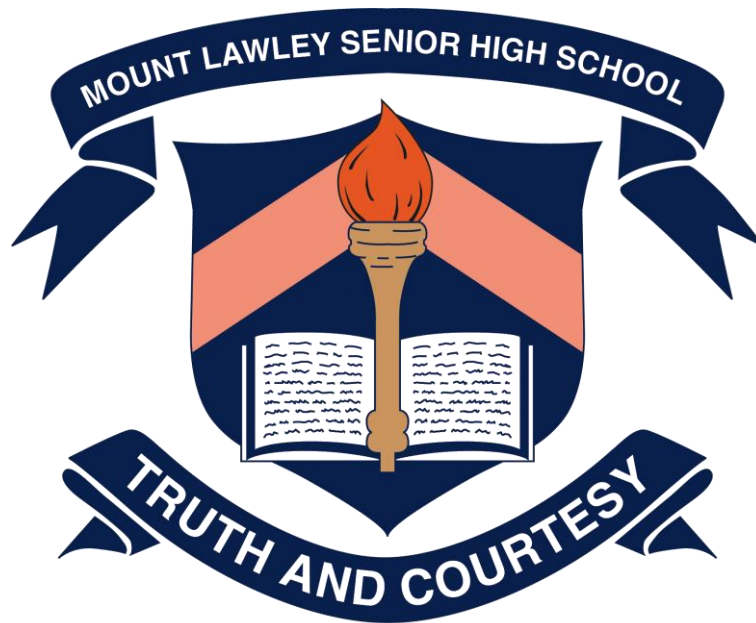


**MOUNT LAWLEY SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL**



# **Safe School Policy**

**2014**

# **POLICY RATIONALE AND OBJECTIVES**

## **Whole School Community Agreement**

Our Values embrace the concepts of Achievement, Excellence, Perseverance, Learning as well as Tolerance and Respect. Mount Lawley Senior High School:

- Affirms the rights of all members of the school community to feel safe and be safe in all school related activities.
- Acknowledges that being safe and supported at school is essential for student wellbeing and effective learning.
- Accepts responsibility for developing and sustaining safe and supportive learning and teaching environments.
- Encourages the participation of all school community members in the development and maintenance of a safe school community.
- Commits to a whole school and evidence informed approach to developing a safe and supportive learning and teaching environment.
- Every person has the right to feel safe at school. The school community will not tolerate any action that undermines a person's right to feel safe, respected and to learn. It is everyone's responsibility to take the necessary steps to prevent bullying behaviour.

## **Policy Rationale**

- The aim of these Policy is to ensure that the school is a safe and supportive learning environment, free from bullying, for all members of the school community.
- The aim of these Policy is to establish a school environment in which everybody feels valued, respected and safe and where individual differences are appreciated, understood and accepted.
- The aim of these Policy is to provide the framework for a safe and supportive environment in which everyone feels valued and respected.

## **Policy Objectives**

The objectives of our whole-school bullying Policy are to:

- Create a school environment where all students, staff and parents feel safe and supported.
- Raise awareness among staff, students and parents about bullying.
- Establish a clear set of agreed upon aims regarding the prevention and reduction of bullying.
- Clarify the roles, rights and responsibilities of all school community members in responding to bullying and promoting positive relations.
- Facilitate an ethos in which students, staff and parents believe they do not have to accept bullying behaviour.
- Create a climate where it is acceptable to talk about bullying, ask for help, report bullying and seek support.
- Promote a planned and coordinated response to bullying and consistency in responding to bullying incidents.
- Provide school staff with clear Policy to follow when responding to bullying incidents, enabling them to act with confidence.
- Provide a framework for maintaining activity to reduce and prevent bullying.

# COMMON UNDERSTANDINGS

## A Definition of Bullying

- Repeated, targeted and unjustifiable behaviour.
- With a specific intent to cause fear, distress or harm to another.
- Physical, verbal or *relational*.
- Perpetrated by a more powerful individual or group against a less powerful individual who is unable to effectively resist.

These Policy highlight that bullying occurs in various formats:

- Overt Bullying - “in your face” behaviours.
- Covert Bullying - “behind your back” behaviours.
- Cyber Bullying - when an individual, or group, use the internet, mobile phones or other technology to cause harm another person or group of people.

## Types of Bullying Behaviour

### Physical bullying

- Deliberately bumping, pulling, shoving or tripping someone again and again.
- Throwing things at someone to hurt, annoy or upset them.
- Hitting, punching or slapping, pinching, biting or scratching someone repeatedly.
- Repeatedly touching someone who doesn't want to be touched.

