

# Mount Pleasant Primary School

## Anti Bullying Policy and Procedures



Ratified 17/10/2012

### Rationale

At Mount Pleasant we encourage and expect all members of our community to act Responsibly and treat themselves and others with Respect and Honesty. These values engender an environment of support and care that does not tolerate bullying, harassment or violence of any kind in any way and will be dealt with seriously and expediently.

Bullying is defined as 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 such as the internet and mobile phones. See Appendix 1 for signs of Bullying and Being a Bully.

Fights, arguments or conflicts of any type where there is no imbalance of power or are one-off incidences, although serious, are not defined as *bullying*.

As bullying can have serious long term effects on those involved, all members of our school community will actively engage with and follow the guidelines and procedures of this policy to ensure the safety (physical, social, emotional and psychological) and wellbeing of all.

### **Examples of bullying**

- *Physical:* hitting, pushing, touching, grabbing, looks, stares, facial expressions, gestures, spitting, taking or damaging property
- *Verbal or written:* spoken or written insults, threats, suggestive comments, name-calling, unfair criticism, spreading rumours
- *Cyber:* using e-mail, voice and text messaging, social networking sites, photographic and video images
- *Graffiti:* using pictures, tags or words
- *Social:* forming groups to leave out, ignore and disrespect; influencing, encouraging or organising someone else to be involved in any type of bullying or harassment or comments on social networking sites

### Aims

- To oppose bullying, harassment and violence of any type or form.
- To counter the view that bullying is an inevitable part of school life.
- To provide strategies for responding to bullying.
- To create a safe, supportive environment to enhance learning outcomes and wellbeing for all.

## **Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of all members of our school community to actively promote a safe and secure environment by taking appropriate actions to stop bullying behaviors if they encounter them.

### ***The School***

The school, through its Leadership, should:

- Promote, maintain and review the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedures.
- Actively follow up all incidences.
- Communicate effectively and appropriately with staff, students and parents concerning bullying incidences.
- Collect, record and report relevant data<sup>i</sup> as appropriate or required.
- Develop and maintain a bully free culture.
- Ensure staff have effective, on-going training in relation to antibullying in schools.
- Ensure new members of the school community (staff, students or parents) are informed of the schools policy and procedures in regards to bullying and harassment.

### **All Staff**

If a student reports a bullying incident or a staff member witnesses incidents of bullying, they should:

- Be familiar with and act in accordance to the school's bullying policy and procedures.
- Treat all reports of bullying seriously.
- Listen and provide support to the target of the bullying by acknowledging the nature and seriousness of bullying behaviour.
- Report incidents to the Class teacher and/or Principal.
- Fill out a Bullying Incident Report form.
- Put in place anti-bullying strategies as appropriate using Restorative Practices and Method of Shared Concern<sup>1</sup>.
- Encourage targeted students to report similar behavior if repeated.
- Encourage bystanders to report similar behavior if repeated.
- Document incidents of serious violence on the behaviour and critical incident forms.
- Communicate with Parent/Caregivers in a timely<sup>ii</sup> and appropriate manner<sup>iii</sup>.

At other times staff will:

- Teach, maintain and model the school's expectations in relation to bullying.
- Be involved in the development, implementation and review of the school's anti-bullying policy and procedures.
- Encourage and develop positive relationships with students and parents.
- Empower students to become effective bystanders.
- Engage with training and development to further improve their knowledge of anti-bullying programs and strategies.

---

<sup>1</sup> See page 5

## Parents and Caregivers

If bullying occurs it is best tackled by parents and the school working together.

Parents should:

- Support the school and its policies and procedures.
- Make themselves available for contact by phone.
- Speak positively about the school to and around their child.
- Support and encourage their children to interact appropriately with others.
- Support their children if they do become involved in bully/victim difficulties and be prepared to share the problem and work collaboratively with the school to solve it.

Parents who witness bullying should:

- Not take matters into their own hands.
- Speak to relevant school staff (not the students concerned).
- Speak in a calm, respectful manner with school staff.

## Students

If a student feels they are being bullied they should:

- Tell the bully/bullies to stop, if they feel able, using assertive but not aggressive language.
- Report the behavior, as soon as possible, to a trusted adult<sup>iv</sup> with the expectation they will be listened to and believed.

Students who witness bullying should:

- Report the behavior, as soon as possible, to a trusted adult with the expectation they will be listened to and believed.
- Be an effective bystander by safely intervening and discouraging bullying behaviour through peer pressure.
- Not encouraging the bully through their presence or inaction.
- Encourage the victim to safely leave the situation by walking away with them.
- Encourage, and if necessary go with, the victim to report the incident.
- Support the person being bullied.
- Document the incident if requested by staff.

## PROCEDURES

### ACTIONS

In the actions taken when dealing with bullying there needs to be a degree of flexibility depending on the nature, extent and severity of the bullying. Sanctions or other punitive measures may be applied and in extreme cases the principal can suspend students from attendance at school. When sanctions are applied they will be appropriate to the severity of the offence.

