

MENINDEE CENTRAL SCHOOL



Anti-Bullying Policy

Rationale:

"Every student has the right to expect that he/she will spend the school day, both in and out of the classroom, free from bullying and intimidation."

(Ministerial Statement, Good Discipline and Effective Learning, 1996)

School Value Statement:

We at Menindee Central School believe that everybody has the right to enjoy our school equally and feel safe, secure and accepted, regardless of colour, race, gender, popularity, athletic ability, intelligence, religion or nationality. The whole school community will work together to ensure that students' rights and responsibilities are sustained.

Definition

(From 'Bullying: Preventing and Responding to Student Bullying' in Schools Planning DEC Document 2011):

Bullying is any repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that causes hurt, fear or anxiety in another person. It may be deliberate or a result of thoughtlessness. It may be a physical attack on a person, a group or their property. It may be verbal teasing or insulting. It may be indirect, such as spreading rumours, excluding people from groups or manipulation of others to mistreat another person.

Cyber bullying refers to bullying through information and communication technologies (ICT).

Central to both bullying and harassment is the inappropriate use of power, which deprives others of their rights. Bullying can involve humiliation, domination, intimidation, victimisation and all forms of harassment, including that based on sex, race, disability, homosexuality or transgender. Typically, students suffering bullying feel distressed, hurt, frightened, disturbed, embarrassed, stressed, pained and upset. Bullying of any form can have long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders.

Conflict or fights between equals or single incidents are not defined as bullying.

Declaration of the rights of individuals in the school community:

At Menindee Central School, every person has a right to feel safe and respected as an individual as well as a right to learn, free from anxiety.

Any person who bullies another is denying them these rights.

Students can expect that their concerns will be responded to by school staff, with appropriate support.

Statement of the responsibilities of members of the school community:

- All members of the school community contribute to the prevention of bullying by modelling and promoting appropriate behaviour and respectful relationships.
- Schools have a responsibility to:
 - develop an Anti-Bullying Policy through consultation with parents, caregivers, students and the community, which clearly identifies both the behaviours that are unacceptable and the strategies for dealing with alleged bullying in the classroom and playground;
 - inform students, parents, caregivers and the community about the School Discipline Code and the Anti-Bullying Policy on the School Website;
 - provide students with strategies to respond positively to incidents of alleged bullying behaviour, including responsibilities as bystanders or observers at Year Advisor Meetings;
 - provide parents, caregivers and students with clear information on strategies that promote appropriate behaviour, and the consequences for inappropriate behaviour;
 - communicate to parents and caregivers that they have an important role to play in resolving incidents involving their children;
 - follow up complaints of alleged bullying, harassment and intimidation.

Teachers will:

- act as role models of caring, respectful and tolerant behaviour;
- monitor behaviour in classrooms and playgrounds. This will include punctuality to lessons and the establishment of 'safe' classroom rules;
- listen to reports of alleged bullying;
- protect the student from further harm;
- endeavour to stop the hurtful behaviour recurring;
- praise bystanders for taking appropriate positive intervention;
- notify relevant staff members concerning anti-social behaviour or possible bullying incidents;
- respond in an appropriate and timely manner to incidents of bullying according to the school Anti-Bullying Policy.

Students will:

- abstain personally from engaging in anti-social behaviour;
- speak to their teachers and give them full details of any alleged bullying;
- review their own behaviours and seek assistance if necessary.

Bystanders will:

- intervene positively, if they are able;
- immediately seek teacher assistance, if they can't intervene positively;
- offer support to the victim.

Parents/caregivers will:

- listen sympathetically to their children's reports of alleged bullying;
- speak to the relevant school personnel;
- work with the school in seeking a solution;
- promote positive relationships that respect and accept individual differences and diversity within the school community.

Types of Bullying

The ways people bully can be classified (with examples) as follows:

	DIRECT	INDIRECT
Verbal abuse	Verbal insults Unfair criticism Name calling	Persuading another person to criticise or insult someone. Spreading malicious rumours Anonymous phone calls and emails
Gestural abuse	Threatening or obscene gestures Menacing stares	Deliberate turning away or averting one's gaze to ignore someone
Physical means	Striking Throwing things Using a weapon	Getting another person to assault someone
Relational bullying	Forming coalitions against someone	Removing and hiding belongings Persuading people to exclude someone
Cyber Bullying	Insults and photos on chat sites, Facebook, Twitter, Tumbler, Instagram, Viber and SMS	Being excluded from chat sites, Facebook, Twitter, Tumbler, Instagram, Viber and SMS

Strategies:

1) Prevention through education may include:

- prevention strategies and positive relationships through units in the PDHPE programs for Years 7 – 10;
- presentation of lessons based on the Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) slogan – Be Safe, Be Smart, Show Respect;
- presentation of curriculum material across a number of KLAs, for example, English, CAFS, Drama;
- Year 7 students are introduced to the school Anti-Bullying Policy through the PBL lessons;
- the process of Peer Mediation;
- Crossroads Camp for students from the three Wilvande schools in Year 11;
- promote group work with a focus on interpersonal skills and co-operative learning;
- students reminded at Year Advisor Meetings and on the School Website of strategies and contacts if they experience bullying. They are made aware of the players in a bullying situation and the role of all involved (bully, victim and bystanders) plus the support available through the School Counsellor.

