Morawa District High School

2022-2024

MORAWA
Endeavour and Achieve
DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOL

An Independent Public School

Preventing and managing bullying policy

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Rationale

Bullying is a learned behaviour which is unacceptable. However, bullying behaviours can be changed. Morawa District High School takes an educative approach to managing and preventing bullying. Our processes and activities promote the development of the values and behaviours that create and maintain inclusive, safe and supportive environments.

Vision

All members of our school community are committed to ensuring a safe and supportive environment where all members have the right to be respected and have a responsibility to respect each other. We are all responsible for creating an environment that is safe and inclusive.

Definitions

Schools provide a clear shared understanding of what bullying and cyberbullying is to their school community and include explanations of the concerning behaviours in the school plan:

The national definition of bullying for Australian schools is as follows:

> *Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening.*

> *Bullying can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time (for example, through sharing of digital records).*

> *Bullying of any form or for any reason can have immediate, medium and long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders.*

> *Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.*[1]

Confirming whether the behaviours were intentional is not required to implement the strategies for responding effectively. Young people involved in bullying are not always fully aware of the impact of their actions on others. It is more important to act as a result of the effects on the targeted individual, immaterial of the determination of intent.

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[1] *Bullying. No Way!* website www.bullyingnoway.gov.au

Bullying can include:

- **Verbal bullying**: The repeated use of words to hurt or humiliate another individual or group. Verbal bullying includes using put-downs, name-calling, insulting someone about the way they look or behave, spreading rumours, and homophobic, racist or sexist comments.

- **Social/relational bullying**: Involves repeatedly ostracising others by ignoring someone or keeping them out of conversations, convincing others to dislike or exclude an individual or group, spreading rumours, and sharing information or images that will have a harmful effect on the other person.

- **Physical bullying**: Includes violent actions towards another person that involves hitting, pinching, biting, pushing, pulling, shoving, damaging or stealing someone's belongings, and unwanted touching.

- **Cyberbullying**: Involves the use of technology to bully a person or group with the intent to hurt them socially, psychologically or even physically. Cyberbullying includes abusive texts and emails, hurtful messages, images or videos, imitating, excluding or humiliating others online, nasty online gossip and chat.[2]

- **Bystanders**: Bystanders are those who are aware of, or witnesses to, the bullying situation. A supportive bystander will use words and/or actions to support someone who is being bullied by intervening, getting teacher support or comforting them. All members of a school community need to know how to support those who are being bullied and how to discourage bullying behaviours.

Note:

The Department of Education promotes the use of affirmative language that supports the values of the Western Australian Curriculum (i.e. Health and Physical Education curriculum). The terms 'bullies' and 'victims' are not recommended as appropriate terminology to use when identifying, reporting, recording and responding to bullying incidents. It is important that bullying is seen as a behaviour. It is more appropriate to identify and label the unacceptable behaviour such as 'students who are bullied', 'students who bully others' and 'students who engage in bullying behaviour'. This will ensure that the unacceptable behaviours are addressed in a manner that supports the individuals involved to learn and demonstrate more acceptable social behaviours without the impact of enduring labels.

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[2] Office of the eSafety Commissioner

Rights and responsibilities of school community members

MEMBERS	RIGHTS	RESPONSIBILITIES
All students, teachers, parents, wider school community	• are safe and supported in the school environment • are included • are treated with respect	• positive role modelling and demonstrate respect for all people • participate and contribute to school positive behaviour programs • build positive relationships • demonstrate respect and tolerance towards others
School leadership	• is supported by the school community in developing the school's plan to prevent and effectively manage bullying • is supported by the school community in implementing the strategies and programs under the school's plan	• fosters a safe and supportive climate across the school • provides leadership in resourcing the school's plan • ensures plans are clear and publicly available to the school community • ensures the school community is informed of the plan • implements the plan • supports staff to implement the strategies and programs under the plan
Staff	• feel safe and supported in the workplace • are informed by school leadership of the school's plan on bullying • have access to professional learning in preventing and effectively managing bullying • have access to curriculum resources suitable for supporting students in building positive relationships, resiliency, safety and bullying prevention (including social/ emotional learning)	• promote and model positive relationships • participate in developing the school plan • identify and respond to bullying incidents • deliver the strategies and programs to students in responding to bullying effectively • promote effective bystander behaviour • promote social problem solving • use appropriate terminology when referring to bullying and the students involved
Students	• have access to curriculum that supports the building of resiliency and social skills • are informed by staff of the school's plan on bullying • are provided with supports by staff to stop bullying	• understand and value the concepts of inclusion and tolerance • identify and respond effectively to bullying • are aware of themselves as bystanders • seek help for themselves and others as needed

