

# Anti Bullying and Harassment Policy

## Murray Bridge South Primary School

The Aims of this Policy include the Following;

- To establish a caring and tolerant atmosphere where each member of the school community considers the welfare of others.
- To establish set procedures to deal with incidences involving bullying, for both the perpetrators and the victims.
- To raise the children's awareness of their right to live, learn and be happy at school without fear of emotional or physical abuse.
- To raise the children's awareness that it is their responsibility to report incidents of bullying.
- To counter views within the school community that bullying is an inevitable part of school life.

### Statement on Bullying

We aim to establish a community in which everybody upholds our school values of respect, safety and trust, and where individual differences are appreciated, understood and accepted.

Everybody has a right to enjoy their time at school.

### What is Harassment?

Harassment is any behaviour that is uninvited, unwelcome and unwanted that can cause another person to feel hurt or uncomfortable.

### Rights and Responsibilities

At Murray Bridge South Primary School everyone has the right to feel safe and valued and every member of the school community has a responsibility to ensure that this happens.

#### Rights

To feel safe  
To learn  
To be respected  
To be valued

#### Responsibilities

To respect yourself  
To respect others  
To use common sense  
To support others

### What is Bullying?

Bullying is a deliberate desire or action which is intended to threaten, hurt or embarrass someone.

Bullying may be physical verbal or indirect/relational and conducted by a more powerful individual or group.

## What Is Bullying?

Bullying is defined here as a physical and / or psychological action by an individual or group which is purposely intended to hurt or stress another. Bullying is seen as deliberate and can occur over a period of time.

It includes:

- Threats,
- Teasing and name-calling about a range of things; abilities & disabilities, gender, physical characteristics, family, ethnic, cultural or religious background,
- Sexual and racial harassment,
- Demands for money or possessions,
- Damaging, removing or hiding belongings,
- Leaving someone out of activities on purpose, spreading rumours,
- Physical violence and the threat of violence
- Put-downs, gestures and invasions of personal space,
- Other actions which are meant to hurt someone else, including the threat of other actions which are intended to hurt.

## Adult Bullying

Our school does not tolerate abuse / bullying / harassment of any kind. This applies to all students, visitors, volunteers, staff, parents and community.

## Bystander Bullying

### What is a Bystander?

A bystander is someone who sees the bullying or knows that it is happening to someone else.

Bystanders can be identified in the following categories: 3

1. **Supporters**—Support the person bullying, either by helping the child to bully the other person or by encouraging the person bullying;
2. **Spectators**—Gather or deliberately stay to watch the incident (sometimes from concern and sometimes for enjoyment);
3. **Witnesses**—Are aware that the incident is occurring (know about the bullying or see it from a distance);

Within each group there may be potential victims who are afraid they could be bullied next and this may influence their decision-making when deciding what to do.

## What Can I Do?

If Bullying is happening to you or someone else:

1. Tell the student who is bullying to stop. State quite clearly that the behaviour is unwelcome and offensive;
2. Ignore them and walk away;
3. Be a friend to the person being bullied;
4. Encourage the person being bullied to inform someone;
5. Seek help. Talk about it to someone you trust
6. Report it to a member of staff, a trustworthy friend or buddy. Feel confident that an incident can be solved
7. Talk it over openly with your parents—they can help you make a decision
8. DO NOT retaliate with physical or verbal abuse
9. If you are experiencing bullying on the way to or from school, tell your parents and walk home with a friend
10. Write a description of the event and place it in the class meeting agenda or give it to the teacher

## Do You Bully?

Do you tease, abuse or hit others? Yes / No

Do you call people names? Yes / No

Do you belong to a group which hurts or insults others? Yes / No

Do you stand silently watching others being hurt? Yes / No

If you answered YES then... this will happen:

## If You Are Bullying:

**Step 1**—You will be counselled by your classroom / yard duty teacher. You will be given the opportunity to resolve the situation and discuss the issue with the person you bullied. The name of the perpetrator and victim will be recorded.

**Step 2**—If you persist you will be referred to a member of the administration team. You may be required to attend a counselling program with the school counsellor and your parents will be notified.

**Step 3**—If you are found to be bullying again a consequence will be applied. This may include:

- In school Time Out (Either at recess or lunch, or both)
- A letter home to parents and a parent interview and/or your parents / caregiver will be phoned and required to come to school
- A counselling program with the Student Counsellor

- Loss of privileges in the school
- Suspension from school

Severe cases involving bullying are accelerated through these stages.

