



Bullying

MORAWA DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOL

Whole School Common Understanding

Morawa has amongst its aims the provision of a safe, secure and positive environment in which each child can develop the knowledge, skills, self-confidence and maturity to respect and care for themselves and others.

The School aims to establish a community in which everybody feels valued and safe, and where individual differences are understood, accepted and appreciated. It is the responsibility of all students and staff to uphold the right to this environment. The Morawa community does not tolerate bullying or harassment in any form. Respect for others by staff, parents and students, is expected at all times.

An awareness and shared understanding of bullying needs to be developed through active consultation with all members of the school community, including teaching staff, non-teaching staff, students, parents and the wider community. This shared understanding needs to be characterised by acknowledgement of bullying as more than a relationship between those who bully and those that are bullied. Bullying needs to be seen as a social relationship, involving group values and group standards of behaviour, requiring collaborative and consistent action across the school community for positive changes to occur.

Aims

To teach, protect and support members of the School community by:

- providing a learning environment where individual differences are appreciated and accepted.
- modelling behaviour that shows tolerance and acceptance at all times by all members of the community.
- a discipline practice that emphasises the protection of rights, the enhancement of personal responsibility and accountability, self-discipline and respect for the rights of others.
- an understanding and support of the above Morawa policy statement.

To increase the awareness of all members of the school community by communicating:

- an understanding of what bullying is, where/when/why it occurs.
- the school's attitude is one of total opposition to bullying, and countering the view that bullying is an inevitable part of school life.
- the school has strategies to deal with bullying.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is any behaviour intended to hurt, injure, threaten, intimidate or frighten another person in such a way that the person feels that she/he cannot do anything about it. Bullying is perceived as an imbalance of power or the attempt to gain power over another person.

Elements:

- hurtful, (the person does not like it) intentional, uninvited/aggressive behaviour
- Targeted student feels powerless (to do anything about it).
- Repetitive, occurring over a period of time.

Examples of Bullying Behaviour

Physical:

- Pushing, hitting, punching, bumping, kicking.
- Obstructing/ confining.
- Stealing / hiding property. Damage, interference or damage to personal belongings. Writing abusive notes or initiating inappropriate emails.
- Sending abusive or malicious emails, text messages and accessing, altering or deleting others work or folders.



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- Writing harmful comments about any member of the School community on social websites such as Facebook.

Verbal:

- Name calling/teasing/picking on.
- Mocking/taunting.
- Making put down comments/belittling.
- Threatening violence/physical aggression.
- Insulting/shouting at/swearing at.
- Homophobic comments.
- Racial/minority group comments.

Social/Psychological:

- Visual - staring at threateningly, giving 'evils'.
- Standing close to a person and acting in a threatening manner.
- Pulling faces.
- Excluding from activities.
- Ignoring completely.
- Saving seats.
- Creating paranoia - whispering, stopping activities when targeted student enters room.

Cyber Bullying:

- In recent years, schools have become increasingly concerned with bullying behaviour that occurs within cyber space such as email, social network and phone texts. The definition of the behaviour remains the same; repeated and unjustifiable behaviour that is to cause fear, distress or harm. The effect of cyber bullying can become more pronounced than other forms of bullying as the intentional harm can be distributed to a wide audience, adding to the embarrassment or level of distress.

Definition*

- Cyber bullying is when an individual or group use the internet, mobile phones or other technology to hurt another person or group of people.

Facts*

- Cyber bullying is fairly common, likely to increase and possibly associated with greater harm than face to face bullying.
- Young people are less likely to report cyber bullying than face to face bullying.
- Engaging young people, especially as positive bystanders is the key to discouraging negative behaviours in cyber space.

Prevention strategies:

Home

If you allow your children to use social network sites at home- discuss the potential for harm from bullying behaviour and supervise their use of technology.



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A “Cyber Friendly” programme is run with all Year 7/8 students. Other Year group discussions take place within the Health Education curriculum and workshops run by health and wellbeing officer staff members.

Prevention Strategies

The Principal and Staff of the College must clearly demonstrate a commitment to supporting staff and students in the implementation of the anti-bullying policy and procedures in a regular and consistent manner.

Whole School Prevention Strategies

- Public Commitment to Respect for Self, Others and the School
- Explicit in School aims and reinforced through School assemblies, publications and meetings.
- Modelling appropriate behaviour and action.
- Allocating appropriate resources to implement policy effectively.
- Providing professional development and training for staff.
- Legitimising the roles and responsibilities of all members of the School community.
- Increase Awareness of the School Policy on Bullying
- Clear statement in School Community Handbook and School Diary.
- Distribution of Bullying Policy brochure to all parents.
- Anti-Bullying Policy outlined to all parents of new students at Orientation Day.
- A regular reminder of what bullying is, and that bullying is not acceptable, and what to do if they know or suspect that bullying is occurring in Year, Sport Meetings and Assemblies.
- Support from other curriculum areas to reinforce the ideas presented in the Policy Statement.
- Supervision Practices - Staff and Student Leaders to be aware of:
 - :- Their responsibilities in carrying out supervision duties - on campus, on buses, during camps and excursions and in the classroom.
- School rules and School policy on bullying.
- Modelling appropriate behaviour especially:
 - Tolerance and acceptance of individual differences.
 - Assertive behaviour rather than aggressive behaviour.
 - Emphasis of co-operation and teamwork.
 - Use of alternative conflict resolution strategies.

