying data and trends to develop prevention strategies with the Governing Council and school community
- explicitly teach students about respectful relationships, bullying and cyberbullying.
- work with students to come up with solutions to bullying and are involve them in decisions that impact them.
- support all students to be included, in particular, students at higher risk of being bullied
- take action when bullying and cyberbullying have been reported. This includes incidents that happen out of school hours or off school grounds when it relates to school relationships
- report criminal matters to police
- help parents and carers to recognise bullying. Include information about what to do when their child is engaging in or affected by bullying
- work with parents, carers and families, service providers and the community to support students affected by bullying
- support students to repair and restore relationships that have been harmed by bullying where it is safe to do so.
- have planned responses to bullying. Make them visible and consistent. Responses should foster trust and confidence
- help students to be physically, psychologically and culturally safe from bullying.

Non-department staff

Non-department staff working with students and providing a service on behalf of the department or delivering a service on a departmental site must comply with this policy and any associated policies and procedures.

Leigh Creek Area School's parents, carers and families will:

- model behaviours that are safe, respectful and inclusive
- help their child to be safe online
- make sure their child knows how to identify and report bullying and work with the school to help their children be safe from bullying
- talk to their child about safety issues, including bullying and cyberbullying, including what it is, why it is harmful and how to respond
- report concerns about bullying to school staff
- work collaboratively with the school to resolve concerns if a bullying incident occurs (in accordance with the department's education procedures and policies)
- support their child to go to school while a bullying issue is being worked on

- support their child to actively participate in addressing bullying-related matters in accordance with their developmental abilities and best interests
- get external professional support for their child or young person, if needed.

Leigh Creek Area School's students will:

- ensure their behaviours are safe, respectful and inclusive
- build the skills, knowledge and confidence needed to recognise and respond to bullying
- be a part of decision-making processes that improve student safety and wellbeing
- take action when bullying is observed in person or online, by safely intervening or seek help from adults
- support friends and peers in seeking help from trusted adults if they experience bullying
- support friends to behave in safe, respectful and inclusive ways.

Further information on any of the following is provided in the department's behaviour support policy under:
[i] *'Harmful behaviour'*
vii Planning processes, see 'support and safety planning for a child or young person affected by the harmful behaviour of another child or young person'

Further information on any of the following is provided in the department's bullying prevention and response procedure:
[ii] *Bullying (overt and covert) and bystanding, see 'Definitions'*
[iii] *Priority Cohorts, see 'Definitions'*
[iv] *Communication requirements, see 'Communication actions in response to bullying and maintaining privacy'*
[v] *Fair and logical consequences, see 'Definitions'*
[vi] *Trauma informed practice, see 'Definitions'*
[vii] *(see vii above)*
[viii] *Initial response requirements, see 'Initiate a response within 2 school days'*

Parts of this policy were drafted with the assistance of EdChat, the department-endorsed secure AI tool. The policy was subsequently reviewed, refined and endorsed by the site leader and governing council.