MEMBERS	RIGHTS	RESPONSIBILITIES
Parents	• are treated with respect • are confident their children are provided with a safe and supportive school environment • are provided with access to information on the prevention and management of bullying by the principal • are informed by the principal of the school's plan and opportunities to participate	• support and encourage children to treat others with respect and tolerance • model appropriate behaviours and teach children appropriate social skills including conflict resolution • act in accordance with the school plan if they observe/ know about bullying • encourage children to report bullying incidents • work effectively with the school in responding to bullying
Wider community: including other professionals	• are strategically included in bullying prevention and management	• provide support and input into the school's approach to preventing and managing bullying • strengthen the school's anti-bullying messages

School strategies to prevent and manage bullying

A school policy relating to student wellbeing and safety is the foundation for effective practices to counter bullying. At Morawa District High School we align our strategies with the *Australian Student Wellbeing Framework*[3] and *Be You*[4], a national mental health in education initiative.

At Morawa District High School we engage in ongoing and collaborative planning, monitoring and reviewing of the school's processes, strategies and programs will ensure that schools are ready to respond effectively.

This includes:

- setting a timeline for review and updating;

- using appropriate assessment tools to identify bullying issues and the school's progress towards achievement targets (snap-shot measures);

- collaborating and linking with key stakeholders of the school community to form effective family and community partnerships;

- providing opportunities for authentic student participation;

- using existing data to monitor changes over time (longitudinal measures);

- making adjustments to the selected strategies and programs based on the data;

- reviewing available resources (including human resources) to ensure that the approaches and strategies are suitable, accessible and sustainable; and

- communicating any changes to the whole-school community.

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[3] Australian Student Wellbeing Framework, Student Wellbeing Hub
[4] Be You https://beyou.edu.au

Whole school prevention strategies

- promoting a whole-school student support approach with shared leadership;

- promoting collaborative relationships between the school, parents (see parent factsheet) and the wider community on developing and implementing school based strategies and programs with students;

- developing a positive whole-school plan based on the teaching and recognition of respectful and pro-social behaviour;

- developing active, trusting relationships within the whole school community;

- establishing a skilled student support team;

- providing professional learning for staff and parents in identifying, preventing and addressing bullying (i.e. through Be You professional learning modules, the Office of the eSafety Commissioner);

- implementing a whole school social competency development curriculum;

- aligning approaches and strategies with the Australian Student Wellbeing Framework;

- using resources such as - Be You, Friendly Schools Plus and Bullying. No Way! to guide the school's planning;

- implementing developmental, evidence-based social emotional learning programs such as Friendly Schools Plus, Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies (PATHS™), and Aussie Optimism to develop shared understanding of:
  - what behaviours constitute bullying;
  - the impact of bullying;
  - safe and supportive bystander responses;
  - positive social problem solving skills;
  - promote a school culture that seeks to be proactive and restore relationships affected by persistent or unresolved conflict;
  - promote positive staff role modelling; and
  - ensure the plans or policies are monitored, reviewed and refined regularly and collaboratively.

Preventative classroom strategies can include:

- developing supportive and inclusive classroom environments;

- implementing teaching and classroom management strategies that teach and encourage positive behaviours, and address negative behaviours effectively;

- implementing teaching and learning programs to develop positive communication, empathy, tolerance, assertiveness, social and coping skills;

- promoting the use of cooperative learning strategies;

- encouraging and support help-seeking and positive bystander behaviour;

- using social problem solving approaches to resolve peer based conflicts; and

- implementing strategies from resources such as Cyber Savvy and the Office of the eSafety Commissioner to promote cyber safety and positive digital citizenship.

