



MAITLAND GROSSMANN HIGH SCHOOL

ANTI BULLYING POLICY 2011

POLICY STATEMENT

Maitland Grossmann High School is an inclusive environment. The school openly celebrates diversity and individual student differences are respected and valued.

MGHS actively seeks to ensure all students receive an education which caters to their individual student learning needs in a highly supported and safe environment.

The basis of the school's Anti Bullying Policy is its inclusiveness. The views, values and beliefs of parents, caregivers, and students are reflected in this policy and therefore central to its success.

DEFINITION

Bullying can be defined as, but is not limited, the intentional, repeated or perceived behaviour by an individual or group of individuals that causes distress, intimidation, fear, isolates and devalues, injury or unreasonable levels of anxiety on another individual within the Maitland Grossmann High School environment. Bullying can involve any or all forms of harassment which can include for example, reference to an individual student's sex, race, disability, or sexual preference, humiliation, intimidation and victimisation of others.

Examples of bullying can be manifested, but are not limited to, the following four general areas:

- Verbal - name calling, teasing, abuse, putdowns, sarcasm, insults and threats
- Physical - A physical attack on the person or their property. E.g. hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping and spitting
- Social - ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating, making inappropriate gestures
- Psychological – spreading rumours, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions, malicious **cyberbullying** (online and mobile communications), including, mobile phones, SMS, email messages, chat rooms and message boards and social networking websites like Facebook or MySpace. Inappropriate use of camera phones, webcams and video – hosting sites.

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Maitland Grossmann High School students fully engage in high quality teaching and learning practices which are specifically designed to assist them to develop pro-social skills and academic competencies. These attributes will enable them to take responsibility for their own learning and behaviour and ultimately allow students to engage with and contribute to the wider Australian community.

For students to positively engage in educational opportunities at Maitland Grossmann High School, they each have a right to learn in an environment where they feel and are safe and free from any form of bullying. Any person who bullies another is denying them that right. Any inappropriate behaviour that

inhibits another student's right to learn or otherwise interferes with their well being and undermines a person's right to feel safe **cannot and will not be accepted**. The school will take the necessary steps to stop such behaviour.

All members of the school community, that is, students, teachers, parents and or caregivers have a responsibility to:

- Promote positive relationships that respect and accept individual differences and diversity within the whole school community.
- Support the school's Anti-bullying Plan through their individual words and actions.
- Actively work together to resolve incidents of bullying behaviour when they occur.

MANAGING BULLYING

The Maitland Grossmann High School Anti-bullying Plan has been developed through consultation with parents, caregivers, students, school staff and the community. *See Maitland Grossmann High School Anti-bullying Policies – A Review of Procedures and Practice Sept 2010, Surveys for Staff, Parents and Students Sept 2011, MGHS Newsletter March 2011, Anti-bullying Plan – A checklist for parents and caregivers May 2011, Anti-bullying Program Coordinators consultation with Maitland Regional Student Welfare Consultant 2011, Welfare meetings 2011 and students website reviews 2011.*

Information for parents, caregivers and students

Accompanying this Plan, brochures designed by students, parents and caregivers and school staff for parents and caregivers and students have been developed and are available from the school office, Anti-bullying Program Coordinators and Anti-bullying Contacts, Year Advisers and Deputy Principals.

Staff at Maitland Grossmann High School will utilise a variety of methods in dealing with suspected bullying incidents. The aim is to resolve the situation aiming for the best possible outcomes for all students. They may use the traditional disciplinary approach, restorative practices, strengthening the target, mediation, the support group method or the method of shared concern.

PROCEDURES AND STRATEGIES FOR STUDENTS, PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS

Students

Reporting Bullying Incidents – as target or bystander

You can do this in person, in writing or online through student Millennium.

