



Macquarie Fields High School

Anti-bullying Plan

Updated 12/2/2019

1. DEFINITION

“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. Cyberbullying refers to bullying through information and communication technologies. Bullying can involve humiliation, domination, intimidation, victimisation and all forms of harassment including that based on sex, race, disability, homosexuality or transgender. Conflict or fights between equals or single incidents are not defined as bullying”.

2. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Our school accepts that it has a responsibility to raise awareness of bullying and cyberbullying and educate and support students in the development of positive relationships in the context of a calm and safe environment; develop responsible use of the media as digital citizens and encourage the reporting of bullying to remove the anonymity behind which the bully hides.

3. OUTCOMES OF THE ANTI-BULLYING PLAN

- awareness, in students, of their role in helping to reduce bullying
- more resilient students
- increased reporting of incidents of bullying and cyberbullying
- increased use of early intervention strategies
- a sensitive and safe reporting environment
- reduction in instances of bullying students either directly or online
- developed and embedded anti-bullying messages across the curriculum
- increased capacity for student leaders to promote anti-bullying messages

4. RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THIS PLAN

The whole school community including staff, students and parents.

5. RESPONSIBILITIES

At Macquarie Fields High School we believe that it is the responsibility of students, caregivers, teachers and the school community to increase reporting of bullying and work towards creating a positive school climate. Members of the school community should model and promote positive relationships that respect and accept individual differences and diversity. It is an expectation that members of the school community work together to resolve incidents of bullying when they are reported.

Macquarie Fields High School staff have a responsibility to:

- provide opportunities for students to understand the effects of bullying and the individual's role in reducing bullying
- listen to, respect and support students
- model and promote appropriate behaviour
- have knowledge of school and DEC policies related to bullying behaviour
- respond to incidents of reported or identified bullying

Macquarie Fields High School students have a responsibility to:

- behave appropriately, respecting individual differences and diversity
- behave as responsible digital citizens
- be aware of the school's Anti-bullying Plan
- behave as responsible bystanders
- report incidents of bullying and cyberbullying

Macquarie Fields High School parents, caregivers (and the broader community members) have a responsibility to:

- support their children to become responsible citizens and develop responsible online behaviour
- acknowledge the behaviours that constitute bullying behaviour
- be aware of the school Anti-bullying Plan and assist their children in understanding and reporting bullying behaviour
- support their children in developing positive responses to incidences of bullying consistent with the school Anti-bullying Plan
- report incidents of school related bullying to the school.

6. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Students may occasionally come into conflict with one another, this is not necessarily bullying.
- During schools hours, where schools have requisite control, reasonable steps to reduce cyberbullying should be taken.
- The school can take no responsibility for out of school hours cyberbullying and such conduct should be reported to Police. Macquarie Fields High School may, as appropriate, support and assist families in such reporting, including the collection of relevant information concerning inappropriate online behaviour.
- Reasonable disciplinary action by staff conducted in a reasonable manner does not constitute bullying.

7. PREVENTATIVE STRATEGIES

Macquarie Fields High School has instituted many programs to both educate students, teachers and parent/caregivers about the dangers of anti-social behaviour and provide strategies for building resilience.

Whole school strategies include:

- Positive Learning for Behaviour Modules.
- Embedding anti-bullying messages into curriculum area.
- Welfare programs focused on anti-bullying and building positive relationships.
- Peer Support program.
- Yellow Ribbon program.
- Regular year meetings with a welfare focus.
- School Code of Conduct.
- Regular distribution of information to students and parents about steps for preventing, dealing and responding to bullying and cyberbullying.
- Staff training and awareness.
- Parent/caregiver information to raise awareness.
- Referral to outside agencies for support phone numbers.
- Anti-racism Education Workshops (students and staff).

8. RESPONSE

It is important to recognise that in responding to bullying behaviour a planned combination of interventions might be matched to the particular incident of bullying.