These programs will assist students to:

- understand the nature of bullying and harassment;
- develop skills of assertive communication and social responsibility;
- be familiar with places and people they can contact for help if they are being bullied;
- develop strategies of resilience to bullying.

2) Prevention through building a safe and happy school:

- active role of school Learning Support Team and school Welfare Policy implementation;
- modelling and promoting behaviour that makes students feel safe and included within the school community through Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL);
- students' rights and responsibilities in the school Behaviour Code;
- communicating school rules and procedures;
- ensuring relevant school personnel are accessible. Eg: Counsellors, Year Advisors, Deputies, Learning Support Team, Peer Mediators;
- provide lunchtime activities;
- playground area procedures and responsibilities.

3) Prevention through intervention:

- follow the DET and school policies for responding to bullying situations;
- use of the referral system for discipline problems with incidents documented on SENTRAL.

School Response To Alleged Bullying

1. Dealing with cases of bullying

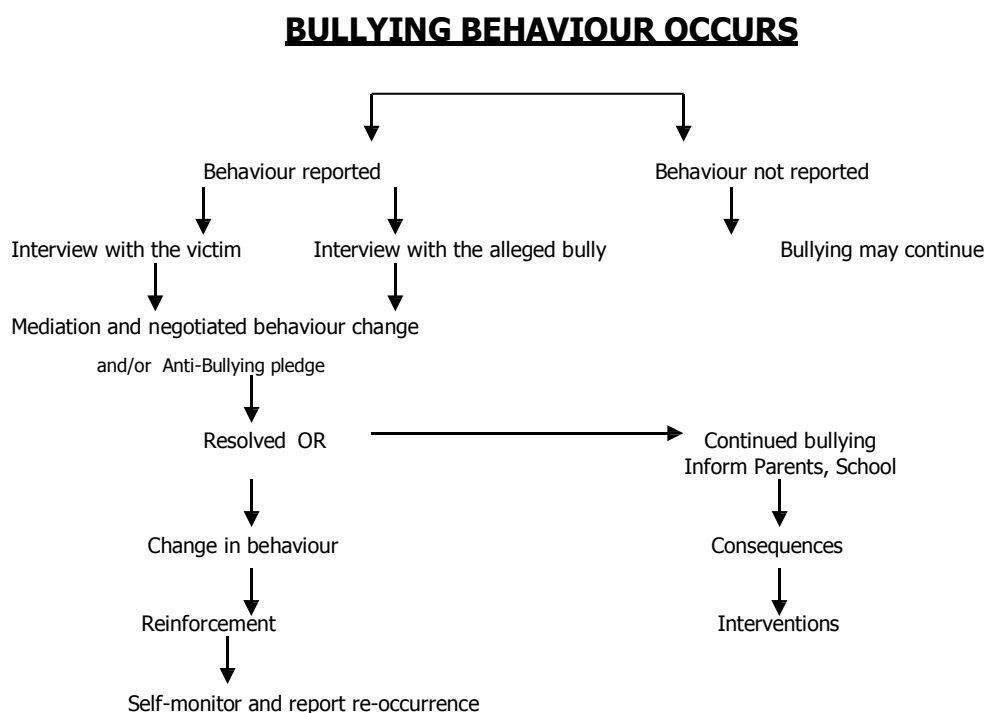
Different procedures, both formal and informal, can be used with students, according to the nature, severity and frequency of the bullying. There can be teacher support, counselling and/or consequences, depending on severity.

Notification of Parents: Parents may be notified about bullying.

Interventions: discussion, interview mediation, the Method of Shared Concern, Anti-Bullying Pledge, developing agreements/contracts, support strategies for the victim, counselling.

Consequences: used in conjunction with the school's Code of Conduct and including time-out, isolation from peers, alternative recess/lunch, withdrawal of privileges, detention, suspension, (expulsion) notification to parents.

The flow chart below is a guide as to how these two approaches can be used in conjunction with each other.



Information concerning Departmental appeal procedures may be obtained from the Principal or Deputy Principals.

2. Detection of bullying, reporting and record keeping

To assist in the detection of bullying, a number of strategies may be employed.

- Students will be encouraged to report incidents to relevant teachers
- Parents will be requested to report cases to the relevant Year Advisor.
- Teachers are to closely monitor classrooms and playground areas.
- Incidents of alleged bullying will be recorded on *Sentral*, where both parties will be identified.

