



MOUNT VIEW HIGH SCHOOL

Delivering excellence, innovation and success



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY





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Document History

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WHAT IS BULLYING?

Our school rejects all forms of bullying behaviours, including online (or cyber) bullying by maintaining a commitment to providing a safe, inclusive and respectful learning community that promotes student wellbeing. Executive staff are committed to establishing evidence-based approaches and strategies that promote a positive climate where bullying is less likely to occur.

DEFINITION

Bullying behaviour has three key features. It involves the intentional misuse of power in a relationship. It is ongoing and repeated, and it involves behaviours that can cause harm.

The NSW Department of Education requires all NSW public schools to have an Anti-bullying Plan which details the strategies implemented to reduce student bullying behaviours.

TYPES OF BULLYING

- Bullying can happen in person or online. It can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert).
- Bullying might involve repeatedly:
 - Physically hurting someone
 - Keeping someone out of a group (online or in person)
 - Saying mean or humiliating things, or spreading rumours or lies
 - Sending nasty messages or inappropriate images online
 - Tagging inappropriate images online.

A person can be bullied about many different things such as how they look, sound or speak; their background, religion, race or culture including being Aboriginal; they have a disability; their sex; being lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and/or intersex (**LGBTI**); their size or body shape; their schoolwork, hobbies or achievements; or other ways they may be different.

ABOUT BULLYING

- Bullying is NOT the same as conflict or disliking someone – even though these things may sometimes lead to bullying.
- If someone teases or behaves in a mean or aggressive way once, it isn't bullying. It is not okay, but it isn't bullying. A fight or disagreement between friends isn't bullying.
- Bullying has negative effects and consequences on everyone involved. People who are bullied need help to feel safe. People who bully others need help to change.

SCHOOL CULTURE AND INCLUSION

All members of the school community are active participants in building a welcoming school culture that values diversity and fosters positive relationships. A key component of a supportive school culture is building respectful relationships and an ethos that bullying is not accepted, in both online and offline environments. School staff actively respond to student bullying behaviour. The community has previously been invited to participate in a review of the Bullying Policy of Mount View High School and make a series of recommendations to inform this newly developed policy. The summary of the review and findings is listed as an Appendicle 2.



PROMOTING A POSITIVE SCHOOL CULTURE

The following procedure outlines the responsibilities for staff, students and parent/carers in regard to reporting and managing incidents related to bullying at Mount View High School.

STAFF AWARENESS

1. Raise awareness through whole staff meetings, ongoing evaluation and regular reporting
2. Implement programs to involve ALL school staff. Features of these programs to include:
 - Bullying is
 - Rights, Responsibilities and Respect
 - What everyone can do about it
 - Walk through the Harassment Form
3. Adopt whole school procedures for dealing with bullying incidents
4. Wellbeing meetings
5. Explicit teaching in Year Groups, wellbeing team responsibility

STAFF REPORTING

When incidents of bullying are reported to staff AT ANY TIME, intervention strategies are implemented and a report is made of the process through the Harassment Form. This information is then forwarded to the Head Teacher Wellbeing.

STUDENT AWARENESS

1. Raise awareness of 'Hands Off' and 'It's OK to tell' through SRC speakers on assemblies and class discussions
2. Displays and posters to promote a safe environment
3. Year Advisers, Head Teacher Wellbeing / Deputy Principal visits to Year Assemblies to explain procedures
4. National day of Action against bullying and harassment
5. Anti-bullying awareness lessons and PYLO sessions

STUDENT REPORTING

Staff members investigate all reports made by students to teaching staff 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 constitutes bullying in the following ways:

1. In the **classroom** – to the **classroom teacher or Head Teacher**
2. In the **playground** – to the **teacher on duty or the Head Teacher on Duty**
3. **Travelling to and from school** – to the Year Advisers, Head Teacher Wellbeing, **Parent, Bus Driver**
4. **At Sport** – to the **supervising teacher or Teacher in Charge of Sport**

In all cases, students must complete a **Notification of Student Harassment** form, which is available in all staff rooms, as well as with Year Advisers and the Head Teacher Wellbeing.



PROMOTING A POSITIVE SCHOOL CULTURE

MVHS practices support student wellbeing and positive behaviour approaches that align with community needs.

Social and emotional skills related to personal safety, resilience, help-seeking and protective behaviours are explicitly taught across the curriculum in Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE).

