

Mordialloc College

BULLYING PREVENTION

POLICY

Policy Statement:

Mordialloc College is committed to providing a safe, respectful and caring environment and culture which enables positive relationships to be formed amongst all staff and students and which encourages self-esteem, cooperation, personal growth and a positive attitude to teaching and learning. The purpose of a clear policy on preventing bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment is to inform the whole community that **bullying and harassment in any of its forms will not be tolerated.**

Rationale:

Mordialloc College is a school that encourages all students to reach their full potential physically, intellectually and socially by providing them with challenging educational experiences within a safe, respectful and positive learning environment. We recognise that bullying exists within schools and the wider community, however bullying in any form, whether by staff or students, will not be tolerated. It is understood that bullying can have a profound and ongoing effect on the wellbeing of members of the College.

Our duty of care to our students and staff is a duty to take *reasonable* steps to minimise the risk of reasonably foreseeable injury. It is essential that Mordialloc College works with students, parents, carers and the wider community to promote anti-bullying strategies and effective response policies.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the 'Student Engagement Guidelines' policy, the Student Code of Conduct and the Staff Code of Cooperation.

Aims:

Mordialloc College will be a safe and supportive environment for the whole school community that:

- Reinforces that bullying behaviour is unacceptable
- Is aware of its responsibility to report signs and evidence of bullying to relevant staff
- Follows up all reported incidents and gives support to all parties involved
- Seeks parental and peer-group cooperation

Mordialloc College will provide whole school bullying prevention programs and a school environment that:

- Builds mutual respect and promotes safety at school
- Provides an engaging and inclusive curriculum for all students
- Promotes resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving
- Enhances school attendance
- Encourages supportive relationships that promote inclusiveness and belonging
- Supports successful transitions
- Encourages parents, family and community involvement

Definition:

Bullying is when a person, or a group of people, repeatedly upset or hurt another person or damage their property, reputation or social acceptance. Bullying may be direct physical, direct verbal, indirect or cyber bullying. There is an imbalance of power in incidents of bullying with the perpetrator having more power at the time due to factors such as age, size, status or other reasons. Bullying is not a one-off disagreement between two or more people or a situation of mutual dislike.

Bullying can be:

1. **Direct physical bullying** – e.g. hitting, tripping, and pushing or damaging property.
2. **Direct verbal bullying** – e.g. name calling, insults, homophobic or racist remarks, verbal abuse.
3. **Indirect bullying** – e.g. spreading rumours, playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate, mimicking, encouraging others to socially exclude a person, damaging a person's social reputation or social acceptance, or cyber bullying.

Cyber bullying is direct or indirect bullying behaviours using digital technology, for example via a mobile

phone, chat rooms or social media. It could involve setting up a defamatory personal website or deliberately excluding someone from social networking spaces. It can be verbal or written.

Harassment is any verbal, physical or sexual conduct (including gestures) which is uninvited, unwelcome and which is reasonably likely to humiliate, offend, intimidate or distress a person. For example, teasing a student because of their speech impediment.

When people are bullied or harassed some effects might be anger, embarrassment, fear and humiliation, loss of self-confidence and reduced function and potential. Bullying and harassment will be addressed, individual differences will be respected and students and staff will be enabled and supported in their pursuit of learning and teaching.

There are also some behaviours, which, although they might be unpleasant or distressing, are not bullying.

Bullying is not:

1. **Mutual conflict** – an argument or disagreement between students but not an imbalance of power. Both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution to the problem
2. **Social rejection or dislike** – unless the social rejection is directed towards someone specific and involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike for others
3. **Single episode** – Acts of nastiness or meanness, or random acts of aggression or intimidation – while unacceptable, these are not the same as bullying. If a student is verbally abused or pushed on one occasion they are not being bullied

Roles and Responsibilities:

Rights and Responsibilities of Students

Rights	Responsibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To access a wide and varied program that develops their potential as independent lifelong learners • To access a versatile educational program that meets their individual needs, including individual pathways • To participate in their education without the fear of harassment, intimidation or bullying from other members of the school community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be involved in the development and implementation of whole class-developed Code of Cooperation • Willingness to explore career / educational opportunities • Develop their potential as learners at every opportunity • Lead by positive example • Show empathy and respect for their peers and school community members • Be supportive of school rules and policies • Be punctual to all classes and attend regularly • Participate to their full potential in all aspects of their educational program