Playground strategies to be considered could include:

- coordinating a highly visible and active approach to playground supervision;

- implementing identification of and supervision adjustments to high-risk situations and settings;

- offering a range of organised activities during break times that encourage positive peer relations and networks;

- providing developmentally appropriate unstructured playground activities and equipment;

- recognising and reinforcing positive playground and pro-social behaviour; and

- developing and communicating whole school processes for responding to playground issues.

Targeted early intervention strategies

- raising awareness of and planning around, specific forms of bullying, such as cyberbullying and racism;

- identifying and targeting early signs of problematic peer relationship issues within the school community;

- identifying individuals and groups at risk that require targeted programs;

- teaching effective bystander behaviour to targeted groups or for specific situations;

- teaching pro-social behaviour to identified students and groups;

- providing high supervision areas for students with higher support needs;

- providing effective options for individual students experiencing safety issues (such as buddy systems, alternative play areas and transition routines);

- providing access to specialist/pastoral care staff and case management processes for students at risk of being targeted or those who demonstrate bullying behaviour; and

- promoting the inclusion of parents of students at risk in identifying and addressing bullying behaviours that may be occurring within the community.

Procedures and actions to respond to bullying incidents

Schools provide consistent and clearly articulated procedures for responding to incidents of bullying which may include the following:

- staff are provided with the support and training by school leadership to confidently manage bullying situations as they occur;

- provide parents with information including key contacts and how the school will respond to bullying incidents;

- staff, students and parents have processes for reporting incidents of bullying or when they become aware that a student needs support because of bullying;

- intervention practices that resolve conflicts, restore relationships, and promote tolerance and social problem solving are used for responding to bullying incidents;

- help all the students involved with the incident (e.g. the student(s) who bullied others; the student being bullied; bystanders) to discuss the incident such as using the Co-LATE model;

- Ensure staff members are aware of the processes for recording bullying incidences and monitoring the effectiveness of response strategies;

- students who are being bullied are provided with support by staff to promote recovery and resilience; and

- case management of students involved in persistent bullying is implemented.

School psychologists can assist schools in implementing whole-school approaches to preventing and responding to bullying incidents.

Restorative Approaches

Possible restorative approaches for students who bully others	
Restorative approach	**When this approach can be used**
The Shared Concern method **Age**: upper primary and Lower secondary students. For cases that are low to moderate severity	• Willingness to change behaviour • Groups of students identified as bullying others • Feels remorse, capacity for empathy • Also bullied by others • Person who bullies multiple individuals • Agreeable to participating in a series of meetings
Support Group method **Age**: middle to upper primary students. For cases that are low to low-moderate severity.	• Currently or previously a friend of person being bullied • Girls bullying girls • Person being bullied has other supportive friends • Feels remorse, has capacity for empathy • Influenced by group norms and normative expectations • Agreeable to participating in a series of meetings
Motivational interviewing **Age**: all secondary students. For cases that are low to moderate severity	• Does not feel remorse, limited capacity for empathy • Also bullied by others • Popular and/or high self-esteem • Willing to talk about behaviour • Person who bullies multiple individuals

Possible restorative approaches for students who are bullied by others	
Counseling approach	**When this approach can be used**
Individual meeting **Age**: Upper Primary and Secondary students. For cases that are low to moderate severity.	• Provocative individual • Individual has been bullied by multiple individual students and/or bullied for extended length of time • Also an individual who bullies others • Lower self-esteem • Agreeable to participating in a series of meeting
Support Group method **Age**: Middle to Upper Primary students and Secondary For cases that are low to low-moderate severity	• Currently or previously a friend of person who is bullying them • Girls bullying girls • Individual being bullied has other supportive friends • Agreeable to participating in a series of meetings
Motivational interviewing **Age**: All Secondary students. For cases that are low to moderate severity	• High motivation to take action to stop bullying • Willingness to help themselves • Individual has been bullied by multiple individual students and/or bullied for extended length of time • Provocative individual • Also an individual who bullies • Agreeable to participating in a series of meetings