



ANTI BULLYING POLICY 2012

RATIONALE:

Port Macquarie High School's Statement of Purpose (2009) states, "we do not tolerate violence or harassment of students or staff." We also aim to "provide a safe, secure and friendly environment." We are not tolerant of bullying and are proactive in preventing bullying.

TYPES OF BULLYING

Bullying is physical, mental or emotional harm. It occurs when one person or a group tries to intimidate someone else.

It can be defined as intentional, repeated behaviour that causes distress, hurt or unfair pressure.

- *Cyber* - malicious use of technology such as the Internet and electronic devices
eg SMS & email messages, inappropriate use of camera phones and social networking sites
- *Physical* **eg** pushing, shoving, tripping, blocking, "dacking", damaging property or equipment invading others personal space
- *Verbal* **eg** put downs, sarcastic comments
- *Gestures or looks* **eg** intended and willful intimidation
- *Extortion* **eg** demanding money, food, possessions or favours
- *Exclusion* **eg** deliberately excluding someone or isolating them from a group
- *Harassment & victimisation* **eg** gender, race, sexuality.

SOME PEOPLE BULLY FOR A NUMBER OF REASONS INCLUDING:

- To make themselves feel important
- To impress others
- To get their own way
- Because others are doing it.
- Peer pressure to conform to a standard set by another individual or group
- Because they are angry or discontent with their own situation.
- And other reasons

MOST PEOPLE DON'T BULLY BECAUSE THEY:

- Have learnt to co-operate with others
- Would feel ashamed of hurting anyone especially if that someone appeared more vulnerable than themselves
- Because they empathy for others
- And other reasons

AT PORT MACQUARIE HIGH OUR EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS AND STAFF ARE THAT THEY:

- Make themselves familiar with the school's Anti Bullying Policy
- Refuse to be involved in any bullying situation
- Take some form of preventative action if present when bullying occurs eg walk away from or tell the student or staff member who is engaging in bullying behaviours to stop etc
- Report the incident or suspected incident and speak up. Students or staff engaged in bullying behaviours should not be protected by silence
- Help break down the myth that it's not "cool" to "dob"
- Are aware that silence or inaction may give the message that bullying is okay
- Know that bullying is unacceptable and will be dealt with under the School's Discipline Policy

TO STOP BULLYING AT PORT MACQUARIE HIGH SCHOOL:

STAFF WILL:

- Role model appropriate behaviour
- Consistently reinforce anti-bullying behaviour through school practices that promote respectful relationships
- Listen to student concerns and follow through
- Be observant of signs of distress or suspected incidents of bullying
- Take steps to help the student who is being bullied
- Remove sources of distress without placing the student who is being bullied at further risk
- Respond in a timely and appropriate manner
- Document instances of bullying or suspected bullying on the school's 'RISC' database
- Record all instances of bullying. Teachers will listen to the student then ask that the student writes down what has happened. If the student does not want to write it down, the teacher will take down a verbal account of what happened and read it back to the student for clarification and signature.
- Report bullying incidents to year advisor and Head Teacher of Welfare.

IF STAFF ARE BULLIED:

- If staff are being bullied by other staff members they should refer to the Resolution of Complaints procedures
- Staff need to be aware of their right to a support person if they so choose
- *The School Principal will be responsible for dealing with incidents of staff bullying*
- If the Principal is involved then the incident will be referred to the Area Office
- Allegations of staff bullying need to be referred to the Principal or Federation Representative

STUDENTS WILL:

- Know that their concerns will be responded to by school staff
- Are provided with appropriate counselling if they are either the target of the bullying behaviour or responsible for the behaviour.
- Participate in learning experiences that address key understandings and skills relating to positive relationships, safety, gender equity, discrimination, bullying and harassment.
- Be co-operative in the investigation of the bullying behaviour or incident
- Understand that being a bystander makes you an accessory

These experiences will be guided by the Personal Development, Health and Physical Education syllabuses and other Key Learning Areas.

THE SCHOOL RECOMMENDS THAT PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS:

- Watch for signs of anxiety eg unwillingness to attend school, a pattern of headaches, missing equipment, requests for extra money, damaged clothes or bruising; switching the computer screen when an adult comes into the room
- Take an active interest in their son/daughter/ward's social life and acquaintances
- Advise their son/daughter/ward to tell a staff member about any incidents that have occurred at school. The police may also be able to help you.
- Keep a written record (who, what, when, where, why, how)
- Not encourage retaliation
- Attend interviews at the school as requested
- Work in partnership with the school to resolve issues
- Have their son/daughter/ward seek support from school staff
- Report cyber bullying instances to the police

PARENTS OF BULLY STUDENTS:

- Attend interviews
- Support special programme for bullies

CONSEQUENCES OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR:

PHYSICAL BULLYING:

Instances of physical bullying are classified as **violent acts**. Hitting, kicking, spitting, throwing stones, getting another person to assault someone, etc will be referred to the Deputy Principal following the gathering of information by the relevant teacher. Depending on the circumstances a suspension and/or other disciplinary consequences will result. Action regarding staff bullying will be dealt with by the Principal.

NON-PHYSICAL BULLYING:

Non-physical bullying can involve any of the following: verbal insults, cyber bullying, persuading another person to insult someone, spreading malicious rumours, threatening and obscene gestures, removing and hiding belongings, deliberate exclusion from a group or activity. Depending on the circumstances a suspension and/or other disciplinary consequences will result.

CYBER BULLYING: – REFER TO POLICE

ANTI BULLYING STRATEGY:

1. All reported instances of bullying are recorded on the school “RISC” database
2. The RISC report of bullying will be dealt with in the same way as other reports, with the following considerations:
 - The teacher will advise the student that their name is to be recorded on the student ‘RISC’ database, for bullying
 - The Head Teacher will be notified of the bullying RISC report. The Head Teacher will decide whether further action is required, or if specific counselling support is needed for either the student who is engaging in bullying behaviours or the student being bullied
 - Parental contact made earlier in procedure
 - If the bullying is considered significant or likely to reoccur, the Head Teacher will inform the Deputy Principal of the incident. Counsellors, Head teacher Welfare, Year Advisors and other staff may be informed if considered appropriate by the DP.
 - The Deputy Principal may **advise parents via letter, warning that a suspension** will apply if bullying behaviour recurs
3. If a student’s name is recorded for repeated bullying he/she will be placed on after-school detention, have privileges such as excursions and sporting representation/cultural activities denied. The student’s parents will be required to attend an interview with the Deputy Principal and the student will be required to attend anti-bullying sessions with the school counsellor.

ANTI BULLYING STRATEGY - CONTINUED

4. If a student believes that they are being bullied by a staff member they are encouraged to discuss the issue with their parents or caregivers and request that they make an appointment to discuss the matter with the Deputy Principal /Year Advisor.

ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES:

- A reduction in the number of students and staff being bullied
- An increase in the rate of reporting bullying behaviour
- A reduction in the amount of time before bullying is reported
- Development of a school culture of respect and concern for all staff and students
- A willingness to support the student being bullied
- Improved school attendance by students
- Recognition by the community that PMHS is a school that is pro-active in reducing bullying
- Feeling safe in our school environment
- Support for school Anti Bullying Policy by parents/carers
- All teachers will have professional learning regarding methods to combat bullying.

OTHER SCHOOL POLICIES THAT MAY BE REFERRED TO:

- Anti- racism policy
- Workplace Health & Safety. (2012)
- Sexual Harassment Policy & Procedures
- Responding to Suggestions, Complaints and Allegations (2001)

2010 **Endorsed by School Council / P&C / / 10**