



BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY

Myponga Primary School strives to provide a success oriented, safe, caring and orderly environment in which all staff, parents and students are responsible for their own behaviour and support the rights of others. This Anti-bullying policy is aligned with our School Behaviour policy.

At Myponga Primary School bullying and harassment will not be tolerated. We will also not tolerate bullying against those who make a report. We take any reports of bullying seriously and these are thoroughly investigated. Each bullying incident will be approached on a case-by-case basis and appropriate action taken. The school implements positive practices through education, cooperation and consultation. We aim to empower students to function assertively and effectively within the school and wider community.

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

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. Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.

HARASSMENT is behaviour that targets an individual or group due to race, culture or ethnic origin; religion; physical characteristics; gender; sexual orientation; marital, parenting or economic status; age and/or ability or disability, and that offends, humiliates, intimidates or creates a hostile environment. Harassment may be an ongoing pattern of behaviour, or it may be a single act.

VIOLENCE is the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against another person/s that results in physiological harm, injury or in some cases death. Violence may involve provoked or unprovoked acts and can be a single incident, a random act or can occur over time.

This may constitute as an assault, which is a police matter.

DISCRIMINATION occurs when people are treated less favourably than others because of race, culture or ethnic origin; religion; physical characteristics;



gender; sexual orientation; marital, parenting or economic status; age and/or ability or disability. Discrimination is often ongoing and commonly involves exclusion or rejection.

ONLINE BULLYING is bullying carried out through the internet or mobile devices. Online bullying is sometimes called cyberbullying.

Examples include:

- sending insulting or threatening messages
- posting unkind messages or inappropriate images on social networking sites
- excluding others from online chats or other communication
- inappropriate image tagging
- sharing someone's personal or embarrassing information online
- creating hate sites or starting social exclusion campaigns on social networking sites
- sharing unflattering or private images, including naked or sexual images
- assuming the identity of another person online and representing them in a negative manner or manner that may damage their relationship with others
- repeatedly, and for no strategic reason, attacking players in online gaming

SEXUAL HARASSMENT is unwelcome sexual conduct, which makes a person feel offended, humiliated and/or intimidated. Sexual harassment can be a single incident, repeated or continuous, direct or indirect, and take various forms.

Examples include:

- Unwelcome touching, hugging, kissing, brushing up against a person, staring or leering
- Suggestive comments or jokes; sexually explicit pictures, screen savers, posters, graffiti, letters, messages, magazines or any other visual or written medium
- Unwelcome invitations to go out on dates
- Requests for sex
- Inappropriate and intrusive personal questions about a person's private life or his/her body
- Insults, taunts, teasing or name calling of a sexual nature; or sexually explicit conversation
- Accessing sexually explicit internet sites
- Offensive telephone calls, letters, e-mails or mobile phone text messages
- Posting filmed or photographed images or comments on social networking sites



- Behaviour that may constitute a criminal offence under criminal law and is reportable to the police, such as physical or indecent assault, stalking, obscene communications and sexual assault

CONFLICT is a mutual disagreement, argument or dispute between people where no-one has a significant power advantage and both feel equally aggrieved. Conflict is different to bullying because there is always an imbalance of power in bullying. However, poorly resolved conflict situations, especially those involving friendship breakups, sometimes lead to either aggression or bullying.

BYSTANDER BEHAVIOUR Conduct by someone who sees or knows about child maltreatment, harassment, aggression, violence or bullying that is happening to someone else. Supportive bystander behaviours are actions and/or words that are intended to support someone who is being attacked, abused or bullied. The actions of a supportive bystander can stop or diminish a specific bullying incident or help another student to recover from it.

If a student is being bullied:

Children affected by bullying and harassment may not want to talk about it with their teachers or family. They may be afraid that it will make things worse or that it is wrong to 'tell on' other students. When people are bullied or harassed, they may feel angry, embarrassed, frightened, humiliated or uncomfortable, scared or unsafe. That is why all members of the school community have an important role to play in supporting and helping the school and students deal with bullying and harassment.

