

## RATIONALE

All members of Murchison Primary School (MPS) have the right to feel safe at all times. MPS will provide a positive school culture where bullying (including cyberbullying) in any form is unacceptable. We will work to educate students, parents and teachers of their right for respect from others. The School is committed to achieving this and we will respond appropriately to bullying (including cyberbullying) incidents and work to repair relationships. Each student and staff member have the responsibility to support and promote this positive school culture.

### Definition of Bullying

Bullying is when someone, or a group of people, who have more power at the time, deliberately upset or hurt another person, their property, reputation or social acceptance on more than one occasion.

### Types of Bullying

There are four broad categories of bullying.

- Direct physical bullying e.g. hitting, tripping, pushing or damaging property.
- Direct verbal bullying e.g. name calling, insults, homophobic or racist remarks, verbal abuse.
- Indirect bullying - This form of bullying is harder to recognise and is often carried out behind the bullied student's back. It is designed to harm someone's social reputation and/or cause humiliation. Indirect bullying includes:
  - lying and spreading rumours
  - playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate
  - mimicking
  - encouraging others to socially exclude someone
  - damaging someone's social reputation and social acceptance
- Cyber-bullying, which involves the use of social media to humiliate and distress.

### What Bullying is Not

Many distressing behaviours are not examples of bullying even though they are unpleasant and often require teacher intervention and management. There are three socially unpleasant situations that are often confused with bullying:

- Mutual Conflict
- In mutual conflict situations, there is an argument or disagreement between students but not an imbalance of power. Both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution to the problem. However, unresolved mutual conflict sometimes develops into a bullying situation with one person becoming targeted repeatedly for 'retaliation' in a one-sided way.
- Social rejection or dislike
- Unless the social rejection is directed towards someone specific and involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others, it is not bullying.
- Single-episode acts of nastiness or meanness, or random acts of aggression or intimidation. Single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. If a student is verbally

abused or pushed on one occasion they are not being bullied. Nastiness or physical aggression that is directed towards many different students is not the same as bullying.

## **Aim**

- To reinforce within the school community what bullying (including cyberbullying) is and the fact that it is unacceptable.
- To promote the rights and responsibilities of students, teachers and parents to act in an appropriate manner.
- Everyone within the school community to be alert to signs and evidence of bullying (including cyberbullying) and to have responsibility to report it to school staff, whether as observer or victim.
- School staff to report incidents of bullying (including cyberbullying) to the Principal.
- To ensure that all reported incidents of bullying (including cyberbullying) are investigated appropriately and that support is given to both victims and perpetrators.
- To seek parental and peer-group support and co-operation at all times about bullying (including cyberbullying) issues.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

### **Reporting**

At MPS it is a staff and student right and responsibility to report bullying (including cyberbullying) whether it happens to them or to someone else. Reporting to the class teacher, duty teacher, Principal or Education Support Officer will ensure action will be taken.

Parents who become aware of bullying (including cyberbullying) are encouraged to report this to the Principal and can be assured it will be followed up. Victims will be supported. (Confidentiality will occur on request.)

### **Primary Prevention**

- MPS aims to combat bullying by providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment as reinforced by the School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) framework.
- Professional learning for staff to educate about all forms of bullying as stated in the definition, as well as proven counter measures.
- Educate the school community about the seriousness of bullying (including cyberbullying), its impact on those being bullied and how this behaviour is unacceptable. Educating our school community is reinforced by the Respectful Relationships curriculum to be implemented at MPS.
- Community awareness and input relating to bullying (including cyberbullying), its characteristics and the school's programs and response.
- Provide programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving.

- Each classroom teacher will clarify with students at the start of each year the School Policy – Anti-Bullying (including Anti-Cyberbullying).
- MPS will clearly set expectations for students to safely and responsibly use digital technologies as stated in the Acceptable Student Use Agreement signed by students at the beginning of each year.
- All staff at MPS will supervise students when using digital technologies and students will be expected to follow teachers' instructions within the guidelines of the Acceptable Student Use Agreement.
- Consequences will be implemented for any students who use ICT inappropriately.
- The implementation of the MPS eSmart curriculum to educate students about appropriate online behaviour and possible dangers.
- The school curriculum includes anti-bullying (including cyberbullying) messages and strategies.
- MPS will educate the wider community about eSmart through the weekly Newsletter.
- A vigilant and accountable yard duty roster for teachers is in place.
- Electives and structured activities available to students at recess and lunch breaks.
- The MPS Buddy program proactively develops positive mentor relationships between our senior and junior students.

## Early Intervention

- At MPS all instances of suspected bullying (including cyberbullying) must be responded to by staff by alerting the Principal, upon reporting of these instances.
- Encourage students to report bullying incidents involving themselves or others.
- Parents are encouraged to contact the school if they become aware of a bullying (including cyberbullying) problem.
- MPS will provide a designated safe and quiet place for children to access at recess and lunchtimes.
- Public recognition and reward for positive behaviour and resolution of problems.

## Intervention

1. **Once identified, each bully, victim and witnesses will be spoken with and all incidents or**
2. **Allegations of bullying (including cyberbullying) will be fully investigated and documented.**
3. **Parents to be contacted if appropriate.**
4. **Students and staff identified by others as bullies will be informed of allegations.**
5. **Both bullies and victims will be offered counselling and support.**

- Parents are encouraged to contact the school if they suspect bullying (including cyberbullying).
- The School will reinforce with children the importance of appropriately reporting incidents of inappropriate behaviour involving themselves or others, and the imperative that staff respond appropriately and proportionally to each allegation consistent with the school's Student Code of Conduct, including the proper reporting and recording of the incident.
- For isolated, infrequent or less serious incidents appropriate and proportional consequences may include a verbal apology, writing a letter of regret, completing a Behaviour Incident booklet, attending SOS, loss of privileges etc.
- In the case of cyberbullying during school hours, removal of cyberbullies from access to the school's network and computers for a period of time.
- Serious incidents and/or repetitive incidents of bullying (including cyberbullying) or unacceptable behaviour must be reported, responded to by staff and documented.
- Serious incidents are those that include physical assault, sexual assault, criminal activity involving theft or serious damage of property, serious threats or homophobic bullying etc.
- All such incidents or allegations will be properly investigated and documented. Depending upon the nature of each incident, they may be also be reported to and investigated by police, reported to the Student Critical Incident Advisory Unit, and/or reported to the Department's Emergency and Security Management Unit.
- The School may contact support professionals such as Welfare officers, Welfare coordinators or Councillors and/or Student Support Officers for assistance and support.
- Students and staff and parents identified by others as bullies will be informed of allegations.
- Both bullies and victims will be offered counselling and support.
- All repetitive or serious incidents must be brought to the attention of the principal class members of the school.
- The most appropriate staff member will contact parents of the targeted child. Principal class members will contact alleged perpetrators unless advised by police etc. not to do so.
- Regional office will provide support as appropriate, and the Principal will monitor the investigation and review the situation until matters are appropriately resolved.
- Consequences of repetitive or serious incidents may include criminal charges, suspension, expulsion, loss of privileges, counselling, conciliation or any other consequences consistent with the school's Student Code of Conduct.
- A management strategy for all parties will be developed in consultation with the students and parents involved.
- Parents or community members who bully or harass or abuse staff will be provided with official warnings, and if necessary, referred to the police, and/or have Trespass restrictions placed upon them by the Principal consistent with the Summary Offences Act.



# Anti-Bullying (including Anti-Cyberbullying) Policy

Murchison Primary School

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## EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed annually as part of the school's three-year review cycle.