

Anti Bullying Procedures



UPDATED MARCH 2023

Bullying – Prevention and Response

RATIONALE

"Schools exist in a society where intimidation and harassment occur. Bullying must be taken seriously and is not acceptable in any form. The Anti-Bullying Plan is a key part of every school's planning for student well-being and effective learning. It complements each school's Student Welfare and Discipline Policies."

Anti-Bullying Plan for Schools, 2023

Miranda North Public School does not tolerate bullying in any form. Students have the right to expect that they will spend the school day free from the fear of bullying, harassment, intimidation and discrimination. They also have the responsibility to ensure that this is maintained.

Teachers, students, parents, caregivers, and members of the wider community have a responsibility to work together to address bullying. The school, therefore, seeks to promote positive and respectful relationships between all members of the school community.

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying can be defined as intentional, repeated behaviour by an individual or group of individuals that causes distress, hurt or undue pressure. Bullying can involve all forms of harassment, humiliation, domination, and intimidation of others.

Bullying behaviour can be:

- **verbal** e.g., name calling, teasing, abuse, putdowns, sarcasm, insults, threats.
- **physical** e.g., hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting.
- **social** e.g., ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating, making inappropriate gestures; or
- **psychological** e.g., spreading rumours, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions, malicious SMS and email messages, inappropriate use of camera phones.

There are seven key elements of bullying:

- an intention to be hurtful.
- this intention is carried out.
- the behaviour harms the target.
- the bully overwhelms the target with his / her power.
- there is no justification for the action.
- action / behaviour is repeated; and
- bully gets satisfaction / enjoyment from hurting the target.

(Rigby, 1996)

AIM

To take positive action to prevent bullying from occurring through a clear school policy.

RESPONSIBILITIES

All members of the School Community must play their part in preventing bullying. The school's position on bullying is zero tolerance.

THE SCHOOL WILL:

- develop an Anti-Bullying Plan through consultation with parents, caregivers, students and the community.
- inform students, parents, caregivers and the community about the School Discipline Code and Anti-Bullying Plan.
- provide students with strategies to respond positively to incidents of bullying behaviour, including responsibilities as bystanders or observers; and
- follow up complaints of bullying harassment and intimidation.

MEMBERS OF STAFF WILL:

- respect and support students in all aspects of their learning.
- be positive role models in action and speech.
- be alert to the possibility of bullying.
- promote a safe and happy playground environment through diligent supervision; and
- be proactive by implementing this policy in response to all bullying situations.

STUDENTS WILL:

- act in a safe and considerate manner.
- act in a way that will not physically or psychologically hurt, threaten or put others in danger.
- report any behaviour associated with bullying; and
- respond to incidents of bullying according to our school's Anti-Bullying Plan.

THE SCHOOL SUGGESTS THAT PARENTS SHOULD:

- familiarise themselves with the Miranda North Public School Anti-Bullying Policy and assist their children in understanding bullying behaviour.
- support their children in all aspects of their learning.
- work with the child and the school in resolving incidents of bullying.

STRATEGIES

The school will adopt a four-point plan to anti-bullying which includes:

Primary Intervention
Early Intervention
Intervention
Post Intervention.

Primary Intervention

- Professional development for staff related to bullying and the strategies to counteract it.
- Community awareness and input relating to anti-bullying, its characteristics and the school's programs and response. (e.g., newsletter, parent forums etc.)
- Provide programs that promote resilience, life skills and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and communication skills
- Provide alternative activities during lunch breaks, e.g., sport equipment, library, dance, sport training etc.
- Positive play area established in the playground.
- Ensure students know and understand what behaviour is acceptable in the school (i.e. consistent classroom / school rules displayed in each class)

Early Intervention

- Students encouraged to report bullying incidents involving themselves or others.
- Teachers to regularly remind students to report incidents. Reporting is not dobbing.
- Parents are encouraged to contact the school if they become aware of a problem.
- Students are recognised for positive behaviour.

Intervention

- Once identified, the bully, victim and witnesses are spoken with. All incidents or allegations of bullying will be fully investigated.
- Consideration as to why the bullying occurred will be investigated.
- Both bully and victim are to be offered basic assistance and support (outside school resources, counselling may be utilised if deemed necessary).
- A meeting of relevant persons is convened following identification of on-going bullying behaviour. All issues relevant to the student are considered.

Post Intervention

Miranda North Public School's Discipline Policy outlines appropriate procedures for inappropriate behaviour in the classroom and the playground, including bullying.

Possible consequences may involve:

- warning
- removal to the class supervisor or Principal
- contact with parents
- playground contract
- detention / time-out from class or playground
- mediation sessions with the victim to reconcile differences
- referral to external agencies
- ISTB
- suspension.

ADVICE TO BE GIVEN TO STUDENTS WHO ARE BEING BULLIED

The student should be encouraged to:

- tell the bully to stop. State quite clearly that the behaviour is unwelcome and offensive.
- seek help. Talk about the experience with someone you trust.
- report the bullying to a member of staff and feel confident that any incident can be resolved satisfactorily.
- try to stay away from the bully or places where bullying occurs; and
- be with friendly, supportive peers.

ADVICE TO BE GIVEN TO STUDENTS WHO KNOW THAT ANOTHER STUDENT IS BEING BULLIED

- If possible, intervene as the bullying occurs, by telling the bully to stop. This is very useful if the on-looker student has influence with the bully.
- Refuse to join in with the bullying.
- Support students who are being bullied.
- Tell an adult about the bullying.
- It is every student's right and responsibility to report bullying whether it happens to oneself or to someone else.

THE SCHOOL SUGGESTS THAT PARENTS SHOULD:

Take an active interest

- in your child's social life
- in what is happening at school.

Encourage your child

- to bring friends home
- to accept and tolerate differences in others.

Build your child's self-confidence

- by recognising his / her positive qualities
- by valuing him / her for who he / she is.

Discuss with your child

- the school's expectations about behaviour
- ways to respond if his / her rights are infringed.

Encourage constructive responses

- bullying should be reported
- hitting back or retaliating with name-calling won't solve the problem.

Set an example

- be firm, but not aggressive in setting behaviour limits
- be positive in things you say and do.

Be alert for signs of distress

- unwillingness to attend school
- drop-off in academic performance
- damaged clothing and frequent loss of personal property
- loss of confidence and uncharacteristic mood changes
- withdrawal from social activities.

Act

- if your child is being bullied at school, report it to a teacher or the Principal. Your report will be followed up.

OUTCOMES

- Reduced incidence of bullying at Miranda North Public School.
- Greater awareness of bullying issues by the school community.
- Empowerment of students to effectively deal with bullying behaviour.
- Increased communication between school and parents in dealing with bullying issues.
- Parents and staff are better equipped to deal with bullying issues.