Examples of other ways that our school embed student wellbeing and positive behaviour approaches and strategies in practices include the following:

1. Professional Learning

Professional learning for staff is a critical component of our current student wellbeing program including a recent focus on:

- VIA Character Strengths
- Trauma-informed practice
- Positive Education
- Mindfulness training through Smiling Minds
- Supported through Real Schools affective language and consistent practices

2. Positive Education / Five Ways to Wellbeing

Mount View High School is a lead school in the Hunter Valley in the introduction of the principles of positive education / positive wellbeing. As a PESA (Positive Education Schools Association) member school, Mount View High School embraces the Five Ways to Wellbeing (NEF) framework as the basis for supporting the wellbeing of our students. Positive education is “the development of educational environments that enable the learner to engage in established curricula in addition to knowledge and skills to develop their own and others’ wellbeing” (Oades, Robinson, Green & Spence, 2011). It is our belief that, without compromising either, can schools teach both the skills of wellbeing and the skills of academic achievement.

Students are engaged in extended period one lessons and weekly wellbeing lessons to check in and inform students of vital information relating to wellbeing, safety, attendance and engagement. A range of positive education activities are conducted during wellbeing lessons – often focussed on developing student’s understanding of the Five Ways to Wellbeing framework. Period one allows for a welcoming, inclusive and positive experience to each day so that students’ engagement in, and connectedness and belonging to school, is enhanced.

Wellbeing and Engagement is our third Strategic Directions in our 2021 – 2024 School Plan and our school vision states that our school continues to strive for ‘High Expectations and Opportunities for all to Thrive’ in all aspects of the school learning environment.

3. Wellbeing Support Programs

Mount View High School strategically plans for and implements internal and external wellbeing programs, and support mechanisms. A whole school scope and sequence for wellbeing support outlines the theme of each year group (7-12), wellbeing strategies, responsibilities and funding. Internal and external wellbeing programs are included in the scope and sequence following a review of SENTRAL wellbeing data, Learning Support Team referrals and meeting minutes, counsellor interventions, Year Adviser input and community need. This document is evaluated and reviewed regularly to ensure initiatives are meeting the current wellbeing needs of students. A significant budget has been allocated to resource internal and external wellbeing programs.

External programs such as Batyr, Reach, Brainstorm Productions etc have been engaged to provide significant wellbeing intervention in the school in line with the themes identified through our scope and sequence. Evaluative evidence from students (statistical and anecdotal) is gathered after each program intervention and has indicated high levels of student engagement in the program and that, as a result of their involvement, they will be more open to seeking help to support their mental wellbeing.

In response to students demonstrating complex mental health needs and suicidal ideation, the wellbeing program has also collaboratively developed risk management plans, safety plans, self-harm action plans, TAR 3 evaluations and collaborated with CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) and the Nexus Ward at John Hunter Hospital to refine return to school processes after an inpatient admission.

4. Establishment of the SPHERE – A Wellbeing Hub

In 2020 Mount View High School established The SPHERE with an aim to meet the diverse wellbeing needs of all students. The SPHERE at Mount View High School offers a safe, supportive and respectful environment promoting the emotional development and wellbeing of students.

S – Self: Compassion: Knowing Your Value.

P – Potential: Possibility For Change.

H – Hearing: I hear you. Listen. Validate.

E – Empathy: I am aware that I am not the only one.

R – Responsibility: I choose how I respond.

E – Evolve: The only way is through. Growth is a “through” process.

The aim of The SPHERE is to establish consistency, stability and a sense of belonging within the school community. The primary focus of The SPHERE is proactivity and prevention; the secondary focus is providing reactive therapeutic support. The SPHERE will create opportunities where students at MVHS can develop communities within their existing school community. We believe that through encouraging belonging and inclusivity, human beings thrive. The SPHERE is staffed by a fulltime youth worker, full time chaplain, and supported by two Head Teachers Wellbeing.

5. A focus on continuous improvement

The school’s student wellbeing program is continually being evaluated using statistical and anecdotal data and informed by research and evidence-based initiatives.

Establishment of a GP clinic, in the school, in consultation with Community Health Care, following an 18 month period of consultation and approval within the NSW DoE.

- Accepted as one of 30 schools Australia-wide for free training by Smiling Mind. Mindfulness is being trialled by several staff, in various classrooms and in senior learning and study spaces. A team continues to guide the implementation and maintenance of the program.
- Re-introduction of AAI (animal-assisted interventions) following a most successful three year period of the school counsellor being supported by “Brando,” a border collie, before his recent transfer to Sydney. The success of this program has been outlined at state and national conferences as, while dogs in schools is somewhat prevalent in primary schools, implementation in a secondary setting has been relatively rare. Mount View High School also initiated a “Pause 4 Paws” forum where we showcased the therapeutic interventions and benefits of AAI. The forum was attended by approximately 50 teaching and counselling staff from NSW and QLD.