Rights and Responsibilities of Staff

Rights	Responsibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To work in a safe environment that is compliant with all relevant OH&S standards • To be informed of students with special learning needs in order to provide a supportive and engaging program. • To teach in a orderly and cooperative learning environment • To have access to adequate teaching resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use appropriate assessment tools to establish student's current learning standard • Negotiate tasks to cater for individual learning styles and abilities • Implement use of restorative justice principles in teaching practice • Develop positive learning relationships with all students – know how individuals learn and how to teach them effectively • Demonstrate respect and empathy for all students • Follow all College and Departmental procedures and policies, including mandatory reporting, duty of care, late process etc. • Provide a safe learning environment for all students • Incorporate quality learning practices into their teaching and learning program • Access professional development to expand their teaching in order to improve learning outcomes

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify and refer at-risk students in terms of attendance, wellbeing and/or progress • Consistent and fair assessment and reporting of learning to students, parents and other staff • Be a positive role model within the College Community
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Rights and Responsibilities of Parents and Carers

Rights	Responsibilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To feel confident that the College is providing a safe and nurturing learning environment • That their child will be provided with a rigorous, engaging educational program that is valued in the broader community • Receive regular progress reports regarding their child's education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To take an active interest in their child's education and model positive behaviours • To ensure their child regularly attends school and notify the College when their child is absent • Engage in regular and constructive discussion with school staff regarding their child's learning • Attend student-led conferences and / or Parent Teacher interviews with their child to engage in discussions about the child's learning journey • Support College policies and processes including appropriate behaviours and efforts by the school to provide a safe environment • Support their child to be fully equipped for all classes and ensure they have an appropriate space to complete homework

Implementation:

This policy has a three stage approach to addressing bullying behaviours.

1. Prevention:

- Ongoing professional development will be provided for staff in areas related to bullying and harassment, conflict resolution, classroom and student management
- Student programs that promote and develop positive wellbeing, resilience and social and emotional skills
- The Bullying prevention policy and processes will be made available to the entire Mordialloc College school community and are regularly communicated through the Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) program and the curriculum
- The Student Wellbeing team will be available for staff, students and other members of the school community regarding bullying and harassment information and concerns
- All class teachers develop a Code of Cooperation (CoC) with the students during their first lesson and each student keeps a copy of the agreed CoC which promotes values of Integrity, Personal Best, Respect and Responsibility
- Students are encouraged to report bullying incidents to classroom teachers, or a staff member they feel comfortable to talk to, promptly
- Audits completed by the school community to identify bullying behaviours
- Public recognition in the form of Postcards, for positive behaviour in line with the Mordialloc College values
- Implementation of surveys to identify the presence of bullying and focus groups to address concerns

2. Intervention:

- Any bullying and harassment related complaint can be lodged with a teacher, Year Level Coordinator (YLC), Director of Subscool, Student wellbeing staff member, Assistant Principals or Principal
- All complaints will be investigated promptly, confidentially, with impartiality and will be documented
- Appropriate agencies will be informed if deemed necessary (eg. Police)
- Students have access to safe and supervised areas as needed
- Parents/Carers kept informed

3. Post Incident:

- Restorative processes including the opportunity for restorative conversations and, if required, counselling to support students/staff at risk of being bullied or who are bullying others will be provided

- Further strategies for dealing with the issue will be in line with recommendations made in the Student Engagement Guidelines policy and will be implemented in a timely manner
- Reinforcement of positive behaviours and appropriate behaviour strategies and may include the development of a Behaviour Management Plan (BMP)
- Persons involved in, affected by or witness to bullying behaviour are offered support and counselling if required
- Agreed support agencies are engaged as required

Links to other Policies and Practices:

Student Engagement Guidelines policy
 Student Code of Conduct
 Staff Code of Cooperation
 Parent/Carer concerns and complaints policy

Support Services available:

Kingston Youth Services - 1300 369 436 and/or www.kyfs.org.au
 Headspace – 9076 9400 (Bentleigh/Moorabbin)
 9769 6419 (Frankston)
<http://headspace.org.au/>
 Kids Helpline – 1800 55 1800 and/or www.kidshelpline.com.au/

Review:

This policy will be reviewed by the Program Development Committee annually

Victorian government schools are child safe environments. Our school actively promotes the safety and wellbeing of all students and all of our school staff are committed to protecting students from abuse or harm in the school environment in accordance with their legal obligations including the Child Safe Standards. The school's Child Safe policy and Code of Conduct are available on the school's website.

This policy was last ratified by School Council in....	August 2017	
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