## How Can You Help?

### As Parents You Can:

- Be aware of signs of distress in your child.
- Assist you child to discuss the problem with a teacher.
- Discourage any planned retaliation, either physical or verbal, if your child is bullied by discussing positive strategies they can use.
- Be positive about your child's qualities and encourage your child to be tolerant and caring.

### As Staff You Can:

- Adopt positive classroom management strategies and incorporate anti-bullying messages in the curriculum.
- Provide positive role models for students.
- Actively counteract bullying behaviour.
- Respond appropriately to any reported incident of bullying.
- Be obviously present during recess and lunchtimes when you are on duty, as a deterrent to possible incidents of bullying.

## Promoting Positive Behaviours

At Murray Bridge South Primary School we aim to promote positive behaviours around the issues of bullying and harassment in a number of ways including:

- Positive Rewards Programs
- The Student Counsellor working in the classroom supporting teachers by focusing on programs such as Tribes, The Circle of Courage and "Shared Concern.
- Building positive relationships with parents and caregivers.
- Sharing of good practise by teachers throughout the year.
- Implementing through the SRC a 'Focus Week' involving whole school activities in the theme of 'be a buddy not a bully.'
- Staff training and development.
- Student Voice is encouraged through class meetings, SRC groups and the safe use of the email system to report 'issues.'
- The use of student 'cool-down cards' to ensure that students have an opportunity to think and reflect before issues develop.

## Grievance Procedure

If you are unhappy with the outcome of an incident please refer to and work through the Murray Bridge South Primary School Grievance Procedure. Copies of these are available from the front office.

## Some Common Reactions and Unhelpful Beliefs.

*"I was just mucking around, can't they take a joke?"*

This is the most common response to bullying. To put someone down, ridicule them, make them feel uncomfortable, push them around, or to take their possessions is not a joke.

*"I'll ignore it and it will go away. "*

If anything, ignoring it makes it worse. You will give the impression that it is okay with you and that you agree with what the bully is doing.

*"My parents told me to fight back."*

The problem with retaliation to bullying. Part of the problem with bullying is that it escalates other forms of misbehaviour. Violence of any type is not acceptable in our school.

*"I don't want to cause trouble."*

Most cases of bullying are sorted out very simply, especially if it is reported straight away. You're not causing trouble, you're standing up for yourself.

*'It' s just a natural part of growing up."*

There is nothing natural about being victimised. Kids have a right to feel safe at school, as well as at home.

## Strategies for students to deal with bullying

- Don't ignore it! Tell someone. If they don't help you, tell someone else until it is dealt with. Bullying is too important not to report. This includes incidents which involve someone else as the victim. not just yourself.
- If the problem re occurs then tell someone again.
- Don't be fooled by the bully's threats to "get you" if you tell. You have a much better chance of being protected if you can say, "I've already told Mrs..... and she knows that if I'm hurt she should come looking for you."
- Avoid joining in to encourage bullying. Being part of a group which is bullying someone else is just as bad as bullying yourself.
- Try to remain in sight of adults if you have been bullied.
- Walk tall with your head held high, don't show that you are scared , even though you may be.
- Stay near friends, or other children whenever possible. Being on your own makes you more vulnerable.
- If confronted, stay calm and confidently walk away from the bullying situation
- If you are getting bullied before or after school then vary times and routes for travelling to and from school. Be aware of the location of safety houses on the varying routes

- Leave expensive possessions and money at home. If you don't have it with you, it can't be taken away.

### Strategies for teachers to deal with bullying

- Listen to the complaints and act upon them, empathy for the victim is vital.
- Avoid labelling students.
- Focus on what you want when there is no bullying - move behaviour towards tolerance and acceptance, model this behaviour.
- Encourage students to be active bystanders, to tell about bullying and to support the victim
- Hold open discussion about bullying in the classroom, teach assertive skills.
- Provide feedback to all students involved in bullying incidents so that they are aware of the consequences that have been implemented.

### Strategies for parents to deal with bullying

- Stay calm and accept that all of us have the capacity to be involved in either the giving or receiving end of bullying.
- Listen calmly, note specifically what your child is saying.
- Let the school know what is happening.
- If the victim, let your child know that it is not their fault.
- Try not to model bullying behaviour at home.

### School Yard Safety Audit

The Student Counsellor will, from time to time, conduct a student audit (or questionnaire). This is about the use of the school yard, how safe students believe they are and is a tool for identifying issues, individual students and areas of concern.

The results will be presented to the Principal and to staff meetings for evaluation and review.

### Endorsement Process

The policy was approved by School Council on 6<sup>th</sup> December 2011