- In the classroom: to the classroom teacher or Anti-bullying Coordinator or Contact (ABPCs) *note; HT Welfare and all Year Advisers are also Anti-bullying Contacts.*
- In the playground : to the teacher on duty or ABPCs
- Travelling to and from school: to your parent, bus driver, Deputy Principal or ABPCs
- At sport: to the supervising teacher or sport coordinator or ABPCs
- In all cases fill in a *Bullying and Harassment? No Way* form (available from your teacher, ABPCs or HT Welfare) or fill in an online referral through Student Millennium.
- For an online notification check Student Millennium to see if the notification has been received and in any instance if you have not had a progress report within a week follow up by talking to the person you reported it to or an ABPC.

n.b. you will find the Anti-bullying Program Coordinators and Contacts (ABPCs) in the staffroom with an ABPC sticker. They are here to help with information and advice.

Parents and caregivers

Parents who feel their child is being bullied should contact the school – the Anti-bullying Program Coordinators, Year Adviser, Anti-bullying Contact (ABPC) or Deputy Principal to find out if the incident is known and what the school might already be doing to address the incident. Ask for an *MGHS Bullying and*

Harassment? No Way Parent Brochure and check the schools' Anti-bullying Plan. Make a follow-up appointment to talk to the Deputy Principal or Anti-bullying Coordinator in a week or two to check the progress of the situation.

Information for parents and caregivers will be regularly published in the school newsletter. It will include helpful tips and contact addresses, websites and phone numbers for parents in dealing with suspected bullying incidents and their child.

Students' Brochure includes a definition of bullying, advice if it happens, steps for targets take to minimise the bullying, advice of consequences to students if they bully, bystander information and a list of helpful websites and phone numbers.

Parent and caregivers' Brochure includes a definition of bullying, signs that might indicate their child is being bullied, steps to take if they think their child is being bullied and helpful websites and phone numbers.

Strategies for Staff

It is the responsibility of all staff to act when suspected incidents of bullying are reported or noted. If a suspected bullying incident is witnessed in class the teacher should note the incident with the students involved and make clear to all students what is expected of them in their general behaviour and remind students of their need to behave responsibly.

If further incidents occur the teacher should follow the Staff Response for reported incidents.

REPORTED INCIDENTS

TALK to the student (this may be the target or bystander) about the incident, discreetly and confidentially. **LISTEN** to the whole story without interrupting; ask what they want to happen before you make any decisions.

EXPLAIN it is normal to be feeling hurt, it is not okay to be bullied, it is not their fault and there are things they can do to help stop the incidents.

FIND OUT WHAT IS HAPPENING Ask what, when and where the behaviours occurred, who was involved, how often and if anyone else saw it (take notes if necessary). Discreetly talk to possible observers. Check Millenium, find out if the ABPCs, or Deputy are already addressing the situation.

GIVE the student a *Bullying and Harassment? No Way* form to fill in or direct them to Student Millenium and an *IHS Bullying and Harassment? No Way* student brochure. Ask them to take it and read the information.

ENTER the incident in Millenium.

If the incident is minor and a past history is not established ask the student to use the strategies in the brochure and then make sure you catch up with them within a week to check if things have improved. If so, go back to the Millenium entry and tick *resolved*.

If the incident is moderate refer the case to an ABPC (through email) who will use one of the six major methods of intervention to work towards resolving the issue with the target and suspected bully/ies. The ABPC records the action in Millenium as a bullying incident.

If this approach does not resolve the issue the ABPC refers the matter to the Deputy Principal.

If the bullying involves violence, referral must be made to the Deputy immediately with appropriate statements. These incidents will be dealt with according to the School Welfare and Discipline Policy.

STUDENTS' RIGHTS

Students at Maitland Grossmann High School have the following rights;

- All students have a right to take part in learning experiences that address key understandings and skills relating to positive relationships, safety, gender equity, discrimination, bullying and harassment.
- All students have a right to a high quality education.
- All students have a right to be an individual at school, regardless of intellectual or physical ability, because of race, religion, sexuality, country of origin, beliefs or any other reason what so ever.
- All students have the right to be respected and treated with fairness and kindness at school.
- All students have the right to express themselves.
- All students have a right to feel and be safe at school.
- All students have a right to know that their concerns will be responded to by the school staff.