Monitor and Review

- Heads of Middle, Senior School, and Primary School and class teachers maintain records of incidents. Copy of incident reports highlighted in SIS records.
- Continual review of the Anti-Bullying Policy and process.
- Annual update of ‘Safe Schools’ initiatives.

Classroom and Tutorial Prevention Strategies

- Generate Awareness and Build Involvement
- Find opportunities to increase awareness of what bullying is, and what is acceptable behaviour through discussion and role playing.
- Consider student views on use of bags, queuing for class, canteen, what happens at lunch or recess.
- Encourage students to be active bystanders with collective responsibility.
- Encourage all Learning Areas to develop themes of respect, friendship and anti-bullying through curriculum.
- Display posters about bullying, made by the students.
- Remind students that there is always someone to talk over a situation with: friend, tutor, class teacher, counsellor, chaplain, senior student, parent or Year Coordinator.



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- Remind students that there is always someone to talk over a situation with: friend, tutor, class teacher, counsellor, chaplain, senior student, parent or Year Coordinator.
- Use peer support practices through form, classroom and Tutorials.
- Develop Peer Mediation and Peer Support Programs.
- Mix up class seating arrangements on a regular basis.

Individual Student Prevention Strategies

Early intervention with students who are likely to be vulnerable to teasing and bullying, through such means as:

Explaining that responding is not dobbing.

- Emphasising that they are not to blame.
- Explaining their rights.
- Teaching them how to be more assertive.
- Skilling in response to bullying incidents.
- Affirming their self-worth by treating them with dignity and respect.

Parental Prevention Strategies

- Take time to be with and to communicate with your daughter.
- Discuss their day at school, share thoughts and ideas
- Keep communication open and positive.
- Do not be judgmental about friendships.
- Develop awareness of own parenting styles.

Encourage your child to:

- Consider alternative ways to respond.
- Develop self-confidence and independence.
- Have friends over.
- Discuss values and beliefs.
- Understand and appreciate individual differences.
- Encourage your daughter to talk about her social life.
- Advise your daughter to tell a trusted staff member if she is bullied.
- Advise a staff member immediately if you think your child is being bullied.

In setting behaviour limits at home:

- Be fair and consistent.
- Be assertive not aggressive.

Discuss with your child:

- Discuss with your child:
 - The ethos of the College.
 - The School rules.
 - The use of the Year Co-ordinator and Counsellors and pastoral care system.

Watch for Signs of Distress

- Check out possible sources of anxiety. Where you have concerns contact the Year Co-ordinator or Principal of School immediately.
- Advise your child to tell a trusted person if a bullying incident arises.
- Take your child seriously, but act calmly.
- Do not phone the parents of the student perceived to be engaging in the bullying behaviour.



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- Do not phone the parents of the student perceived to be engaging in the bullying behaviour.
- Maintain contact with the School.

Responses to Incidents of Bullying

Students, staff or parents may report incidents to the Class Teacher, Tutor, Year Co-ordinator, Head of School, Counsellor, School Nurse, Chaplain, Deputy Principals or Principal. Support and promotion of the idea that, 'it is okay to tell, and you will be believed', will assist in the detection of individuals at risk. Staff are to record reported or observed incidents on the intervention record. Copies of the incident reports will be held in the Deputies office. If an incident is not resolved after the initial reporting, it is taken to the Deputies or Principal for discussion of appropriate next response. For persistent bullying behaviour in groups, the 'Shared Concern' method may be employed. Appropriate responses to persistent bullying behaviours will be decided after consultation with two or more staff members, usually involving the relevant Principal of School.

The Person Being Bullied

The School's aim in responding to incidents of bullying should be to support, repair and rebuild.

Students should be taught that if they are subjected to bullying, there are alternatives available to them, which include:

- Decide how serious the present incident is. If it is not serious or especially hurtful, such as a singular incident of name-calling or put down, ignore it. If it is hurtful, or frequent you should act to stop it.
- Tell an adult about the bullying: a class teacher, tutor, older student, peer support leader, school nurse, counsellor or parents. Do not be afraid of intimidation, this only encourages the bully and rewards the behaviour.
- Be assertive, not aggressive. Tell the bully you won't put up with this and tell the person to stop
- If it does not stop, report the incident immediately to a member of staff.

