

Anti-bullying Plan

Murwillumbah Learning Community High School





Bullying:

Preventing and Responding to Student Bullying in Schools Policy

The NSW Department of Education and Communities rejects all forms of bullying. No student, employee, parent, caregiver or community member should experience bullying within the learning or working environments of the Department.

Bullying

Bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons. Cyber bullying refers to bullying through information and communication technologies.

Bullying can involve humiliation, domination, intimidation, victimisation, and all forms of harassment including those based on sex, race, disability, sexuality or gender. Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long term effects on those involved including bystanders.

Conflict or fights between equals or single incidents are not defined as bullying.

Bullying behaviour can be:

- **verbal** e.g. name calling, teasing, abuse, putdowns, sarcasm, insults, threats
- **physical** e.g. hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting
- **social** e.g. ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating, making inappropriate gestures
- **psychological** e.g. spreading rumours, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions, malicious SMS and email messages, inappropriate use of camera phones.

The term "bullying" has a specific meaning. The school's Anti-bullying Plan sets out **the processes for preventing and responding to student bullying**. The school has a range of policies and practices, including welfare and discipline policies that apply to student behaviour generally.

Schools exist in a society where incidents of bullying behaviour may occur. Preventing and responding to bullying behaviour in learning and working environments is the shared responsibility of all departmental staff, students, parents, care-givers and members of the wider school community.

School staff have a responsibility to:

- respect and support students
- model and promote appropriate behaviour
- have knowledge of school and departmental policies relating to bullying behaviour
- respond in a timely manner to incidents of bullying according to the school's Anti-bullying Plan.

In addition, teachers have a responsibility to:

- provide curriculum and pedagogy that supports students to develop an understanding of bullying and its impact on individuals and the broader community.

Students have a responsibility to:

- behave appropriately, respecting individual differences and diversity
- behave as responsible digital citizens
- follow the school Anti-bullying Plan
- behave as responsible bystanders
- report incidents of bullying according to their school Anti-bullying Plan.

Parents and care-givers have a responsibility to:

- support their children to become responsible citizens and to develop responsible online behaviour
- be aware of the school Anti-bullying Plan and assist their children in understanding bullying behaviour
- support their children in developing positive responses to incidents of bullying consistent with the school Anti-bullying Plan
- report incidents of school-related bullying behaviour to the school
- work collaboratively with the school to resolve incidents of bullying when they occur.

All members of the school community

Have a responsibility to:

- model and promote positive relationships that respect and accept individual differences and diversity within the school community
- support the school's Anti-bullying Plan through words and actions
- work collaboratively with the school to resolve incidents of bullying when they occur.

Our School Anti-Bullying Plan

This plan outlines the processes for preventing and responding to student bullying in our school and reflects the *Bullying: Preventing and Responding to Student Bullying in Schools Policy* of the New South Wales Department of Education and Communities.

In developing this Anti-bullying plan parents/carers, students, teachers and other staff have been involved. Formal consultation has occurred with students, parents and teachers. This consultation has taken place during the development of the plan and will continue during implementation and review through formal and informal processes.

Statement of purpose

All students have the right to learn, and staff have the right to work, in a safe and secure, non-threatening environment. It is the responsibility of the whole school community to ensure this and to insist that harassment and bullying of any kind has no place in the school.

Protection

Bullying and harassment refers to any behaviour, verbal or physical, enacted by groups or individuals, intentionally or unintentionally that causes a person or a group of persons to feel or experience degradation or lack of self-worth. There are many forms of bullying and harassment evident that can affect the well-being of an individual. These can include sexual, racial, religious, personal, physical and emotional bullying or harassment.

Physical Contact: hitting, punching, kicking, touching another person in a way that causes unease, invading another's personal space, stalking.

Verbal Harassment: displaying an aggressive attitude, showing intolerance of another, teasing and taunting, making denigrating comments (racial, sexual, religious or personal), swearing, spreading rumours, disruptive behaviour, making accusations or bullying.

Body Language: using unacceptable body gestures and mannerisms towards others.

Written: notes, letters, graffiti which include denigrating comments or spreading rumours

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Sexual: Based on the gender of the victim and including discrimination, jokes, unwanted contact, leering, gestures and/or drawings.

