



Anti-Bullying and Cyberbullying Policy

Rational

At Maroochydore State High School every person has a right to feel safe. Any person who bullies another is denying them that right. The school will not tolerate any action that undermines a person's right to feel safe and it will take whatever steps are necessary to stop such behaviour.

- Staff are committed to reducing the incidence of bullying, teasing, harassment or cyber bullying.
- All staff have the right to teach; and
- All students have the right to learn in a safe and supportive environment, free from fear, discrimination, violence, intimidation and harassment.
- Victims of bullying will be supported.
- Bullies will be assisted with taking responsibility with their behaviour.

Policy Guidelines

Bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons.

The following are types of bullying:

- Physical bullying

This is when a person (or group of people) uses physical actions to bully, such as hitting, poking, tripping or pushing. Repeatedly and intentionally damaging someone's belongings is also physical bullying.

- Verbal bullying

Using negative words, repeatedly and intentionally to upset someone. Examples of verbal bullying includes name calling, insults, homophobic, sexist or racist remarks, and verbal abuse.

- Social bullying

Lying, spreading rumours, playing a nasty joke are all examples of social bullying. Repeatedly mimicking someone and deliberately excluding someone is also social bullying behaviour.

- Psychological bullying

Psychological bullying is when someone (or a group of people) repeatedly and intentionally use words or actions which cause psychological harm. Intimidating someone, manipulating people and stalking a person are all examples of psychological bullying.

- Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is when someone (or a group of people) uses technology to verbally, socially or psychologically bully. Cyberbullying can happen in chat rooms, through social networking sites, emails or mobile phones

Behaviours that do not constitute bullying include:

- mutual arguments and disagreements (where there is no power imbalance)
- not liking someone or a single act of social rejection

- one-off acts of meanness or spite
- isolated incidents of aggression, intimidation or violence.

However, these conflicts still need to be addressed and resolved.

Bullying, harassment, discrimination and violence are all interpersonal behaviours that can create or contribute to negative social environments.

Procedures

Role of Staff

- Encourage students to speak out and take reports seriously
- Respond to an incident if witnessed or reported
- Be supportive to the victim but don't encourage dependency
- Gather factual information through victims accounts and possible witnesses
- Organise a mediation with the victim and bully in consultation with Yr Coordinator or other support staff
- If the incident is serious refer both victim and bully to the appropriate person for counselling or mediation.
- Record the incident OneSchool
- Model supportive classroom management practices

Role of Administration

- Deal with any bullying involving violence as per the Positive Behaviour Matrix. The usual consequence of a significant violent act of one student against another is suspension.

Responsibilities

Teachers will:

- Act as role models of caring and tolerant behaviour
- Listen to and record reports of bullying and pass the record of report onto the Principal or delegated relevant staff member
- Support students **who have been bullied** by reassuring them, offering continuous support and strategies, encouraging them to form and maintain friendships with non-bullying students, and offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a staff member of their choice
- Support students **who have bullied** by discussing what happened, discovering why they became involved in bullying behaviour, telling them their behaviour was wrong and needs to change by explaining alternative ways of behaving, enlisting the parents/caregivers where appropriate to help change the behaviour and attitude of the student where necessary
- Aim to protect the victim from further harm
- Aim to act to stop the behaviour recurring
- Aim to make an oral or written statement to the school Principal and keep appropriate records if allegations have been made, or it is reasonable to suspect that a student will be, is being or has been the subject of unwelcome behaviour by an another student or an employee, such as harassment, intimidation, bullying or other improper behaviour, which has harmed or could harm a student. If the allegation is made against the School Principal then the report should be made to the Executive Director (Schools) in the District Office

The Principal will

- Upon receiving information or advice from any reasonable source, take such action as is reasonably necessary to protect the student from harm and to correct the improper behaviour
- If the information received concerns allegations about an employee then the Principal will take action as outlined in the Student Protection Policy.

Students who are bullied

- Must report to their teacher and give him/her full details of the incident
- Seek and respond to advice to stop incidents of bullying

Student witnesses to bullying

- Verbally intervene to take a stand against bullying.
- Immediately seek teacher assistance if they cannot intervene.

Parents

- Should listen sympathetically to reports of bullying

- Should speak to relevant school personnel

The School

- Must keep adequate records of all bullying incidents
- Must work with parents of the victim to assist their son/daughter to avoid being bullied in the future
- Must protect and support the victim of bullying, and assist the student in order to assure he/she will not be bullied in the future
- Initially approach most bullying incidents using a method of shared concern – a problem solving approach that looks at possible changes in behaviour of both the bully and the person being bullied. Serious incidents or persistent incidents however will be dealt with in accordance with Responsible Behaviour Plan and Positive Behaviour Matrix
- Will work with parents of the bully to establish joint strategies for behaviour modification.

This will be achieved by:

- Relevant school staff discussing the problem with the student/s involved
- Contact with the Guidance Officer may be involved. The school realises that both the student being bullied and the bullies may benefit from counselling and follow up.

Support

Maroochydore State High School's Pastoral Care program has anti-bullying, cyberbullying and respectful relationships embedded into it's curriculum across junior and senior. Students are explicitly taught skills to minimise, respond to and report incidents of bullying.

For further information:

- Queensland Schools Alliance Against Violence (QSAAV) resources
- Act Smart Be Safe
- Bullying. No Way!
- Kids Help Line
- Child Safety Australia