Some signs a child or young person might be being bullied are:

- Reduced ability to concentrate or learn
- Refusal to attend school, excuses not to go
- Unexplained cuts, bruises or scratches
- Stolen or damaged possessions/clothing
- Headaches or stomach aches
- Asking for extra pocket money or food
- Acting out, tearfulness, sadness, lack of interest in usual activities
- Unwillingness to discuss, or secrecy about, their online communication

Children may present these signs for reasons other than bullying and it is important to support children to communicate and be proactive in sorting out problems.



Reporting:

If you are being bullied or you know someone who is being bullied, it is important that an adult knows about it. Bullying can be reported to a member of staff including the principal, teacher or SSO. It is also important to tell a parent or other family member or a trusted adult. Details of an incident may be written down or explained face to face.

We encourage students to tell the trusted adult where the bullying happened, how often it happened and what you have already tried to do to stop it from happening. We recommend that students record their issue on an incident form (available from the office or the classroom). This way we can keep track of any ongoing problems or patterns of bullying or harassment. Reporting of an incident should occur as soon after the incident as possible. This gives the school the best opportunity to follow up the incident and intervene.

Actions:

At Myponga Primary, we use prevention, intervention and post-intervention strategies.

PREVENTION STRATEGIES

- Beginning the school year with a focus week on school values and processes that keep everyone safe
- Identifying and defining the difference between conflict and bullying
- Embedded in the school's curriculum are a range of programs and strategies to facilitate the prevention of bullying
- Using the curriculum to teach students about respectful relationships, civics and citizenship
- Teaching students about violence prevention, conflict resolution, anger management and problem solving
- Valuing diversity and teaching for and about diversity
- Providing professional learning for staff in collaboration with local agencies

INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

- An acknowledgement that there are degrees of seriousness of incidents of bullying and therefore, the response will be appropriate to the degree of severity of the bullying
- Responses are logical consequences to enable students to learn the appropriate social behaviours and provide an opportunity to restore positive relationships
- Ensuring that all staff know how to address bullying effectively and respectfully
- Counselling students who have been bullied or harassed
- Talking with parents/caregivers about the situation
- Putting consequences in place for those who bully or harass others as well as providing counselling to develop skills for self-management



- Teaching students of their responsibilities as contributors or bystanders
- Responses will be age appropriate

POST-INTERVENTION STRATEGIES

- Monitoring the situation between the students to ensure that their safety and wellbeing are maintained
- Informing parents of strategies to prevent and deal with bullying
- Reviewing and evaluating behaviour codes and policies
- Continual professional learning to support staff in effectively implementing this policy

In extreme cases, under the regulations pursuant to the Education Act 1972, Principals can suspend or exclude students from attendance at school if they: ...act in a manner that threatens the safety or wellbeing of a student or member of staff or other person associated with the school (including by sexually harassing, racially vilifying, verbally abusing or bullying that person).

Coping strategies for students and families:

Building children's resilience and increasing their skills will help them to manage big feelings and negotiate life's ups and downs successfully. All adults in the Myponga Primary School community can support our students to do this. Here are some strategies families can use at home (from Mark Le Messurier & Bill Hansberry's 'Raising Beautiful Kids' [2013])

- Coach kids to have a 'Can do' attitude when facing tricky situations. Work with them to problem solve, think about options and even to take sensible risks.
- Plant seeds of confidence regularly by telling kids the resilient qualities you see them use when solving problems and managing tricky situations.
- Present a wide range of opportunities to learn, develop and practice social skills. Model them, have friends over and set up success and give direction, be involved with community groups outside of school.
- "How was school today?" is a vague question that is often about parents investigating their own anxieties about their child at school; prompting a 'negative script'. Instead ask 'positive script' questions like "What went well today?", "What were you proudest of today?", "Got anything funny that happened today?", "Did you surprise yourself today?" Keep it up, even if you don't get a positive response. Respond to negative responses in ways that show you have confidence in their capabilities. For example, "You're good at solving problems. Let me know how you go!"
- Organise ways for kids to contribute to the family. Can they prepare a meal? Immerse them in the world of giving. Without this, we risk teaching them the world owes them something.
- Develop coping strategies by: building positive sayings into everyday life. Have 'what if...' conversations when hearing about a problem to show there are always choices, teach the visualisation strategy of a



mental 'delete key' to shrink or get rid of troubles, rehearse how to handle up-coming events and teach how to say "sorry" (it doesn't always mean admitting what happened was their fault, it is a signal to heal and restore relationships), use a catastrophe scale where 1=slight set-back, 2= an upset, 3=a trouble, 4=a worry and 5= a total disaster.