Misuse of Technology: Bullying and harassment using texting and distributing of messages and images, Facebook/Twitter and other on-line messaging and imaging services;

On many occasions there are actions that are overlooked as forms of bullying and harassment. These can include stealing, extortion, verbal abuse directed at an individual, 'jokes' with a derogatory or sexual overtone. These actions can occur in the classroom, playground, staff room, on excursions, at sporting venues, during work experience, in the toilet, at the canteen, on the bus or outside school.

It is not acceptable at Murwillumbah Learning Community High School for an individual to stand by and accept, tolerate or suffer any form of bullying or harassment in the belief that it will disappear if ignored. It is an individual's right and responsibility to raise matters of bullying and harassment to themselves or others and to expect a supportive and caring response from the authority of the school.

The school accepts its responsibility for providing a safe environment. The school accepts its responsibility for educating the wider community about its Anti-Bullying Plan. The school is responsible for providing access to the Anti-Harassment Policy. An electronic copy can be provided on-line or a hard copy viewed at school.

The school also recognises that modelling appropriate behaviour is an important aspect of developing a school culture that does not tolerate bullying behaviour. Staff will model positive behaviour in their interactions with each other, students, parents and members of the general school community.

Students will be reminded frequently by staff that harassment is not tolerated and prompted to demonstrate positive behaviour towards each other. They will be encouraged to promote values of harmony and respect in their lives in the community.

- The role of the P&C and other relevant school community groups is to support the policy.
- The role of the Principal, Executive and staff is to apply the policy.

- The role of the community is to support the policy.
- The role of the students is to adhere to the policy.

School staff, students and parents are made aware of signs to watch for which indicate that a member of the school community is being bullied. The following observable behaviour patterns are acknowledged as possible indicators of bullying and harassment. A victim of bullying or harassment may:

- display a change in behaviour
- complain of teasing
- become isolated from peers
- truant
- voluntarily withdraw from class activities
- show low self-esteem
- show signs of stress
- become attention seeking

The school undertakes a wide range of strategies to maintain a positive climate of respectful relationships where bullying is less likely to occur. These strategies focus on the whole school community and on particular year groups as set out below.

Whole school

- Regular references on school assemblies (Wed)
- Stymie.com
- Safe on Social Media education
- Focus on positive behaviour
- Year meetings each term
- Collaborative planning with Family Centre and other schools
- Rewards for positive behaviour
- Positive Behaviour for Learning implementation
- Peer leadership program
- Celebration of Difference through Harmony Day, Indigenous programs and celebratory activities
- AIME – Aboriginal Leadership Program
- Beyond the Broncos – Aboriginal girls' leadership

program. Year 6

- Rock and Water activities incorporated into Orientation Days in December – Term 4.

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Year 7

- Year 7 Camp (3 days, incorporating Rock and Water activities. Focus on anti-bullying)
- Senior student
- Love Bites
- Mentors. Year 10
- Take a Stand (Whole day workshops incorporating an anti-bullying focus)
- Boys Group
- Girls Group - Term 2.

Year 9

- Love Bites (Focus on cyber bullying) - Term 2.

Year 10

- Real Skills (Small group workshops incorporating an anti-bullying focus) -
- Peer Leadership Training - Term 4.
- Peer Leadership Opportunities
 - Transition Activities
 - Yr 6 to 7 Orientation Days
- Peer Mediation

Training Year 11

- Peer Leadership Opportunities (Year 7 Camp) – Term 1.
- Peer Mediation Opportunities (if needed)
- World Vision leadership Convention - Term 2.

Prevention

Murwillumbah Learning Community High School implements a wide range of preventative strategies in relation to bullying. These include:

- Rock and Water Program
- Family Centre programs – partnerships with community agencies to undertake preventative programs including
 - Boys and Girls Groups
 - Targeted Year Group welfare days
- Negotiated support from School Liaison Police and Police Youth Liaison Officer
- The use of the anonymous, online reporting platform, Stymie.com
- “Love Bites” positive relationships program
- “Safe on Social” workshops to educate students on the safe and responsible use of social media

PDHPE

- Drug education units
- Cyber Bullying Unit
- Relationships unit for Year 7 – Positive family and friends
- Relationships unit for Year 8 – Developing strong relationships – power
- General teaching in team sports – co-operation and valuing others

TAS

Years 11 & 12

Hospitality

- Working with colleagues and customers
- Work in a socially diverse environment
- Conflict resolution
- Work placement experiences

Textiles

- Group work
- Peer assistance
- Collaborative teamwork

Community & Family Studies

- Independent research project
- Conflict resolution
- Working in groups

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Years 7&8 Technology Mandatory

Students participate in structured teams to undertake projects. Roles are allocated within the groups to ensure that all students take on leadership roles. The contributions and achievements of all students is explicitly valued and celebrated.