Sanctions may include (but are not restricted to):

- Office time out
- Restricted play
- Removal from the yard at recess and/or lunch
- Internal suspension
- Behaviour plan
- External suspension

Punishing bullies may not be the best way to deal with their behaviour because research shows non-punitive responses can work just as well or better.

[\*Bullying in Schools: Six Methods of Intervention\*](#) by Professor Ken Rigby is used in supporting effective interventions following a bullying incident.

1. **The Traditional Disciplinary Approach** Setting out clear behaviour standards and using punishment to prevent and deter bullies from repeating their behaviour; punishment could include detention, loss of privileges, chores to be undertaken and even suspension.
2. **Restorative Practice** Encouraging admission of bullying by the perpetrator and stimulating genuine remorse; helping the bully take steps to restore damaged relationships.
3. **Strengthening the Victim** Helping and coaching students to confront a bully assertively; to stand firm and discourage the bullying behaviour through calm and controlled language; to redress the balance of perceived power.
4. **Mediation** Assisting the bully and the victim in resolving their differences and helping them find a peaceful win-win solution or compromise.
5. **The Support Group Method** Gaining the cooperation of the perpetrators by revealing to them the distress that has been experienced by the victim at a meeting in which students supportive of the victim are also present.
6. **The Method of Shared Concern** Empowering the bullies to assist in resolving the bully/victim problem through the use of individual and group meetings with the participants.

In all cases:

- Bullied students will receive support and assistance from the school dependent upon individual needs and circumstances.
- Follow-up will occur with both the perpetrator and the victim dependent upon individual needs and circumstances.
- Parents of both the bully and the victim will be kept informed of progress.

Staff will also address bullying through the curriculum. Below are some ways this may be done.

- Implementing Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum.
- Explicit teaching about bullying and harassment.
- Explicit teaching of how to be an effective bystander, grievance procedures and the use of assertive but not aggressive language and actions.
- Teaching and involvement in the 5 Keys To Success.
- Friendship Day activities.
- Teaching & modelling the school values.

## **Signs a Child is Being Bullied**

Look for changes in the child. However, be aware that not all children who are bullied exhibit warning signs.

Some signs that may point to a bullying problem are:

- Unexplainable injuries
- Lost or destroyed clothing, books, electronics, or jewelry
- Frequent headaches or stomach aches, feeling sick or faking illness
- Changes in eating habits, like suddenly skipping meals or binge eating. Children may come home from school hungry because they did not eat lunch.
- Difficulty sleeping or frequent nightmares
- Declining grades, loss of interest in schoolwork, or not wanting to go to school
- Sudden loss of friends or avoidance of social situations
- Feelings of helplessness or decreased self esteem
- Self-destructive behaviors such as running away from home, harming themselves, or talking about suicide

If you know someone in serious distress or danger, don't ignore the problem. Get help right away. See responsibilities above.

## **Signs a Child is Bullying Others**

Children may be bullying others if they:

- Get into physical or verbal fights
- Have friends who bully others
- Are increasingly aggressive
- Get sent to the principal's office or to buddy class frequently
- Have unexplained extra money or new belongings
- Blame others for their problems
- Don't accept responsibility for their actions
- Are competitive and worry about their reputation or popularity

**BULLYING REPORT FORM****Details of Person Taking Report**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Report: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Time: \_\_\_\_\_am/pm

**Details of Person(s) Reporting:**

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

Class/Role: \_\_\_\_\_

Others: Name (s) \_\_\_\_\_

**Witness(es)/ Bystanders Name(s)** (if any): \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

**Brief Details:****Date of Incident:** \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ : **Time:** \_\_\_\_\_am/pm**Place:** \_\_\_\_\_**Person Reporting Bullying : Statement:**

**Person (People) Accused of Bullying : Statement:**

**Witness's Statement:**

**Have any of these people been named in a previous report? Yes/No (Circle)  
Provide brief details.**

**Action taken by teacher(s) :**

## GLOSSARY

---

<sup>i</sup> **Relevant Data:** - This may be any type of information that has specific relevance to the person or group the information is reported to. This may be any information that pertains to a specific incidence of bullying or statistical information regarding the types, frequency, severity and consequences of bullying incidences.

<sup>ii</sup> **Timely:** - Timely refers to a time frame that would be seen as reasonable to the parent. The time frame will depend largely on the type and severity of the incident. For example physical violence should mean immediate contact, where as name calling or isolation could wait until the end of the day.

<sup>iii</sup> **Appropriate manner:** - The appropriateness of the communication with a parent regarding an incidence will depend largely upon the nature of the incident. Sending a formal letter home may not be appropriate when dealing with a first time minor incident where a phone call or an after school chat may do. Interrupting a parent at work to tell them their child has been called a name may not be seen as appropriate unless the language used was very severe or it was the 20<sup>th</sup> time in three days it has happened.

<sup>iv</sup> **Trusted Adult:** - A trusted adult is considered to be any adult that the child feels safe and comfortable with. They are someone the child feels they can talk to about their problems without feeling embarrassed or pressured. The children are encouraged to choose people they know will be able to help them with their problem which is why we say 'adult'. Their best friend or their dog may be great to talk to but are probably the least effective in helping to devise a solution.