



# Bullying Prevention Policy

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## Rationale

Every student has the right to feel safe when they come to our school. Students who feel happy and safe are more likely to learn. Prevention programs that involve the whole-school community can significantly reduce bullying.

## What is Bullying?

Bullying is the **repeated** and **unjustifiable** actions by a more powerful individual or group over a less powerful person. It is **intended** to cause fear, distress and/or harm to another student or students.

## Forms of Bullying

Ongoing:

- **Verbal abuse:** name calling, teasing, abuse, put downs, sarcasm, insults, threats.
- **Physical abuse:** hitting, pushing, punching, holding, scratching, tripping, spitting.
- **Social abuse:** ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating.
- **Psychological abuse:** spreading rumours, dirty looks, hiding or damaging property, malicious e-mails and texts.

## Possible Signs of Bullying:

- Reluctance to go to school.
- Frequent complaint of illness before school.
- Performing below their ability at school.
- Having difficulty sleeping, nightmares, wetting the bed.
- Having no friends to share free time with.
- Any distinct changes in your child's behaviour.

## Aims of our Programs and Policy

- To promote and encourage positive behaviour.
- To provide a safe environment for students' learning.
- To provide a clear set of guidelines and procedures to follow when bullying is reported.
- To provide a mechanism for recording bullying and to help track bullying over the years.
- To inform the school community of the school's policy.
- To help the school community to understand the difference between bullying and other incidents.

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## Madeley Primary School has:

- Developed a policy in consultation with its stakeholders that includes a clear set of guidelines and procedures for dealing with anti-social behaviours including bullying within the school.
- Informed the school community about the policy.
- Provided our students with a set of strategies for responding proactively to incidents of bullying. This also includes the responsibilities of bystanders or observers.
- Articulated to the parents and caregivers the important role they can play in resolving bullying.
- Provided the parents and caregivers with clear information about the strategies to encourage appropriate behaviours and consequences for inappropriate anti-social behaviours.
- Developed the MPS Bullying Flowchart to follow for issues surrounding bullying. The **Method of Shared Concern** is used to enable the school to establish shared concerns and encourage shared solutions to solve the problem. The method includes informing parents, setting up initial individual meetings with perpetrators to develop constructive responses and a plan to change the behaviour. A final meeting of all involved students is held to ensure all negative behaviours have ceased. Instead of 'bullying the bullies' these strategies establish shared concerns and shared solutions to reconcile differences and encourage more appropriate behaviour.
- Implemented whole school resiliency and social skills training (Life Raft lessons, Mindfulness, Challenges & Choices, PITW and You Can Do It Programs).
- Introduced wearing high-visibility vests while on yard duty supervision, structured sporting activities and clubs at break times (e.g. Find a Friend, Lego and Buddy Club).
- Created MPS Good Standing Policy whereby, Students with Good Standing are eligible to hold leadership positions and participate in activities such as incursions, excursions, inter-school carnivals and camps.

## Teachers will:

- Be familiar with the school's Positive Behaviour Education and Bullying Prevention Policies.
- Respond in an appropriate manner to incidents of bullying according to the Bullying Prevention Policy.
- Model appropriate behaviour.
- Work with students in class on specific lessons that complement the policy and build students' social skills and ability to positively deal with bullying situations (Life Raft, Play is the Way, Mindfulness, Challenges & Choices, You Can Do It resources).

## Students should:

- Behave appropriately and respect other members of the school community.
- Demonstrate expected behaviour at all times.
- Respond to bullying according to the strategies learnt in classroom lessons, for example:
  - Tell the bully "Stop, I don't like it".
  - If it continues, report to an appropriate adult.
- Report any cases of bullying to an appropriate adult (i.e. duty teacher, classroom teacher, parent).

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## Bystander Actions:

If a child sees another child being bullied, he/she could:

- Let the person doing the bullying know that what they are doing is unacceptable.
- Refuse to join in with their bullying and walk away.
- Support the student who is being bullied.
- Ask a teacher or support person for help.
- Support his/her friends and protect them from bullying by being there for them.

## Parents should:

- Develop an understanding of what bullying is.
- Reinforce and model positive behaviour at home.
- Support their children in all aspects of their schooling.
- Make themselves aware of the school's Bullying Prevention Policy and assist their children in understanding this policy.
- Report any incidents to the class teacher with an explanation of the incident.
- Support their children in developing positive responses to incidents of bullying.

## Important Information:

Research conducted on West Australian students and backed up by our own school surveys have shown:

1. Bullying exists in all schools at all ages but peaks in Years 4 and 5 in primary school.
2. Teasing and name calling is the most common form.
3. Of those bullied, 30% will tell no-one.
4. Students who bully and are victims of bullying are more likely to suffer from depression, anxiety, low self-esteem and are more likely to go on to have interpersonal difficulties later in life.
5. Our own survey has shown that bullying occurs 50% of the time in the school playground, 34% at home, 12% in class, and 4% to and from school.

## Parent Resources:

- [www.bullyingnoway.gov.au](http://www.bullyingnoway.gov.au)
- [www.takeastandtogether.gov.au](http://www.takeastandtogether.gov.au) - download the app
- [www.kidshelp.com.au](http://www.kidshelp.com.au) or call 1800 55 1800

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**Prevention Strategies:** Life Raft Lessons, Mindfulness, Challenges & Choices Program, You Can Do it Program, Lunch time clubs

**Who to speak to:** Teacher, Teachers Assistant, Chaplain, School Councillors, Friends and Family

## Stage 1

Yes

**Incident reported- Accusation of Bullying?**

### Investigation, has bullying occurred?

Incident investigate, facts established, students involved spoken to and situation understood.

- Is there an imbalance of power?
- Is the behavior repeated over time?
- Are there repeated acts of physical, verbal, or emotional, social or cyber bullying?

No

### Other Behaviour Incident

The situation is investigated by the duty teacher, class teacher or member of admin.

The behaviour incident would then follow steps according to the MPS Positive Behaviour Education Policy.

Yes

## Stage 2

### Develop a plan

- Student sent to the office to work through a Reflection sheet with Admin or Admin releases the teacher to work with the student
- Restitution is organised
- Parents are contacted
- Good Standing status may be removed. A return to Good Standing plan is developed with student and parents
- A four-way conference may be organised where strategies and goals are identified to be fulfilled within a given timeframe
- An Individual Behaviour Plan may be developed
- Possible suspension or exclusion

### Support

Offer support for person being bullied or offender through services such as the Chaplain.

### Record

- Incident logged on school reporting system (Integris).
- Any Individual Behaviour Plans or Good Standing Plans are recorded.

## Stage 3

### Monitor & Check In

- Class teacher, admin and parents monitor situation carefully
- A conference to be held at the end of a specified timeframe to monitor strategies and goals



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