ANTI – BULLYING RESPONSIBILITIES

Students, teachers, parents, caregivers and members of the wider school community have a shared responsibility to actively work together to resolve incidents of bullying behaviour when they occur and to create a safe and happy environment, free from all forms of bullying.

Each group within the school community has a specific role in preventing and dealing with bullying.

STUDENTS' RESPONSIBILITIES

Within the notion of Students Rights comes the concomitant notion of Student Responsibilities. A student cannot have rights without having Responsibilities. Students' Responsibilities at Maitland Grossmann High School are;

- All students have a responsibility to allow others to work without being distracted or otherwise disturbed.
- All students have a responsibility to contribute to the creation of a happy and safe school environment for others. This means being thoughtful, respectful and courteous

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

To ensure these student rights wherever possible, Anti-Bullying interventions should be proactive. Interventions require the ongoing education of students to develop skills and strategies to allow them to identify, cope and prevent the bullying occurring. The key to anti-bullying interventions is to address all parties involved, that is the bully, victim, and bystander. As teachers we must respond effectively to reports of bullying, and teach appropriate prevention strategies. Proactive strategies might include, but are not limited to, the following, for example;

- Model non aggressive approaches to behaviour management
- Remove opportunities for bullying to occur – arrive on time, group formations and positive reinforcement.
- Classroom organisation – space to move around, access to resources
- Classroom presentation
- Talk about bullying – definitions, myths
- Give clear messages about what behaviours are accepted.
- Display bully free classroom posters, encourage reporting, encourage empathy, no put down zones consistently implemented.
- Welcome new students, engage all students in conversation.

STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT BULLIED STUDENTS

- Teach anger management skills
- Teach assertiveness skills – ‘I messages’
- Conflict resolution skills
- Develop a shared concern. Listen
- Empower students in the classroom.
- Place students in situations where they experience success
- Share stories about bullying
- Provide safe havens.
- Consistently attempt to build self esteem.

STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT STUDENTS WHO BULLY

- Build self esteem
 - No blame approach – never bully the bully
 - Look for warning signs
 - Implement consequences for bullying behaviour
 - Provide students with counselling
 - Teach Self monitoring skills – behaviour chart
 - Teach problem solving skills
 - Cooperative learning strategies
 - Teachers as Mentor for student
 - Empower student in classroom
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- All staff have the absolute responsibility of a “Duty of Care” to all students at all times.
 - All staff have a responsibility to manage all students fairly and evenly.
 - All staff have a responsibility to ensure that this policy is implemented at all times and in all school environments including school excursions.
 - All staff have a responsibility to follow up complaints of bullying, harassment and intimidation.
 - All staff have a responsibility to support students in all aspects of their learning.
 - All staff have a responsibility to model appropriate behaviour.
 - All staff have a responsibility to respond in an appropriate and timely manner to incidents of bullying.

PARENT AND CARE GIVERS RESPONSIBILITIES

- To support the school to utterly eliminate bullying at this school
- To actively participate in their child’s academic learning as well as their social development.
- To participate in all reviews of the school’s Student Welfare and Discipline Policy.

- To accept a shared responsibility for the development of appropriate social behaviour in their children.
- To support the school with the development and implementation of all Student Welfare policies designed to assist their children to develop pro-social skills and academic competencies.

EVALUATION

Evaluation of the school's Student Welfare and Discipline Policy will be routinely conducted to review the relevance and efficacy of the school's practices, policies and teaching and learning programs. It will include discussion about the implementation of this policy and any further identified needs. Parents and care givers will be invited to attend all policy review. In terms of this policy the following questions are examples of how the evaluation process will be structured:

- Is the policy clearly understood by all members of the school community?
- Is the policy meeting the needs of students and effectively eliminating bullying behaviour?
- Does this policy reflect current departmental Education and Training policies?
- How positive and effective are the relationships between staff, parents and staff, and students and staff?
- Has staff development been sufficient to meet the needs and requirements of this policy?