Macquarie Fields High School students should:

- report incidents where they believe they have been bullied at school or online
- never ignore the bullying of another student
- report incidents where they believe another or others have been bullied at school or online
- report to: a trusted teacher; counsellor; year advisor; yellow ribbon student; peer support leader; SRC member; Head Teacher Welfare or a Deputy Principal or to your parent/caregiver.
- not encourage bullying, by laughing or giving any form of approval towards an act of bullying
- immediately inform a teacher especially when a situation is, or looks, violent and threatening
- screen those they communicate with over the internet and “block” immediately those people who send inappropriate comments over the internet rather than continue to communicate with them
- print out a copy of any bullying which occurs online and report this to your parents or Police
- where a threat of violence is implied or imminent and where this threat occurs outside of school hours, report behaviour immediately to a parent or caregiver and/or police

Macquarie Fields High School parents and caregivers should:

- report incidents where they believe their child has been bullied at school or online
- be aware of any changes in the demeanour or mood of their child – a child who has been happy at school and who suddenly loses interest and enthusiasm for school may be a victim of bullying. This can often occur before school restarts, after a weekend or after the school holidays. Report your concerns to your child’s Year Advisor or a Head Teacher Welfare on (9605 3111)
- question your child if he/she presents with unexplained cuts or bruises
- report instances of cyberbullying which occur outside of school hours to the school and also to the police and insist that your child shut down any such communication rather than continue to engage with this form of bullying
- print out a copy of any inappropriate material online which is used to bully a child
- be aware of the school’s Anti-bullying Plan
- parents should support the school response to reports of alleged bullying and work with the school to modify the behaviour of their child where their child may have been bullying other students.
- understand that advising retaliation, physical violence or otherwise, is an illegal and inappropriate response which will need to be dealt with according to DEC policy and which may lead to a harsher consequence than the initial incident of bullying.

Macquarie Fields High School teachers should:

- be approachable and **listen** to students who approach them regarding instances of bullying
- treat all student concerns with respect, valuing that the issue, perhaps trivial in your opinion, may be traumatic for the student; downplaying a student’s concern may lead to an escalation of the problem for the student
- be proactive in recognising true bullying both in the classroom and in the playground
- modify seating plans, sensitive to the particular needs of students, in a particular classroom

- watch for changes in mood and/or friendship groups and pass on your observations to the Year Advisor
- actively promote positive relationships that accept and respect individual differences and diversity in the school community
- talk with ‘bullies’ to make them aware of the seriousness of their actions and behaviour
- take responsibility for disciplining students in your classroom who might be engaging in inappropriate behaviour and enter details onto SENTRAL—Well-being Module so that any emerging patterns of bullying may be tracked
- where a situation is escalating refer the issue immediately to your Head Teacher who will involve necessary personnel as and if required
- ensure any referrals for bullying are followed up in a timely and empathetic manner and that victims are appropriately supported.

Macquarie Fields High School senior executive should:

- be approachable and **listen** to students who approach them regarding instances of bullying
- respond to incidents and/or reports of bullying and/or cyberbullying in a timely and empathetic manner ensuring that victims and the families of victims are appropriately supported
- ensure documentation is updated in terms of senior executive response
- ensure the school community is aware of the Anti-bullying Plan
- isolate and/or suspend students pursuant to DEC guidelines for the suspension and expulsion of students.
- **gather information in relation to cyber-bullying and report it to the appropriate authorities including police and/or the Child Well-being Unit.** (Child Protection issues are paramount in determining the actions of the Senior Executive, as it is with all members of staff).
- **contact the police and the School Safety and Response Unit where incidents of cyber-bullying and bullying include possible criminal behaviour**
- apply consequences consistently and fairly.

9. EVALUATION

- Macquarie Fields High School will undertake a detailed review of this Anti-bullying Plan every three years.
- We will report annually on the success of the plan in terms of outcomes stated in our Statement of Purpose and modify the Anti-bullying Plan annually as required. Such a report to be included in the Annual School Report.
- Data analysed to determine the achievement of outcomes will include but is not limited to: suspension and pre-suspension data; attendance data for at risk students; student and staff surveys; parent surveys; and anonymous e-mail account.
- Evaluation will be carried out by a sub-committee of the Welfare team which shall include: One Deputy Principal; the Head Teacher Welfare and two other members of staff.

Kids Helpline: 1800 55 1800 counselling for students 24 hours per day “We care. We listen.”