

PORT MACQUARIE STEINER SCHOOL

4.4 ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

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Associated policies:	4.3 PMQSS Behaviour Management and Discipline Policy 12.1 PMQSS Use of Email, Technology and Social Media Policy 9.9 PMQSS Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Statement 2.3 PMQSS Student Wellbeing and Pastoral Care Policy 9.11 PMQSS Complaints and Grievances Policy 9.1 PMQSS Communications Policy	
Associated Laws:	<i>Human Rights Act 2004</i> <i>Discrimination Act 1991</i>	

INTENTION

To clearly outline the School's expectation of all employees, students, parents, care givers and volunteers with regards to bullying.

INTRODUCTION

The School is dedicated to providing a safe, secure, caring and supportive environment and to promoting personal growth and self-confidence for students, staff and visitors to the School. It recognises the potential negative effects of bullying and other anti-social behaviours that disrupt the optimal learning and teaching environment. The School does not condone any behaviour which could be considered to be of a bullying, harassing, or violent nature.

The School will seek appropriate interventions if such situations occur.

This policy applies to all employees, students, parents, guardians and volunteers both on and off the School site such as excursions.

DEFINITIONS

Bullying – A pattern of behaviour by one person or a group of people towards another that is intended to hurt, injure, embarrass, upset or discomfort that person. Bullying can take many forms, some of which may not be immediately obvious. Bullying can be verbal, physical, social, cyber or psychological in nature and actions can be observable or hidden. Acts of bullying involve an imbalance of power.

Bullying can arise from the misuse of electronic technology in any form, such as mobile phone messaging or camera, or communication systems such as Facebook, Twitter, or inappropriate. This area is referred to as cyber bullying. There are many other examples of this type of behaviour.

Any behaviour perceived by any student to be threatening, worrying, of concern or unpleasant may be classed as bullying and needs to be addressed in a timely manner.

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Harassment - Negative behaviour intended to annoy or trouble another individual, which may be based on obvious differences such as gender, race, religious or cultural beliefs, physical differences, sexual orientation, ability or disability and socio-economic status. It may be a one-off incident between individuals or groups or may continue over time.

Violence - Incidents where a person is intimidated, abused, threatened, physically assaulted or where property is deliberately damaged by another person. It is an extreme use of force often resulting in injury or destruction. Violence does not necessarily involve an imbalance of power.

Conflict - A disagreement where the needs of one or both parties are not being met. It does not necessarily involve an abuse of power, even if parties do not have perceived equal power.

If handled well, conflict is seen as an opportunity for personal growth. Managing and navigating conflict is an important skill for students to explore. Conflict is actual or perceived opposition of needs, values and interests. It is a disagreement through which the parties involved perceive a threat to their needs, interests or concerns.

Restorative practice - Situations of violence in different forms require the parties involved to seek resolution to restore a healthy communication process.

The School will assist in this process by seeking to restore a situation with fairness and with an understanding of the roles and triggers of each party involved.

POLICY

Everyone has the right to be free of bullying. The School is committed to the creation and maintenance of an optimal learning and teaching environment. It is a priority and an expectation of the School for all students, staff and visitors to the School to be granted a safe, secure, caring and supportive environment free of bullying, harassment or violent behaviour. However, should situations of bullying, harassment or violence occur, the School has in place procedures to follow in response to aggressive situations. These must be undertaken in a timely manner, ensuring procedural fairness for all parties involved.

The School staff will seek to identify bullying, violent or harassing behaviours and will work with students, staff, parents or other individuals involved to offer all parties a safe and restorative response.

The School has a Behaviour Management and Discipline Policy giving appropriate levels of response to behaviours including suspension and expulsion, and methods to record and identify repeated behaviours using the Incident Report Form. Students and their parents and caregivers are to be encouraged to report bullying, harassment and violence, so that appropriate support can be provided.

Parents and caregivers are informed via the PMQSS Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Statement or newsletter about existing procedures, complaints and support processes that the School has in relation to bullying.

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We seek to inform the School community on methods of resilience, positivity and conflict management, whether within the School curriculum, newsletter, class emails or within general information sessions given to students, staff or parents throughout the year.

GUIDELINES FOR TEACHERS

The teachers should focus on promoting and encouraging positive behaviours by way of modelling them. This will create an environment where students are sensitive to the needs of others and confident in their non-acceptance of bullying behaviour. All students will be involved in age appropriate programs and activities which include developing an awareness of what bullying behaviour is and the consequences of this behaviour.

GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS

Should a student find themselves a target of bullying, they should use one or more of the following strategies:

- Use words such as 'Stop' or 'I don't like that';
- Tell the bullying student/s that their behaviour is not fair;
- Refrain from retaliating the same behaviour; and
- Report the incident to the nearest teacher.

GUIDELINES FOR PARENTS AND GUARDIANS

Parents and guardians have a role to play as they can work together with the School to encourage an environment free from bullying by setting a firm example of not accepting bullying toward or by their own child/ren.

- Parents and guardians should report any incidents of bullying to the Class Teacher as soon as possible after the incident;
- Encourage and support their child to adhere to the PMQSS Student Code of Conduct; and
- Reinforce in their own child that bullying is not acceptable.

PROCEDURE(S)

When a student is found to be involved in a case of bullying behaviour, the following steps should be taken by the Class Teacher or Teacher on duty to address the situation:

1. remind the student/s involved of the expected behaviour;
2. remove or re-direct the student into another activity or play scenario;
3. speak to the student as soon as possible after the incident. The student will be asked to stop the behaviour and reminded of or given examples of what is expected of them behaviourally;

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4. complete and manage the Behaviour Incident Report Form as soon as practicable after the incident;
5. monitor the behaviour of the bullying student/s and the safety of the targeted student/s;
6. offer restorative questioning – engage the bullying student in a series of self-reflective questions targeted on empathy and increasing their empathy for others. For example, have them take responsibility for making the situation better. This can be done at the time of the incident;
7. removal from the situation – followed up by reflective questioning which can highlight new behaviour choices. This can be done through behaviour monitoring of the student/s;
8. meeting with the student and parent or guardian to discuss what is expected of them (the student) and or ways of creating change in their behaviour. A Teacher and Parent Interview Record must be completed by the Class Teacher conducting the interview;
9. hold a class meeting to discuss the situation with a ‘no blame’ approach;
10. impose suitable consequences if behaviour is being repeated;
11. inform parents of incident/s and provide support to influence change in the behaviour of their child/ren; and
12. record incidences using the Incident Report Form and store on student files.

RESOURCES

Incident Report Form
Teacher and Parent Meeting Record

REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed annually.