### Verbal bullying

- Calling people names or offensive nicknames.
- Making racial comments about someone and their family.
- Rude comments or jokes about someone's religion.
- Teasing someone or being sarcastic in a way that is hurtful and upsetting.
- Comments about the way someone may look or behave that are hurtful.

### Threatening

- Making someone feel afraid that they are going to be hurt.
- Pressuring someone to do things they don't want to do.
- Aggressive gestures or looks that make someone afraid.
- Forcing students to do hurtful or embarrassing things.
- Forcing someone to give you money, food or belongings.

### Property Abuse

- Damaging someone's belongings.
- Repeatedly stealing someone's money.
- Taking things away from someone.
- Repeatedly taking or hiding someone's belongings.

### Emotional bullying

- Ignoring someone or keeping them out of group conversations (known as **exclusion**).
- Leaving someone out by encouraging others not to have anything to do with them.
- Spreading lies or stories/rumours about someone to try to get others to dislike someone.
- Making things up to get someone into trouble.
- Stalking someone, by continually following them or giving unwanted attention e.g. staring.

## **Cyber bullying**

- Sending harassing, abusive or offensive emails, phone messages or SMS phone texts or prank phone calls.
- Making silent or abusive phone calls.
- Spreading rumours via social networking sites.
- Uploading or sharing harmful or hurtful content or comments on the internet or mobile phones.
- “Slam books” (websites or negative lists).
- Impersonation – Using person’s screen name or password e.g.: message to hate group with personal details.
- Outlining or trickery sharing private personal information, messages, pictures with others.
- Posting “set up” images/video e.g. “happy slapping”.
- Ostracism – intentionally excluding others from an online group e.g.: knocked off buddy lists.
- Sexting – sharing sexually explicit material by mobile phone.

## **Bystanders to Bullying**

A bystander is someone who sees the bullying or knows that it is happening to someone else. Bystanders can be identified in the following categories:

### **Supporters**

- Support the person engaging in the bullying, either by helping the child to bully the other person or by encouraging the person engaging in the bullying.

### **Spectators**

- Gather or deliberately stay to watch or record the incident (sometimes from concern and sometimes for enjoyment).

### **Witnesses**

- Are aware that the incident is occurring (know about the bullying or see it from a distance).

Within each group there may be potential victims who are afraid they could be bullied next and this may influence their decision-making when contemplating their course of action.

# RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

## Rights

**Students, teachers, parents, caregivers and members of the wider school community** have the right to:

- Be safe and supported in the school environment.
- Feel valued and respected in the school environment.
- Be involved in the development of the whole-school community decision making process with regard to the prevention and management of bullying Policy.
- Have clearly articulated common knowledge and procedures about how to deal with bullying situations in the school.
- Be provided with support and appropriate management according to the Policy should a bullying situation occur.

**Students** also have the right to:

- Know that their concerns will be responded to by school staff.
- Be provided with appropriate support if involved in bullying either as a person bullying, a person being bullied or a person who witnesses bullying.
- Take part in learning experiences that address key understandings and skills relating to positive relationships, safety, bullying.

**Staff** also have the right to:

- Feel safe in their working environment.
- Be treated with respect by students, parents, other staff and school community members.

**Parents** also have the right to:

- Expect their child to be safe, supported and treated with respect.
- To be heard and to have their opinions valued.
- To be provided with information regarding the prevention and managements of bullying situations.
- Address their concerns with the appropriate personnel.

## **Responsibilities**

**Schools** have a responsibility to inform staff, students, parents, caregivers and the community about the Whole-school Student Behaviour Policy including:

- Providing students with strategies to respond positively to incidents of bullying.
- Behaviour, including responsibilities as bystanders to bullying situations.
- Providing parents, caregivers and students with clear information on strategies that promote appropriate behaviour, and the consequences for inappropriate behaviour.
- Communicating to parents and caregivers that they have an important role to play in resolving incidents of bullying.

**Leadership Team** will:

- Support, promote, enact, maintain and review the policy and procedures.

**Staff, Students, parents and members of the wider school community** have a responsibility to:

- Promote positive relationships that respect individual differences in the school community.
- Be familiar with the school's student behaviour policy and procedures.
- Be observant of signs of bullying.
- Report incidents of bullying.
- Actively work together to resolve incidents of bullying behaviour when they occur.

**Teachers** have a responsibility to adhere to the Student Behaviour Policy including:

- Being familiar with the school's Student Behaviour Policy and procedures.
- Acknowledging their responsibility as role models for caring and tolerant behaviour.
- Supporting parents to be open in their discussions about bullying in the school.
- Being observant of signs of bullying and treating reports of bullying seriously.
- Responding appropriately and timely to incidents of bullying according to the school Student Behaviour Policy.