Years 9&10 Food Technology

Students work together to create dishes from a variety of cultures. Diversity is explicitly valued. Students are assisted by teachers to resolve conflict within work teams in a constructive way.

Years 9&10 IT Wood

Students are explicitly encouraged to support and assist each other in completing their projects.

ENGLISH

English

- Bullying is explicitly and implicitly dealt with as the issue arises in texts studied.
- Discussions, written responses and assessment tasks that focus on bullying and associated issues of tolerance, understanding, empathy and celebrating difference are used.

MATHEMATICS

- Focus on collaborative teamwork as a problem solving strategy across Year 7-8
- Conducting surveys and statistical analysis on issues relating to bullying and self-esteem as part of teaching and learning
- Students describe their research findings in a supportive classroom environment.

SCIENCE

- Working together in groups to fulfil practical course requirements
- Yr 9 reproduction and co-ordination – changes in the body, including emotional problems/issues/changes
- Yr 10 researching scientists and discussing the work that the scientists are credited with – many times the person that is credited with it is not the person who did all the work. The class, education and money that the true scientist had influenced this decision

SPECIAL EDUCATION

In all classes and Year groups a strong emphasis on developing appropriate social skills that are underpinned by respect for other people is paramount.

This is implemented through targeted social skills programs and activities including Riding for the Disabled, Work Experience and other activities.

CAPA

LOTE

In Japanese Y8 look at school structure, family structure and technology and discuss how Japanese kids are raised differently - grandparents live with families, respect for elders, teachers are treated well. We also discuss how the school structure (student's clean schools, etc.) impacts on social aspects like bullying (less likely occurrence as school is seen as family unit). Students then discuss the similarities and differences between Australia and Japan.

Visual Arts

This key learning area promotes a positive, caring and accepting environment for all students where teachers model appropriate language and actions for students and discourage activities which enable or promote exclusion. Teachers are alert to the possibility of discrimination and harassment, especially of the more subtle kinds, and encourage victims to speak out. The visual arts environment is one in which tolerance is encouraged, diversity is embraced and bullying is unacceptable.

Teachers place students in situations where they experience success and consistently attempt to build student self-esteem and autonomy. They empower students in the classroom by teaching assertiveness skills – 'I messages'. Students develop a shared concern for individuals and their creative works of art by accepting individuality.

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Music

Given the very nature of our subject and the strong emphasis which is placed on classroom performance just for the class to run effectively very strong and positive guidelines for the performer/audience relationship underpin the entire program.

Mutual acceptance of the variety of performances offered requires the understanding that when we perform we deserve a receptive audience so we must exhibit either neutral or positive responses to other students. We therefore have an informal "code of conduct" for all performance situations. This is based on teaching in a practical sense the "values" which give rise to mutual acceptance and tolerance.

HSIE

Yr 7-10 History & Geography

Issues of cultural and other differences are explored in a supportive classroom environment. Community inclusiveness and harmony are strong themes in these courses and class activities.

Years 11 & 12

Courses including Legal Studies, Modern History, Ancient History, Society and Culture and Geography are undertaken at Murwillumbah HS. In all of these courses, students work in collaborative small groups to investigate and report on cultural development and relationships. They are supported to develop better understandings of diversity.

LEAP (Year 7)

Explicit teaching of empathy, grit and collaboration and strategies for the cooperative work structure of the Year 7 program has fewer staff working with students and monitoring more closely their interactions

Early Intervention

The School's Wellbeing Team meets weekly. This team considers the welfare and learning needs of students, both as groups and as individuals.

Individual support plans that identify risks, opportunities and support needs are developed as needed. Support personnel from within the school and from the wider community are brought to bear in support of student needs.

Where the Deputy Principal, Head Teacher or a Year Advisor becomes aware of an emerging issue, teachers and other staff are briefed as needed to identify problems and support students.

Response

The school will publish its anti-bullying plan on its website and publicise it to students, parents and the general community on a regular basis.

The school is committed to developing a school community culture in which bullying is unacceptable.

The school will provide advice to parents/carers. The following suggestions are made to parents through print materials and at Parent Information meetings.

