

MOUNT OUSLEY PUBLIC SCHOOL



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ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

RATIONALE

At Mount Ousley Public School we value, respect and show tolerance of others in a safe and supportive environment. We foster positive relationships through strong welfare programs. Our school's Welfare and Discipline Policy is complemented by our Anti-Bullying Policy, which aims to deal effectively with, and prevent bullying incidents through a zero tolerance approach to bullying.

OUR DEFINITION OF BULLYING

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. Cyberbullying refers to bullying through information and communication technologies. Bullying can involve humiliation, domination, intimidation, victimisation and all forms of harassment including that based on sex, race, disability, religion or homosexuality. Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders. Our school considers the following behaviours as examples of bullying.

Physical:

- Pushing, hitting & kicking
- Throwing objects
- Taking others' belongings & stealing from others
- Damaging others' belongings
- Spitting at others
- Intimidation or making someone do something against their will

Verbal:

- Threatening others
- Name calling, teasing & insulting
- Swearing at others
- Sarcasm
- Ridicule & put downs of another person because of their actions, appearance, physical characteristics or cultural background

Social:

- Excluding or ignoring others
- Ostracising & alienating
- Making inappropriate gestures

Psychological:

- Spreading rumours
- Dirty looks
- Hiding or damaging possessions
- Writing notes
- Cyber bullying
- Inappropriate use of digital media

RESPONSIBILITIES

As a staff and school community we are committed to our responsibility for taking positive and consistent actions to deal effectively with bullying.

Staff responsibilities:

- To model appropriate behaviour at all times
- To teach strategies for students to deal with bullying and to regularly review these strategies in class
- To monitor and track incidents of bullying and take appropriate action
- To implement school programs that promote positive relationships and specifically teach strategies to deal with bullying
- To specifically teach children the difference between reporting and 'dobbing' when communicating with adults
- To communicate bullying incidents to parents when needed

Parent responsibilities:

- To support the school's Anti-Bullying Policy
- To take an active role in their child's school life and watch for signs that their child may be being bullied or may be exhibiting bullying behaviour towards others
- To support their child to learn strategies to deal with bullying
- To instruct their child to tell immediately if they are bullied, or suspect that someone else is being bullied
- To inform the school in a calm manner if any bullying is suspected
- To avoid taking personal action by contacting other students or parents about issues that arise within the school context
- To follow the MOPS Dignity and Respect Charter

Student responsibilities:

- To show respect, consideration and support of others
- To report if they are being bullied, if they see someone being bullied at school, on the way to and from school, or online
- To use learnt strategies to deal with bullying incidents
- To take ownership of choices made
- To follow the MOPS Dignity and Respect Charter
- To learn and understand the difference between appropriate and inappropriate behaviours

CONSEQUENCES

When a bullying incident is reported or observed, the staff will:

- Have discussions with the students involved
- Report to parents any significant bullying incidents
- Take appropriate action e.g. time out in the classroom
- Consider lunchtime detention
- Consider withdrawal of privileges e.g. school representation at sporting or other events
- Consider suspension as a last resort

COPING STRATEGIES

Strategies for students to deal with bullying will be regularly reviewed in class and include the following:

- ☉ Stay in sight of peers and adults
- ☉ Try to stay calm
- ☉ Practise keeping calm and walking away
- ☉ Try to show you are not upset (practise this)
- ☉ Look at the person, try to speak in a strong voice and say something like, “You might think that, but I don’t” or “It’s not very nice to say/do that”
- ☉ Use an “I” message to express your feelings in an assertive way e.g. “I want you to stop” or “Please don’t do that, I don’t like it”, or “I don’t think that what you are saying/doing is very nice”
- ☉ Use humour if appropriate
- ☉ Walk away quietly without looking back
- ☉ Go to a safe place e.g. with other children or near a teacher
- ☉ Talk to a buddy
- ☉ Talk to an adult who can help and tell them what has happened, how you feel and what they can do to help (this is not dobbing; it is called reporting and there is a difference)

GENERAL

Most people have experienced some kind of bullying at some time, so do not be ashamed or embarrassed to speak up. It is important to report.

Unless we are observant and watch for signs of bullying, we may not know that bullying has occurred.

Signs that your child may be being bullied:

- ☉ Dislikes school
- ☉ Lowered school performance
- ☉ Gets into trouble more often at school
- ☉ Wants to be taken to school even though it is close
- ☉ Takes the long way home or walks instead of catching the bus
- ☉ Possessions are damaged or missing
- ☉ Seems unhappy or depressed; cries easily and for no apparent reason
- ☉ Unable or unwilling to explain bruises and scratches
- ☉ Complains of stomach ache to avoid school
- ☉ Asks for or steals extra money
- ☉ Doesn’t seem to have any friends
- ☉ Has bad dreams
- ☉ Sleeps badly
- ☉ Wets the bed
- ☉ Gets angry with brothers and sisters
- ☉ Suffers sudden mood swings and outbursts of temper
- ☉ Uses put down language when speaking about others
- ☉ A change of behaviour is noticed by a family member or someone else
- ☉ More, or less, time is spent using social network sites

Signs that your child may be bullying others:

- Aggressive behaviour, both inside and outside the home (teasing, threatening, hurting others)
- Difficult to manage
- Oversensitive & feels everyone is out to get them
- Unhappiness
- Loses temper frequently
- Quietness or depression
- School work is suffering
- Disturbing stories about the child from other students or adults
- Sensing that other parents (whose children have contact with your child) are avoiding you, or hinting at things you don't know
- Becoming secretive when using the internet

EVALUATION

Incidents of bullying are monitored on an ongoing basis. Student Welfare programs are evaluated regularly.