



# Mount Ousley Public School

31 McGrath Street Fairy Meadow NSW 2519

(02) 4285 4211

[mtousley-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au](mailto:mtousley-p.school@det.nsw.edu.au)

[mtousley-p.schools.nsw.edu.au](http://mtousley-p.schools.nsw.edu.au)

## Anti-Bullying Policy

**Statement of Purpose:** At Mount Ousley Public School we value, respect and foster positive relationships, and demonstrate empathy and tolerance of others, in a safe and supportive learning environment. Our values are upheld by all members of our school community and are supported by the Welfare and Discipline and Anti-Bullying policies. Our school will not tolerate any action that undermines a person's right to a safe working and learning environment, to ensure our school is free from harassment, discrimination or the fear of bullying. Mount Ousley is committed to promoting wellbeing in a culture where students can connect, succeed and thrive.

### Aim:

Embedded within this policy is the notion that all students, staff, visitors and parents have the right to be safe, respected and happy at Mount Ousley Public School. Our school culture promotes anti-bullying attitudes and behaviours, encouraged and worked towards by:

- creating an environment where all stakeholders can learn and work where they feel safe and are free from bullying and/or violence.
- seeking every opportunity to encourage staff, parents and students to work together to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills that support learning, positive behaviour and constructive social relationships.
- implementing policies and strategies guided by current research on effective approaches to the prevention of bullying and violence.
- using our role in the community to raise awareness that bullying of and violence toward children and young people are issues for the whole community and require a community response.

### Defining bullying

Bullying is defined in the National Safe Schools Framework (NSSF) as an ongoing misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that causes physical and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power over one or more persons. Bullying can happen in person or online, and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert).

Bullying has three main features:

- It involves a misuse of power in a relationship
- It is ongoing and repeated
- It involves behaviours that can cause harm

Bullying can involve humiliation, domination, intimidation and victimisation. Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long term effects on those involved, including bystanders.

Bullying can take many forms including:

- **Physical Bullying:** This involves physical actions such as hitting, pushing, obstructing or intimidation. Damaging, stealing or hiding personal belongings is also a form of physical bullying.
- **Psychological Bullying:** This is when words or actions are used to cause psychological harm. Examples of psychological bullying include name calling, teasing or making fun of someone because of their actions, appearance, physical characteristics or cultural background.
- **Indirect/Social Bullying:** This is when deliberate acts of exclusion or spreading of untrue stories are used to hurt or intimidate.
- **Cyber Bullying:** This is the ongoing abuse of power to threaten or harm another person using technology. Cyber bullying can occur in chat rooms, on social networking sites, through emails or on mobile phones.

### Indicators of Bullying

If a student is being bullied at school, they may:

- become aggressive and unreasonable
- start to get into fights
- refuse to talk about what is wrong
- have unexplained bruises, cuts, scratches, particularly those appearing after recess or lunch
- have missing or damaged belongings or clothes
- have falling school grades
- be alone often or excluded from friendship groups at school
- show a change in their ability or willingness to speak up in class
- appear insecure or frightened
- be a frequent target for teasing, mimicking or ridicule

### What Bullying is Not

There are many negative situations which, whilst being potentially distressing for students, are not bullying including:

- *Mutual Conflict Situations:* These arise when there is disagreement between students but not an imbalance of power. Mutual conflict situations need to be closely monitored as they may evolve into a bullying situation.
- *One Off Acts:* These may include: loss of temper, aggression, thoughtlessness, inappropriate jokes or humour, carelessness, shouting or swearing.

***We expect all members of our school community to share in the responsibility of building a safe and secure school.***

**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.
- 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 our Anti-bullying plan

**Parents and caregivers** have a responsibility to:

- 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.
- Support their children to become responsible citizens and to develop responsible online behaviour
- 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 local 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

### **Preventing Bullying**

Mount Ousley Public School is committed to providing a caring, welcoming and safe environment for all students so they can grow and learn in a respectful and secure learning environment. The following initiatives form part of our overall student wellbeing and positive behaviour approaches to create a 'No Bullying' culture:

#### **Whole school**

- Clear communication of the school's anti-bullying policies and procedures
- Promotion of a zero tolerance to bullying philosophy
- Active identification and intervention for students requiring support
- Maintaining records detailing student behaviour and monitoring of students involved in bullying behaviours
- Implementation of programs to promote positive behaviours
- Education, training and professional development of staff in bullying prevention and response strategies
- Regular provision of information to parents/carers to raise awareness of bullying as a school community issue to equip them to recognise signs of bullying, as well as to provide them with clear paths for raising any concerns they may have related to bullying directly with the school
- Promotion of a supportive environment and a safe school culture, that encourages the development of positive relationships and communication between staff, students and parents/carers
- Executive team will collectively establish and implement evidence based whole school systems that support the wellbeing of students (including BSEM)
- Review data and ongoing monitoring of incidences across the school to inform team problem solving processes across the school
- Establish clear protocols for the introduction of casual staff, new staff and new students and families into the school's safety and wellbeing policies and procedures.

#### **Classroom**

As part of Personal Development programs, all students K-6 will participate in learning experiences that directly deal with strategies students can use to eliminate bullying behaviours and promote respectful relationships. These learning experiences will be stage-specific so that they meet the needs of students at their level of understanding. Students will also be informed of the procedures at Mount Ousley PS for dealing with bullying behaviours.