Targeted students who report bullying incidents need to know that something will be done, that their circumstances are not hopeless or 'their fault'. They need to be confident that they will not be at risk of further bullying of reporting an incident.

Target students may be offered:

- The assurance that the incident they have reported will be investigated and acted upon.
- Counselling, by the School counsellor or other appropriate members of staff.
- Opportunities in class to develop their prestige with other students, through having opportunities to exercise responsibility, or through being placed in groups with well-regarded peers.
- Opportunities to learn and practise ways to respond assertively.

Follow Up

In all reported cases of bullying, there needs to be follow up with the student who is bullied after the initial incident has been reported and dealt with. The person responsible for the follow up is the class teacher (Junior School), or Year Co-ordinator (Middle and Senior School), in consultation with the counsellor where necessary. If serious, the relevant Principal of School will be involved.

The follow up needs to be brief interviews at reasonable intervals to see whether the bullying is continuing. The number of follow up interviews required will depend upon the student's needs. In most cases a couple of follow up checks is sufficient, but where the student has been persistently bullied over a long period of time, checks over several months may be necessary.



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The Student exhibiting bullying behaviour

The School's aim is to have the student understand that what she has done is unacceptable and that her behaviour must change in the future. If possible the aim is also to evoke empathy for the student who has been bullied.

The Shared Concern Approach

Staff may use a 'Shared Concern' approach to intervene in group or relational bullying situations. The 'Shared Concern' approach is only appropriate for use in the initial stages of social issues. This approach aims to develop empathy and concern for others and utilizes a problem-solving approach to social issues. Ongoing incidents of bullying would be addressed with parent-student consultation and a range of consequences.

Severe or Recurring Incidents

It must be made clear that the behaviour is against the standards set by the community, and that sanctions may include withdrawal from that community.

Action may include a range of sanctions, including:

- Further counselling.
- Community service.
- Suspension, or ultimately expulsion.

Bystanders

The role of the bystander is crucial in reducing incidents of bullying, and needs to be clearly understood by all community members. The bystander needs to be equally responsible as the student who initiated the bullying behaviour if the bystander does not report the behaviour.

A list of bystanders should be determined from the targeted student, the bully, and other persons associated.

In individual chats with each bystander:

- Their observations and actions are determined.
- The School Anti-Bullying Policy is reiterated.
- Stress the important role that bystanders should be playing in stopping and/or tempering future bullying incidents.
- Emphasis that they are the ones who have the power to stop the bullying.
- Bystanders are failing in their responsibility to themselves and the School if they do not intervene or report.
- Keep notes regarding each contact for future reference.

Some students who are bystanders need to be involved in counselling regarding bullying, or be involved in more thorough discussions regarding the resolution of the incident in question.

The Pikas Method of Shared Concern

Key principles include:

Bullying occurs in the context of group behaviours.

- Approach aims to develop empathy and concern for others.
- Developing a sense of shared concern by the whole community for bullied individuals.
- By involving both the students engaged in the bullying behaviour and the bystanders, the group dynamics can be altered.
- Bullied students may be at risk of revenge attacks if punitive measures are used to discipline bullies as they reinforce the idea that power can be used to meet needs.



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Steps in the Pikas Method of Shared Concern

- Receive information about the incident. Gain the confidence and agreement of the targeted student to proceed with the process.
- Inform the Year Co-ordinator or School Counsellor of the situation and action planned. Inform parents if applicable.
- Arrange meeting with students involved.
- Meetings with the individual 'suspected' bullies. Meetings should be brief and students should be seen without a break in between. Discussion of issue and appropriate behaviour change.
- Counselling sessions with the target student.
- Group or individual meetings with the 'former' bullies approximately a week later.
- Meeting with former target student.
- Resolution meeting with former target student and bullies (if deemed appropriate).
- Further follow up or monitoring.

Points to Remember

- Express confidence to all concerned, that the problem can be resolved satisfactory for all parties.
- When interviewing students who are suspected of engaging in bullying behaviour it is important that the students come up with a simple, realistic change in their own behaviour which will improve relations with the targeted student. The aim is to make the targeted student feel safer and happier.
- In follow up discussions recognise and praise any evidence of positive interactions.
- It is vital to remember that for severe bullying incidents the 'Shared Concern' method is not appropriate.
- A consequence and direct intervention approach should be employed.

Peers

Student

Parent

Report issue to staff member

Intervention Plan
Year Coordinator

Counsellor, Deputy or Principal are consulted where appropriate.

Parent consultation if appropriate

Sequence of consequences as deemed
appropriate by Principal of School

- Negotiated behavioural change
- Parent consultation

Shared Concern Approach

Group support and problem solving
Process suitable for group issues.

Ongoing Support

Further incidents
Teachers to consult with Principal
of School re contact with parents