- Communicate by listening, validating how they feel and responding to promote their independent thinking (our instinct is to rescue them and fix their problem). Try rephrasing what they've told you and ask questions such as "Wow, how did you feel...? I would have felt the same", "How do you think they felt when you said that?", "So, what do you think we should do to make that better?", "What can you do to help fix this?"
- Share problems and how you solved them.
- Always encourage children to use their strategies to solve 'kid sized' problems and make sure the school knows when problems are serious.

Responsibilities of the Principal:

Strategies the leadership team will utilise to minimise the likelihood of bullying and violence occurring in school:

- Implement and review biennially the school's anti-bullying policy involving staff, parents and students
- Manage the incidents of bullying consistent with the Department for Education (DfE) School Discipline Policy
- Ensure ongoing professional development of teachers, induction for new staff (teachers and SSOs), induction of students and the provision of information to parents
- Ensure that all parents have access to the school's Bullying Prevention Policy and related documents via the school's website

Responsibilities of Staff:

Strategies staff will utilise to develop and maintain positive relationships with students and families:

- Communicate and interact effectively with students and parents as well as engage in collaborative problem solving to address issues of bullying
- Critically reflect on practices and develop the knowledge and skills needed to manage incidents of bullying successfully
- Establish, maintain, make explicit and model the school's expectations and values related to bullying
- Adopt positive classroom management strategies and incorporate anti-bullying messages into curriculum delivery
- Participate in professional development related to decreasing bullying and teach students about respectful relationships
- Teach students appropriate grievance procedures, conflict resolution and problem-solving skills



- Teach students how to respond appropriately if they witness bullying and to support students to be effective bystanders

Responsibilities of the Students:

Strategies students will utilise to support the school in maintaining a safe and supportive environment:

- Follow the school's behaviour expectations
- Respect yourself and other students, staff and members of the school community
- Be a strong bystander and report the event
- Provide support by telling the person doing the bullying to stop. State clearly that the behaviour is unwelcome and offensive
- Seek help and communicate with a trusted person if bullied, harassed or if they are aware that someone else is being bullied or harassed
- Act with honesty and integrity

Responsibilities of the Parents:

Strategies parents/caregivers will use to support the school in maintaining a safe and supportive environment:

- Be aware of signs of distress in their child and keep the school informed of concerns about behaviour, their child's health issues and other relevant matters
- Communicate in a respectful manner with the school staff about issues or concerns and assist their child to discuss the problem with a teacher
- Discourage any planned physical or verbal retaliation if their child is bullied by discussing positive strategies
- Be positive about their child's qualities and encourage their child to be tolerant, caring and compassionate

Other considerations:

The school will include in education plans any issues related to bullying, harassment, violence, discrimination or child protection matters as applicable.



Training and development:

STAFF

Staff will be provided with opportunities for professional learning around best practices in preventing and managing bullying and harassment. All staff have undertaken Reporting to Risks of Harm, Abuse and Neglect - Education and Care (RRHAN-EC) training as a requirement of employment.

PARENTS

Parents can access our school policies via the school website. Parents will be required to read and sign the Student Behaviour Code at the beginning of each year.

STUDENTS

Student voice is promoted, sought, listened to and responded to in the classroom and at a whole school level. This ensures that students feel safe and they belong. Myponga Primary students in Year 4-6 will take part in the Education Department's 'Student Wellbeing and Engagement Survey' each year.

Distribution list

Staff, Governing Council, Parents, Website.

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