6. Commitment to professional collaboration and research

Mount View High School executive and wellbeing staff are strongly committed to professional collaboration and research and this is a key component of our student wellbeing program.

Ongoing and significant professional collaboration has occurred with a number of experts in the field including Dr Paula Robinson (Positive Psychology Institute, Sydney), Dan Haesler (Cut Through Coaching, Sydney), Geelong Grammar School Institute of Positive Education, Dr Darren Morton (Lecturer in Lifestyle Medicine, Avondale College NSW and author of *Live More Happy* and *The Lift Project*). Collaboration is also strongly supported and effected with DoE personnel and Hunter New England Health staff such as the School Link Coordinator, CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service) and through professional relationships with Cessnock Healthy Lifestyle Network members.

7. PARENT / COMMUNITY AWARENESS

Effective schools have high levels of parental and community involvement. This involvement is strongly related to improved student learning, attendance and behaviour. Our school proactively builds collaborative relationships with families and communities to create a shared understanding of how to support student learning, safety and wellbeing.

1. Awareness raising through the Mount View High School newsletter
2. Advice to parents in Student Information Booklets
3. P & C support of policy
4. Published policy and procedures through the Mount View High School newsletter

8. PARENT REPORTING

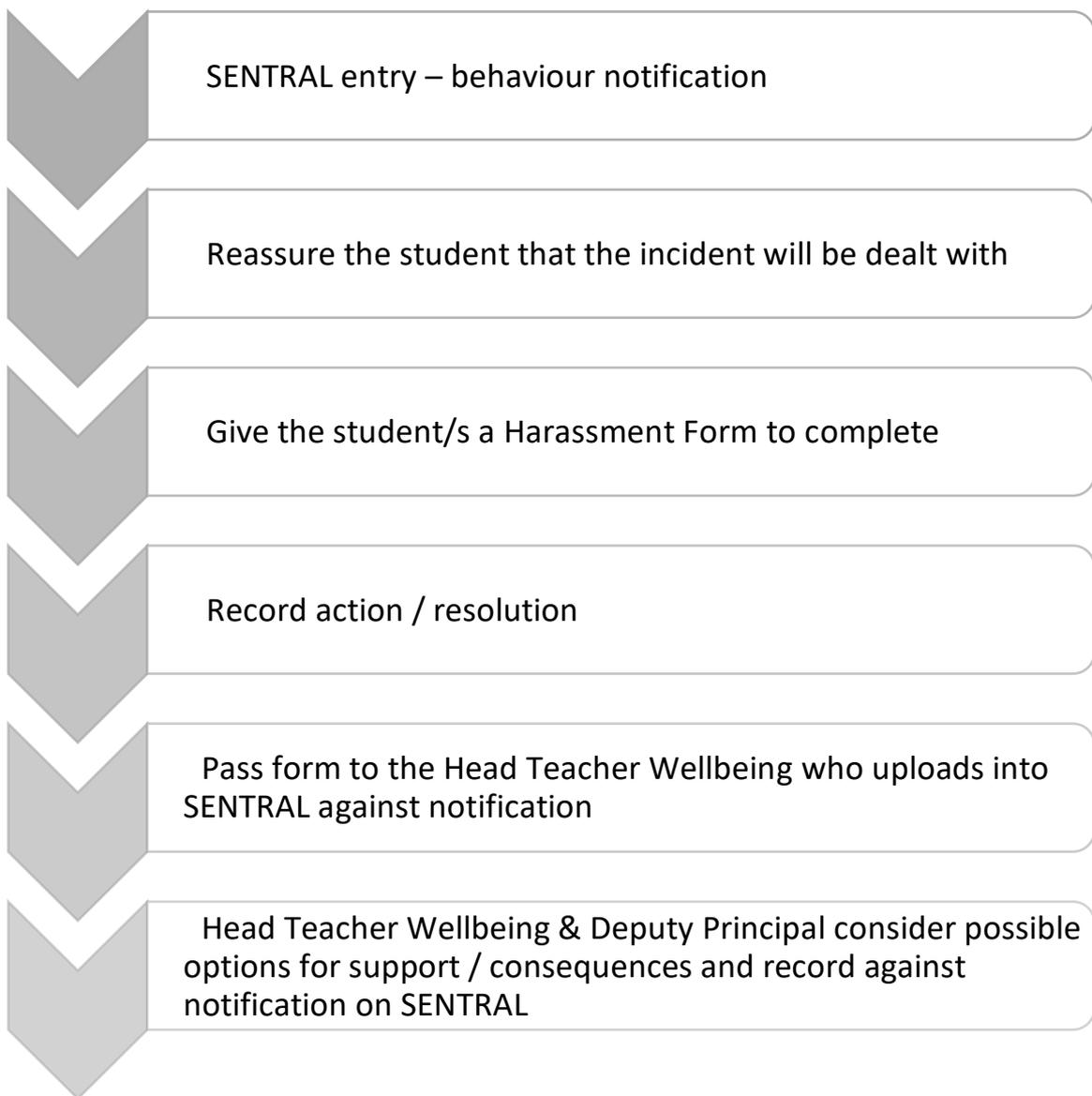
Parents who feel their child may be a victim of bullying should contact their child's Year Adviser, Head Teacher Wellbeing, Anti-Racism Officer or Deputy Principal in order that the school may support the child in a caring, protective manner. After initial contact and a feeling of cooperation have been established, the procedures for managing a bullying incident should be implemented.