Each classroom will also implement the following anti-bullying initiatives:

- Talk about bullying
- Implement a series of stage appropriate anti-bullying lessons each year
- Designate the classroom as bully free
- Intervene immediately when you see bullying: encourage students that it is safe to tell
- Discuss with students' strategies for reporting bullying
- Be proactive: encourage students to be proactive so that appropriate support can be provided to those students involved in any incident

#### **Procedures to report and respond to bullying**

All staff will treat any report of bullying, including cyber bullying, seriously and take appropriate action as outlined in this policy. All bullying complaints, including those involving digital technology will be dealt in a fair and timely manner. It is important to "label" what the student has done, rather than labelling the student.

Bullying incidents vary widely in their severity, impact on the target, and frequency. Most bullying behaviour is hidden from adults' view, and as such all allegations are taken seriously and investigated thoroughly. This means getting an understanding of exactly what happened, considering it in relation to the definition of bullying and then implementing the school's bullying procedures.

## Procedure for Actioning Allegations of Bullying

### Alleged bullying is reported

- Student reports that they have been bullied.
- Parent reports that they believe that their child has been bullied.
- Student reports that they have observed bullying.

### Teacher and Assistant Principal

- Teacher checks for history in EBS4.
- Teacher reports incident to Assistant Principal.
- Assistant Principal completes bullying behaviour checklist with reporting student and calls parents to gain any further details.
- Collaborative recording of incident in EBS4.

### Assistant Principal and Principal

- The Assistant Principal works to resolve the bullying issue by interviewing all students involved and responding appropriately according to the School Discipline Policy.
- The Assistant Principal will meet with the involved students and complete an Anti-bullying Student Agreement. This is then sent home for families to discuss.
- All actions are to be recorded on EBS4.

### Follow up

- The Assistant Principal or Principal will contact the parents one week, one month and one term after the issue has been resolved to review the success of the response and ascertain whether further action is required.
- All further action will be recorded in EBS4.

## Monitoring, Evaluation & Review

The anti-bullying policy will be monitored and regularly reviewed to ensure that reporting and intervention strategies are successfully reducing the incidences of bullying at Mount Ousley Public School. This process should include teachers, parents, students and other staff involved.

These monitoring and evaluation strategies include:

- Collection and review of all reporting documentation and action plans.
- Discussion with staff regarding classroom implementation and teaching and learning strategies.
- Evaluation by parents and students as part of our annual school evaluations.
- Monitoring the number of incidents reported and the tracking of students involved.

## Further Support and Information

**DOE Anti-Bullying Procedures:** These procedures set out the requirements for dealing with bullying behaviour in NSW government schools. They include operational guidelines and a framework for schools to use to develop and implement an Anti-bullying Plan with specific strategies for identifying, reporting and dealing with bullying behaviours. <https://education.nsw.gov.au/student-wellbeing/attendance-behaviour-and-engagement>

**Kids Helpline:** a free, private and confidential, 24-hour telephone and online counselling service for young people aged between 5 - 25 years. <http://www.kidshelp.com.au/>

**Bullying. No way!** The Bullying no way website has been developed in collaboration with other government and non-government authorities from the Commonwealth, States and Territories. It showcases strategies that have proven to be successful in increasing safety and reducing bullying and harassment in schools throughout Australia. [www.bullyingnoway.com.au/](http://www.bullyingnoway.com.au/)

**Prejudice NO Way!** aims to assist students in Years K-3 develop the foundation knowledge and skills needed to counteract prejudice that is the basis of many forms of discrimination and unfair practices. The site provides teaching and learning materials for each stage of students K-3. <http://www.prejudicenoway.com.au/>

**Racism No Way!** is an extensive source of information about racism and anti-racism education. It provides links to tools for investigating and combating prejudice and racism in schools, teaching and learning resources K-12, activities for students and reference materials <http://www.racismnoway.com.au/>

**Anti-bullying interventions in schools – what works?** provides the evidence base for the department's anti-bullying strategy. Released in 2017, the NSW Anti-bullying Strategy brings together evidence-based resources and information to support schools, parents and carers, and students to prevent and respond to bullying effectively. [https://www.cese.nsw.gov.au/images/stories/PDF/anti\\_bullying\\_in\\_schools\\_what\\_works\\_AA.pdf](https://www.cese.nsw.gov.au/images/stories/PDF/anti_bullying_in_schools_what_works_AA.pdf)

**KidsMatter:** is a mental health and wellbeing framework for primary schools and is proven to make a positive difference to the lives of Australian children. KidsMatter Primary provides the methods, tools and support to help schools work with parents and carers, health services and the wider community, to nurture happy, balanced kids. <http://www.kidsmatter.edu.au/>

**ReachOut:** an online resource that assists young people by providing information to improve understanding of the issues that relate to mental health and wellbeing. Reach Out also has information on how young people can get the best help from services, as well as opportunities to connect with other young people. <http://au.reachout.com>

**National Centre Against Bullying:** a peak body working to advise and inform the Australian community on the issue of childhood bullying and the creation of safe schools and communities, including the issue of cyber safety. <http://www.ncab.org.au/>

**CyberSmart:** provides activities, resources and practical advice to help young kids, kids, teens and parents safely enjoy the online world. Cybersmart also offers training and resources for schools and materials for library staff. Developed by the Australian Communications and Media Authority, Cybersmart is part of the Australian Government's cybersafe program. <http://www.cybersmart.gov.au/>