3. Encouraging students to act appropriately in anti-social situations

Teachers should advise students to:

- Be assertive – you have rights. State "Leave me alone."
- Do not retaliate with physical or verbal aggression;
- If possible, try to ignore it. If you show you are not upset, the harassment may stop;
- Use humour;
- Build your own protection by establishing a network of friends;
- Avoid high-risk places and times;
- Talk about it with others who can help you decide how to best handle the situation (for example, friends, family, peer support leaders, teachers, counsellor, Deputy Principals, Year Advisor, etc.).

Witnesses to anti-social behaviour, will be advised to:

- Take action as it occurs by saying, "Leave him/her alone."
- Report the incident to a teacher as soon as you can. You can ask for confidentiality;
- Offer support. Make suggestions about handling it. Encourage the person to get help through a teacher or family member.

Bystanders should be made aware that their own behaviour can encourage or discourage acts of bullying, and that they will be held accountable for their behaviour in anti-social situations.

To integrate new arrivals to the school, 'welcomers' can be used to develop relationships more quickly. These will be under the direction of the relevant Year Advisor.

Students in Year 11, involved with Peer Support of Year 7, will also be enlisted to both monitor alleged acts of bullying in Year 7 and to encourage reporting to teachers through informal discussion and intervention.

4. Education of students about bullying

An anti-bullying program is available to students in Year 7 through explicit PBL workshops. School assemblies and Year Meetings will regularly reinforce an anti-bullying message, together with the idea that "It's OK to tell" and that "Bystanders make a difference."

Classroom teachers are encouraged to openly discuss these issues as they appear in relevant teaching units. Most obviously, teachers of health education will play a major role, but other faculties (English, Drama and Visual Arts, for example) could also be of value.

The Students have conducted anti-bullying poster competitions and made anti-bullying leaflets.

5. Supporting students

Often students can be taught how to resist more successfully than bullies can be taught to stop. Thus, it is seen as a priority for teachers and the school counsellor, in conjunction with outside agencies, to provide clear strategies to students to minimise exposure to bullying and to provide strategies to cope with incidents of alleged bullying.

6. Involving parents

Effective communication between the school and parents is important to help eliminate bullying at school and to assist the victims of bullying. To this end, this policy is made available to parents through the school's website. Various information sheets will also be published periodically in the school newsletter.

Incidents of serious alleged bullying may result in parental contact.

Parents are encouraged to contact the appropriate Year Advisor if concerns exist over bullying.

7. Availability of anti-bullying policy

This anti-bullying policy is available on the school's website (<http://www.menindee-c.schools.nsw.edu.au/>). This policy will also be distributed to all staff members and made available to all members of the SRC. Finally, a hard copy of this policy is available, on request, to any member of the school community at the front office.

8. Justification

Bullying behaviour affects a student's feelings of self-worth, which in turn, hinders the ability to learn and interact socially and feel safe. Moreover, bullying is related to other forms of anti-social behaviour, such as disruptive behaviour, community violence, vandalism and petty theft.

Available programs for dealing with alleged bullying incidents:

- Alleged Bullies:
 - Pika's method/method of Shared Concern
 - Anti-Bullying Pledge

- Alleged Victims:
 - Resilience training in a variety of programs
 - Mentoring
 - Provision for safe places for students at lunch
 - Assertiveness training
 - KIDS HELPLINE
 - Information in diaries

See the school Website for additional support documents.

Anti-Bullying Pledge – Students



We believe that everybody should enjoy our school equally, and feel safe, secure and accepted regardless of colour, race, gender, popularity, athletic ability, intelligence, religion and nationality.

Bullying is any repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that causes hurt, fear or anxiety in another person. It can be pushing, shoving, hitting, and spitting, as well as name calling, picking on, making fun of, laughing at, and/or excluding someone. Bullying causes pain and stress to victims and is never justified or excusable as “kids being kids”, “just teasing” or any other rationalization. A student is **NEVER** responsible for being a

target of bullying.

By signing this pledge, we the students agree to:

1. Value student differences and treat others with respect.
2. Not become involved in anti-social behaviour and bullying-type incidents.
3. Be aware of the school’s policies and support system with regard to bullying.
4. Report honestly and immediately all incidents of possible bullying to a teacher.
5. Be alert in places around the school where there is less adult supervision such as change-rooms, toilets, corridors and stairwells.
6. Support students who have been or are subjected to bullying.
7. Talk to teachers, parents and counsellors about concerns and issues regarding bullying.
8. Work with other students and teachers, to help the school deal with bullying effectively.
9. Encourage students to discuss bullying issues in the classroom.
10. Provide a good role model for younger students and support them if bullying occurs.
11. Participate fully and contribute to assemblies dealing with bullying

I understand that if I participate in repeated acts of anti-social behaviour or bullying, this may lead to parent interviews, withdrawal from extra-curricular activities and suspension.

I also understand that if I am aware of or witness anti-social behaviour or possible acts of bullying, that I must report it or try to stop it. Failure to do so makes me as guilty as the person carrying out these actions.

Signed by: _____

Print Name: _____

Class: _____

Date: _____