MOUNT VIEW HIGH SCHOOL ANTI-BULLYING CODE TEACHER PROCEDURES

What to do when an incident of bullying is reported to you:

- The Safety and Wellbeing of each and every student is a whole staff responsibility. A proactive and consistent response to bullying increases the ability to resolve incidents.
- Deal with the incident **IMMEDIATELY** in an appropriate manner.
- At all stages teachers' professional judgement should be exercised to determine the severity of bullying behaviour and an appropriate course of action.



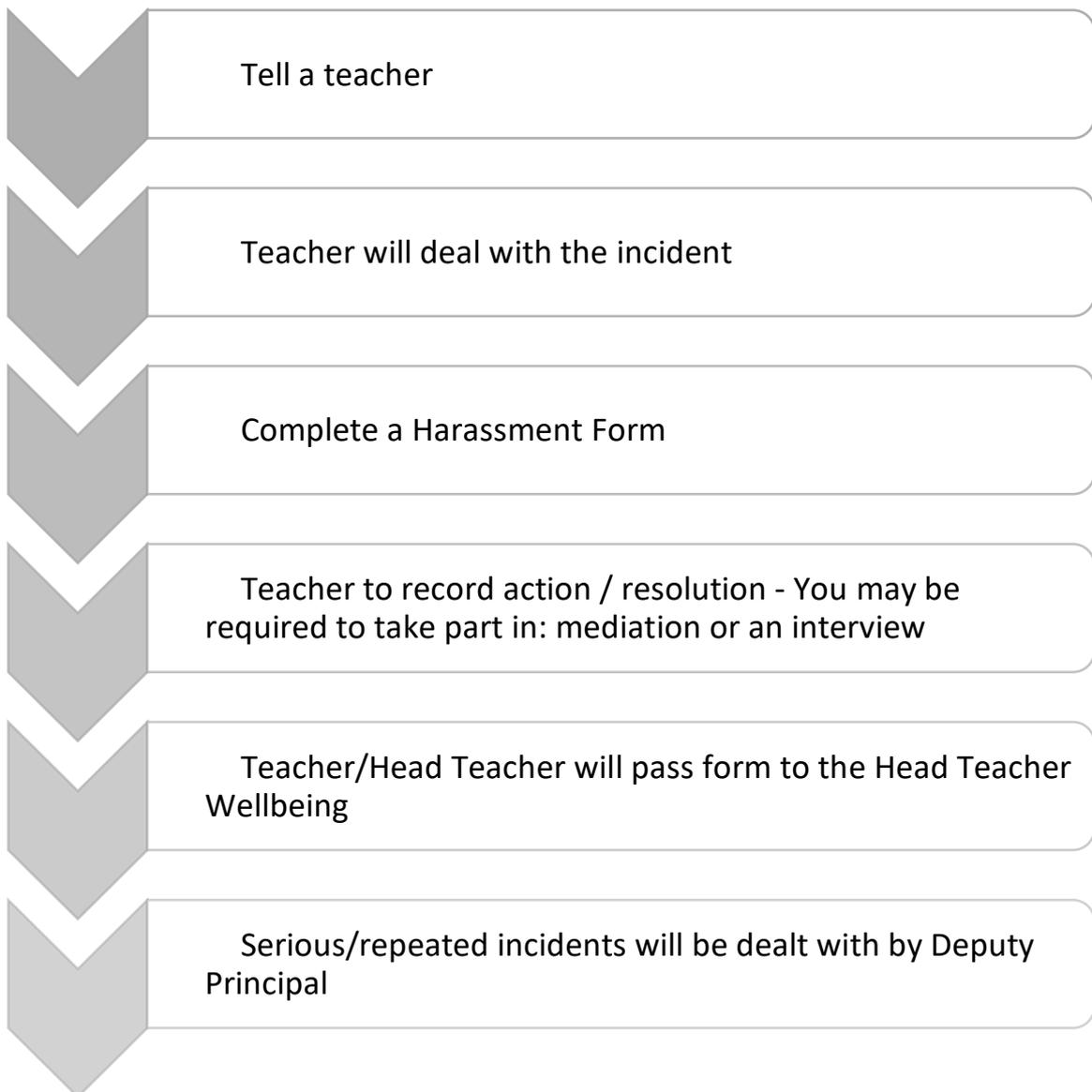


MOUNT VIEW HIGH SCHOOL

ANTI-BULLYING CODE

STUDENT PROCEDURES

What to do when an incident of bullying happens to you:
Deal with the incident IMMEDIATELY in an appropriate manner.



IT'S OK FOR BYSTANDERS TO TELL



NO BULLYING AT MOUNT VIEW HIGH SCHOOL

Mount View High School Notification of Student Harassment

Name:

Check-In:

Form of Harassment:

Name calling

Physical pushing

Deliberate exclusion from group

Physical hitting

Physical threats

Social media:

Brief description of the harassment (when and how does this harassment occur):

Names of person / people causing harassment:

NAME	YEAR GROUP	NAME	YEAR GROUP

Names of person / people who have witnessed this harassment:

What things have you tried to help solve the harassment?

Student Signature:

Date:

Teacher follow-up and possible action/s (please tick those actions you have completed):

E.g. verbal/written apology; detention; time out - in school or room

Peer Mediation

Counsellor Referral

Talk to other students

DP / HT referral

Year Adviser referral

Other:

Student/Teacher mediation

Parent contact

Comments / Resolution:

Teacher Signature:

Date:

Please ensure this form is given to Head Teacher Wellbeing for uploading to SENTRAL



Mount View High School Student Agreement