Take an active interest

- in your child's social life
- in what is happening at school

Encourage your child

- to bring friends home
- to accept and tolerate differences in others

Build your child's self-confidence

- by recognising and affirming his/her positive qualities
- by valuing him/her for who he/she is.

Discuss with your child

- the school's expectations about behaviour
- ways to respond if their rights are infringed

Encourage constructive responses

- physical bullying or persistent teasing should be reported

- hitting back or retaliating with name-calling won't solve the problem

Set an example

- be firm, but not aggressive, in setting behaviour limits
- be positive in things you say and do
- be positive in responding to bullying – don't overreact

Be alert for signs of distress

- unwillingness to attend school
- dropping off in academic performance
- damaged clothing and frequent loss of personal property
- loss of confidence and uncharacteristic mood changes
- withdrawal from social activities.

Act

If your child is being bullied at school, report it to a teacher, or the Principal. Your report will be followed up.

All reports made by students to teaching staff must be investigated as the bullying act may in some cases appear to be minor, but its effect on the victim may be more serious. Students are encouraged to report any incident that they feel may constitute bullying in the following ways;

- In the classroom: to the teacher or the Head Teacher of the faculty
- In the playground: to the teacher on duty or a Head Teacher or the Deputy Principal
- Travelling to/from school: to the Year Adviser or Parent or Bus Driver or Senior Student
- At sport: to the supervising teacher or the Sports Organiser
- All incidents can also be reported via stymie.com

Senior students who receive a **verbal notification** from a junior student should make immediate contact with the Head Teacher Playground Duty, Year Adviser or the Deputy Principal.

Fairness Flowchart

Bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons. Cyber-bullying refers to bullying through information and communication technologies.

Bullying can involve humiliation, intimidation, victimisation and all forms of harassment including that based on sex, race, disability, homosexuality or transgender. Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long term effects on those involved including bystanders. If this happens report it in person as per the following and/or make a STYMIE report;

Classroom Tell the class teacher	Sport Tell the sport teacher	Playground Tell the teacher on duty	Before & After School Tell the Year Advisor or Boys/Girls Advisor	To and From School Tell the Year Advisor or Boys/Girls Advisor
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Teacher or Advisor to take action by:

- A.** Mediating with students involved to seek an acceptable outcome.
- B.** Issuing consequences (detentions, written apology, appropriate card if bullying).
- C.** Record on SENTRAL and notify Year Advisor. Year Advisor contact home.
- D.** If unresolved or high level, refer to Head teacher/Rove teacher.



Head Teacher to take action by:

- A.** Meeting with students involved to seek an acceptable outcome.
- B.** Issuing consequences (detention, talking to parents, card if continuing to bully).
- C.** Updating on SENTRAL and notify Year Advisor and school Counsellor
- D.** If unresolved, refer to DP



Deputy Principal to take action by:

- A.** Meeting with students involved to seek an acceptable change in behaviour and attitude.
- B.** Developing an individual program in consultation with Year Advisor and School Counsellor to cater for student need (formal caution if continuing to bully).
- C.** Communicating with students and parents to seek an acceptable change in behaviour and attitude.
- D.** Suspension and developing a RISC Assessment if necessary
- E.** Accessing out of school resources and programs to support / rehabilitate.
- F.** Updating on SENTRAL.
- G.** Informing staff of students' profile.

Remember you can also report concerns to the student leaders who are always willing to support you.

The school will include items in the school newsletter detailing (within the bounds of privacy legislation) the school's management of bullying incidents reported to it.

Murwillumbah Learning Community High School complies with the DOE Serious Incidents in Schools policy and procedures. Where an incident is of sufficient seriousness to notify Police the school will, in addition to ringing the Murwillumbah Police Station, notify the DOE serious Incident Hotline.

The school will involve the School Police Liaison Officer and Youth Liaison Officer on a case by case basis.

In any instance of assault, threats, intimidation or harassment the legal avenues available will be advised to the victim and their family.

Murwillumbah Learning Community High School follows DOE policies and procedures in relation to child protection.

In line with the NSW government's Keeping Them Safe initiative the school uses the decision trees to identify the appropriate reporting process.

The DOE has procedures in place to facilitate appeals against school and departmental decisions. It also has a firmly established Complaints Handling Policy. Copies of these policies and procedures may be obtained from the DEC website [School A-Z www.schoolatoz.com.au/](http://www.schoolatoz.com.au/) or the school website www.murwillumb-h.schools.nsw.edu.au. These policies and procedures emphasise procedural fairness at all stages.