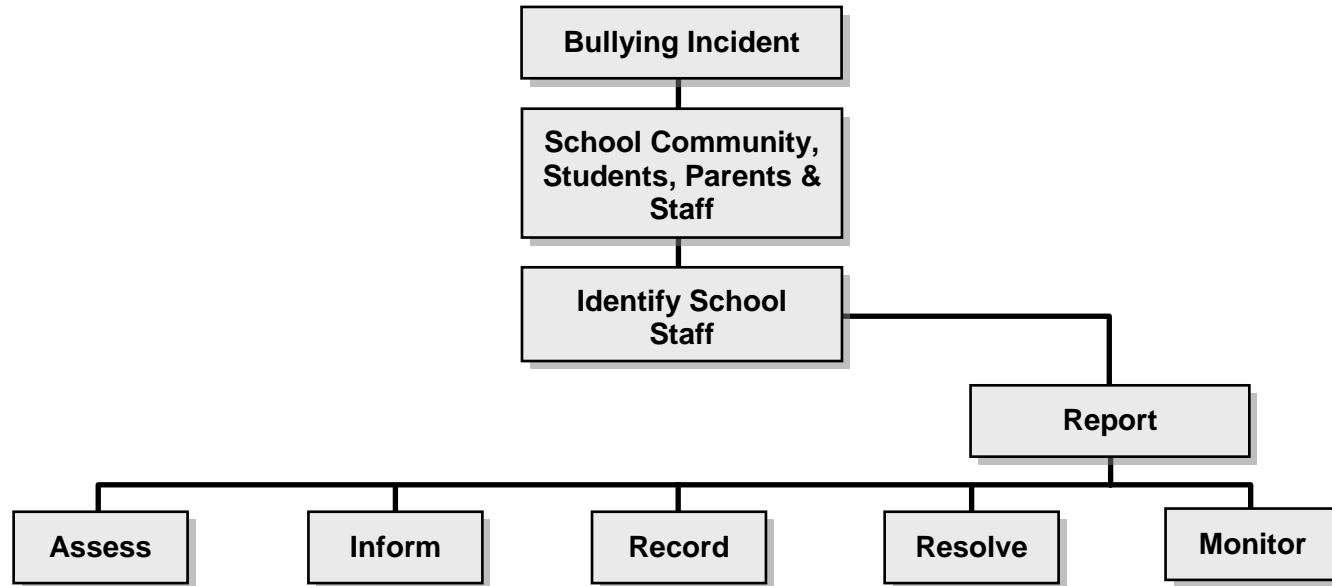
**Students** have a responsibility to:

- Conduct themselves in a lawful, ethical, safe and responsible manner that recognises and respects the rights of others.
- Behave appropriately, according to the Student Behaviour Policy.
- Respond to incidents of bullying according to their school Whole - School Student Behaviour Policy.

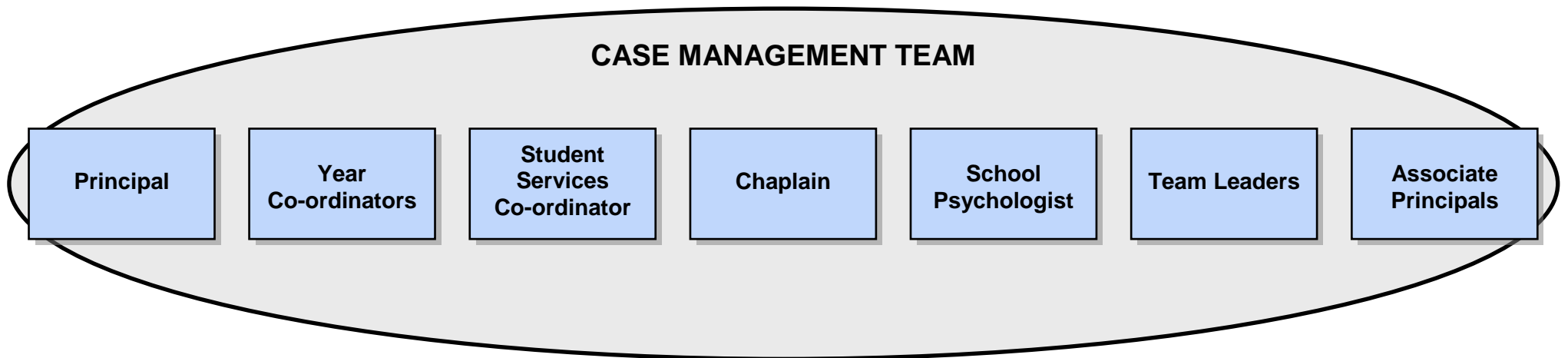
**Parents and caregivers** have a responsibility to:

- Be aware of the Whole - School Student Behaviour Policy.
- Assist their children in understanding bullying behaviour and the policy.
- Support their children in developing positive responses to incidents of bullying consistent with the school Student Behaviour Policy.
- Support the school to deal effectively with bullying through the strategies of Student Behaviour Policy.