Student Name: _____ Year: _____

Date: _____

I, _____, accept that I have demonstrated bullying
behaviour involving:

I agree to:

- Treat others with respect
- Refrain from encouraging others to bully
- _____
- _____
- _____

I understand that the consequences of breaking this agreement may include:

- Interview with a Counsellor about ways to change my behaviour
- Interview with a member of the Senior Executive which may also involve my parents
- Involvement in an anti – bullying program
- Formal Caution
- Suspension

I understand that if I have a problem in resolving conflict, I will ask a teacher for help in order to learn better ways to deal with my problems.

Student's Signature: _____

Teacher: _____



STUDENT AND PARENT PREVENTION FRAMEWORK





APPENDIX

GET HELP FOR BULLYING

If you're being bullied or you see others being bullied, get help.

- Tell someone – a parent or carer, a relative, an adult friend, a teacher or the school's counsellor or psychologist. Ask for advice.
- If you want to talk to someone other than the school or your family, contact [Kids Helpline](https://www.kidshelpline.com.au). You can call them for free on 1800 55 1800.

USEFUL WEBSITES / LINKS

- Bullying No Way website: <https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/>
- NSW Department of Education Anti-bullying website: <https://antibullying.nsw.gov.au/>
- Reach out bullying website: <https://au.reachout.com/bullying/about-bullying>
- Behaviour code for students: <https://policies.education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/associated-documents/behaviourcode.pdf>



APPENDIX: 2018 Anti-Bullying Review - Summary

The Beyond Bullying Review Team consisted of a dedicated team who came together to review the Bullying Policy of Mount View High School and make a series of recommendations to inform a new policy.