Murwillumbah Learning Community High School is committed to a process of continual quality improvement in its processes and procedures. A review has been initiated of

data collection and analysis in relation to student welfare, wellbeing and discipline. This review will include the development of strategies to better identify, analyse and respond to emerging trends.

The Anti-bullying plan will be published on the school website. Hard copies will also be made available to community members who do not have appropriate internet access. This will be publicized in the school newsletter.

The school conducts an annual review of its student welfare, wellbeing and discipline policies and processes. Anti-bullying will be included in this annual review. Incidents will be entered into the school's welfare/discipline database to provide data.

Murwillumbah Learning Community High School will incorporate information about the effectiveness of the Anti-bullying Plan in its Annual School Report.

Review of the school's Anti-bullying Plan will be incorporated into the school's planning and review cycle so that it will be reviewed at least every three years.

Additional Information

Police Youth Liaison Officer (YLO) Mark Harrison (07) 5536 9000
School Police Liaison Officer (SPLO) Nathan Verinder Tel (07) 5536 9000
Stymie.com

The following services may be contacted by telephone as listed

- Kids Helpline: 1800 55 1800
www.kidshelp.com.au
- Tweed Valley Sexual Assault Service: bh: 6620 2970 ah: 6621 8000
- Tweed Community Health: 07 5506 7540
- Tweed/Byron Network Community Mental Health Services: 07 5506 7370
Note: after hours calls to 1300 369 986
- The Family Centre: 07 5524 8711
www.thefamilycentre.org.au/

Principal's comment

Murwillumbah Learning Community High School has a broad range of student welfare programs which create a positive school climate and assist with the physical, social and emotional well-being of the students. A key part of this is our Anti-bullying Plan. This plan outlines prevention, early intervention and response strategies for student bullying and recognises that the best outcomes are achieved by school communities, parents, students and teachers working together to help prevent and to respond to bullying. Any student who experiences bullying or witnesses bullying should report it to a teacher.

This plan was reviewed in April for 2019 by a team including:

Peter Howes Principal
P&C President
School Captain

School contact information

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All students have the right to learn, and staff have the right to work, in a safe and secure, non-threatening environment. It is the responsibility of the whole school community to ensure this and to insist that harassment and bullying of any kind has no place in the school.

The school is committed to developing a school community culture in which bullying is unacceptable.

Murwillumbah Learning Community High School has a broad range of student welfare programs which create a positive school climate and assist with the physical, social and emotional well-being of the students. A key part of this our Anti-bullying Plan. This plan outlines prevention, early intervention and response strategies for student bullying and recognises that the best outcomes are achieved by school communities, parents, students and teachers working together to help prevent and to respond to bullying. Any student who experiences bullying or witnesses bullying should report it to a teacher.

Usually incidents will be dealt with on the same day they are reported. Interventions may occur over a period of time following the incident. (see table)

Students will be interviewed to identify the appropriate mix of interventions.

Murwillumbah Learning Community High School complies with the Department of Education (DoE) Serious Incidents in Schools policy and procedures. Where an incident is of sufficient seriousness to notify Police the school will, in addition to ringing the Murwillumbah Police Station, notify the DoE serious Incident Hotline.

The school will involve the School Liaison Police Officer and Youth Liaison Officer on a case by case basis.

In any instance of assault, threats, intimidation or harassment the legal avenues available will be advised to the victim and their family.

Murwillumbah Learning Community High School follows DoE policies and procedures in relation to child protection.

PROCEDURE FOR RESPONDING TO BULLYING INCIDENTS

Incident / Trigger	Procedure	Timeframe
Bullying witnessed by staff or Report of bullying received	Preliminary interview with reporter / victim	Immediate
Preliminary interview conducted	Decide whether to deal with the report or refer on	Following preliminary interview
Preliminary Interview conducted	Victim completes Bullying/Harassment sheet	Same day
Preliminary Interview conducted	Enter details into Wellbeing	Same day
Decision to refer / deal with	Implement Anti-bullying Policy requirements	Same day and Ongoing
Decision to refer / deal with	Notify parents/carers by phone/letter where needed. Tell them what has happened and what we will do. Give them a timeframe for dealing with the issue and stick to it.	Same day
Incident dealt with	Update Wellbeing	At completion
Incident dealt with	Notify parents/carers of results of intervention or ongoing strategies where needed.	At completion or at appropriate intervals

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