# RESPONSE PLAN FLOW CHART



## CASE MANAGEMENT TEAM



## RESPONSE PLAN

<b>Process</b>	<b>Key Statement</b>	<b>Lower Level Harm</b>	<b>Moderate Level Harm</b>	<b>High Level Harm</b>
<b>Identify</b>	There is a common understanding as to what bullying is and about the range of bullying behaviours so that staff, students, parents and school community can identify bullying incidents.	Bullying incident identified by staff, students, parents or school community members as per Safe Schools Policy.	Bullying incident identified by staff, students, parents or school community members as per Safe Schools Policy.	Bullying incident identified by staff, students, parents or school community members as per Safe Schools Policy.
<b>Report</b>	There are clear procedures and a variety of methods for staff, parents, students and school community report bullying behaviour.	Bullying incident reported through Student Behaviour Report.	Bullying incident reported to Case Management Team.	Bullying incident reported to Case Management Team and/or Administration Team.
	<b>Case Management Team Response</b>	<b>Teacher</b>	<b>Case Management Team</b>	<b>Case Management and/or Administration Team</b>
<b>Assess</b>	Individual incidents are assessed for the severity and impact of the situation to determine what level of intervention is required.	Will assess for the severity and impact of the situation to determine what level of intervention is required.	Will assess for the severity and impact of the situation to determine what level of intervention is required.	Will assess for the severity and impact of the situation to determine what level of intervention is required.
<b>Record</b>	There are clear procedures to record bullying behaviour through a whole school data base of student behaviour.	Completes Student Behaviour Report verbally and written. Report collated centrally.	Refers to Student Behaviour Report where appropriate, interview students, completes individual notes.	Refers to Student Behaviour Report where appropriate. Completes individual notes from student interviews.
<b>Inform</b>	Relevant staff, student services and parents are contacted and sent information from Student Behaviour Report regarding the bullying incident and subsequent actions.	Team discussions, phone call to parents and document notes of conversation. Inform Year Coordinators through slips or email.	Parent contact through formal letter telephone or email, Parent verbal response, SAER meetings, Case Conference.	Parent contact, Parent meeting, Case Conference, Critical Incident Report SAER meetings. Coordinate case management response.
<b>Resolve</b>	All students directly engaged in the bullying situation: the bullied students, the students engaged in the bullying and bystanders are involved in the resolution process.	Teacher-student dialogue, Critical Thinking Line, Motivational Interviewing, BMIS.	Teacher-student dialogue Critical Thinking Line, Motivational Interviewing, Method of Shared Concern.	Motivational Interviewing Method of Shared Concern Behaviour Management Plan Risk Management Plan.
<b>Monitor</b>	There is monitoring of the effectiveness of a response strategy after each incident and follow up sessions with those involved that are recorded and tracked as part of the school data base.	SIS data, Student Interviews, Parent contact.	Team discussion, SAER meetings, SIS data, Student Interviews, Parent contact, monitoring card.	Team discussion, SAER meetings, SIS data, Student Interviews, Parent contact, monitoring card, formal contract.
<b>Consequences</b>	Consequences for breaking school rules will be applied according to the severity of the incident. They should provide the opportunity for students to learn, ensure the safety of staff and students and assist students to develop pro social skills.	Discussion of issues, in class withdrawal, buddy class, monitoring card, as in BMIS Policy.	Formal documentation, parent contact counselling, mediation, withdrawal, in-school withdrawal.	Formal investigation, interview with parents, suspension, Formal contract, exclusion.



# ASSESSING THE HARM

## HIGH LEVEL HARM

Incidents which result in high level harms are behaviours that are extended over a period of time and are intensely cruel and threatening. These behaviours are constant and cause the person being bullied to be severely distressed. Perpetrators of severe incidents have a clear intent to physically or emotionally cause harm and distress to the person they are bullying. There is a clear power imbalance and the person being bullied feels completely unable to stop the bullying happening. It has become systematic and extensive and the person being bullied is often showing signs of intense distress and other symptoms of being bullied such as: being absent from school; complaints of ill health; ongoing headaches, stomach aches.