Terms of Reference are summarised in the following points:

1. To determine perceptions of the prevalence, the scale/severity, consequences and responses to bullying at MVHS
 2. To determine outcomes of bullying for victims and bullies
 3. Developing recommendations for revision of policy and practice.
 4. Documented outcomes of policy revision
 5. Determine an engagement (to consult) and communication strategy (to inform) the review
 6. Identify current approaches to, and understanding of, bullying at MVHS.
-
2. The group was comprised of the school's Principal, wellbeing teachers, students from junior and senior school, parents, representatives from local youth agencies, a representative from a mental health service and representatives from a disability agency. The P and C committee was consulted and kept up-to-date during the process.
 3. Working from a consensus method, the review team met periodically throughout May to November 2018 to discuss and design the review process, research methods and engagement strategies. All group members were afforded an equal voice throughout the review process and members were called upon to volunteer their time to undertake consultation planning and reporting tasks.
 4. The opportunity to be involved in a dynamic, systematic review of the school's Bullying Policy and Procedures was met with enthusiasm. Team members worked consistently throughout the six month period to meet the objectives identified.



REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

Following the research period, the review committee made the following recommendations to the school.

REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. STUDENTS

- 1.1 Mental Health/Wellbeing assessments for those exhibiting bullying behaviour with utilisation of Wellbeing Hub tools (e.g. iPads).
- 1.2 School to consider a range of Mental Health support programs to training young people e.g. YAM, Teen Mental Health First Aid.
- 1.3 Healthy Relationship Support, continuation of programs that support healthy relationships i.e. Love Bites.
- 1.4 Help Seeking Strategies – Students to be fully aware of procedures when bullied as well as referral pathways for support, students supported to be ‘upstanders’
- 1.5 Youth Lead - conflict resolution skills training for young people.

2. STAFF

- 2.1 Training for teachers and support staff around Disability, Developmental and Behavioural Awareness including Autism Spectrum Disorder and ADHD.
- 2.2 Training in Mental Health First Aid – Staff
- 2.3 Modelling of Respectful Relationships - staff to model healthy relationships with each other as well as students. Staff bullying to be covered by the policy
- 2.4 Supervision and intervention - Staff intervention to be consistent and timely with appropriate monitoring and feedback to both those exhibiting bullying behaviour and those subjected to bullying behaviour. Potentially map school grounds for hot spots of bullying behaviour.
- 2.5 Ongoing training for staff on Bullying, research updates and practice methods.

3. COMMUNITY / PARENTS

- 3.1 Clearly define roles of school to the community including parents and carers, especially in reference to cyber-bullying whilst also providing parents and carers with tools and strategies
- 3.2 Involving parents/guardians as often and early as possible when dealing with bullying
- 3.3 Provide regular ongoing information to parents of actions being taken / training courses / student intervention programs that the school is participating in to improve parents perception

4. FOUNDATION RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Expectations and responsibilities to be clearly identified in updated policy.
- 4.2 New Policy to be clearly communicated to all stakeholders with annual refreshers and clear training provided to all staff.
- 4.3 Clear flow-chart (as a minimum) but a Smart Phone Application which would also work on DOE Computers as a preference which details the procedure, when to escalate etc. Policy needs to be easy read, easily accessible and simple

INTERVENTION RECOMMENDATIONS

1. LOW LEVEL BULLYING INTERVENTIONS

- 1.1. First on scene discussion with person exhibiting bullying behaviour—could clearly define this conversation i.e. consequences if behaviour continues, support available in school, escalation procedure
- 1.2. Warnings and mediation
- 1.3. Define in policy / flow chart
- 1.4. Phone call or letter to parents advising of bullying
- 1.5. Referrals/Supports for those who experienced the bullying behaviour
- 1.6. Mental Health and/or wellbeing assessments for all parties

2. MEDIUM LEVEL INTERVENTIONS

- 2.1. First on scene discussion with person exhibiting bullying behaviour
- 2.2. Mediation
- 2.3. Involve Parents in Discussion either on the phone or in person
- 2.4. Escalated referral to head teacher or Deputy Principal
- 2.5. Referrals/Supports for those who experienced the bullying behaviour
- 2.6. Mental Health and/or wellbeing assessments for all parties

3. HIGH LEVEL BULLYING INTERVENTIONS

- 3.1. Phone parents
- 3.2. Refer to Deputy Principal
- 3.3. Formal Caution / Suspension / In-school punishments if possible
- 3.4. Referrals/Supports for those who experienced the bullying behaviour
- 3.5. Mental Health and/or wellbeing assessments for all parties
- 3.6. Police involvement where required (Preventative or Reporting)

4. EXTREME LEVEL BULLYING / REPEAT OFFENDERS INTERVENTIONS

- 4.1. Refer to Deputy Principal
- 4.2. Formal Caution / Suspension
- 4.3. Police Involvement where required (Preventative or Reporting)
- 4.4. Referrals/Supports for those who experienced the bullying behaviour
- 4.5. Mental Health and/or wellbeing assessments for all parties