### Managed by Case Management Team & Administration

#### Suggested actions – Severe incidents

Severe cases are usually referred to Administration staff and/or Case Management Team who need to ensure the safety of all involved. In extreme cases there may need to be police involvement and possibly charges laid.

## MODERATE LEVEL

Incidents which cause moderate harm can be identified by their frequency, duration and by the intent of the person bullying. A behaviour has been going on for some time and is becoming systematic and hurtful to the person being bullied. The person or group bullying has established a power imbalance and the person being bullied cannot stop the bullying from happening. Serious incidents can begin as low level offences and develop into more serious offences as they become more established and develop into a pattern of behaviour. There is a clear intent to cause harm and distress to the person being bullied and is clearly ongoing and harmful. The person being bullied may be showing signs of stress and symptoms of bullying such as looking unhappy, upset and lonely at school, lower interest and possible achievement in school, headaches, stomach aches and possible absences from school.

### Managed by Case Management Team

#### Suggested actions – Serious incidents

The school's Student Behaviour Plan should be utilised for serious cases and the stages or steps followed. The Case Management Team including Administration and student services teams are usually involved at this time.

## LOW LEVEL HARM

Incidents which cause low levels of harm generally involve acts that have only begun recently or occurred a couple of times or occur occasionally over time. Low level incidents such as teasing, name calling and occasional exclusion are often the result of social issues amongst friendship groups or a lack of pro social skills and understandings on the part of the person/people bullying. These behaviours can be annoying and very unpleasant for the person being bullied and the perpetrators are sometimes unaware of the degree of discomfort and hurt they are causing.

### Managed by Teacher

#### Suggested actions – Low level incidents

Low level incidents need to be dealt with, reported and recorded consistently and efficiently as they have the potential to develop into more serious incidents if not resolved and monitored effectively.

## STRATEGIES FOR BEST PRACTICE

Best Practice Principle	Key Statement	Strategies
<p><b>Committed Leadership and organisational support</b></p>	<p><b>Supports the implementation of strategies to prevent and manage student bullying behaviours and</b> helps to ensure school action is effective, sustainable and system-wide. <b>Sufficient leadership, resources, organisational support and compatibility with school needs</b> are reinforced.</p>	
<p><b>Plans and Practices to prevent and respond to bullying behaviours</b></p>	<p>There are <b>clear and consistent Policy and procedures</b> that send a clear message to the whole school community about the school's beliefs and practices to support a positive social school environment. It provides the school with a framework to <b>guide school action for the prevention, early response and case management</b> to respond to student bullying behaviours.</p>	
<p><b>Supportive social environment</b></p>	<p>A positive school climate has been created and maintained that provides safety, <b>encourages open communication, and supports a sense of connectedness</b> to the school. Protects students from the risks of bullying. The <b>quality of relationships between and among staff, students and families</b> is vital in fostering a <b>safe, supportive and engaging school environment</b>.</p>	
<p><b>Collaborative school - family - community partnerships</b></p>	<p><b>Consultation and participation between the school and students' families, key local groups and individuals</b> is encouraged by the school to provide a context and support for action to address bullying. Linkages are made with local and regional health, educational and community agencies that provide services to students and their families.</p>	
<p><b>Protective Physical Environment</b></p>	<p>A <b>well maintained school physical environment</b> helps to promote learning and positive social interactions among students and staff. The <b>building design, location, provision of space, facilities and activities</b> for recreation and learning (including through technology) have an influence on student behaviours.</p>	
<p><b>Staff, students and parents have key understandings and competencies</b></p>	<p>The school provides mechanisms to improve <b>staff, student and parent understandings and competencies</b> to more effectively <b>prevent, identify and respond to bullying incidents</b>. Key understandings about bullying include nature, prevalence and types of bullying, as well as information about <b>bystander roles</b>. These understanding are supported with <b>skills or competencies needed to identify and respond to bullying incidents</b> effectively and consistently.</p>	

## **WHOLE SCHOOL INTERVENTION STRATEGIES**

- Cyber Friendly Schools Project Year 8,9,10 Curriculum.
- Community Awareness Information.
- Web Links.
- Staff Professional Learning.
- School Diary.
- School Website postings.
- Safe School Committee.
- Recording and monitoring of bullying incidents.

### **Planning and Review**

- Provision for Policy update and review.
- Provision for collection and analysis of appropriate data on the nature and extent of bullying in our school.
- Provision for identification of indicators to assess the effectiveness of the strategies programs and procedures in place.

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