

Bullying, harassment and violence are unacceptable behaviours and have no place at Mount Stromlo High School. Staff from Mount Stromlo High School will work collaboratively with each other, students and parents to ensure that all members of our school community feel and are safe.

At Mount Stromlo High School, we believe our core business is to provide and maintain an environment where every student is able to achieve academic and social success. This cannot occur if students are experiencing physical or psychological trauma due to bullying, harassment or violence. All members of our school community are made aware of their rights and responsibilities to promote an environment which does not accept bullying, harassment or violence.

Definitions

Bullying is the repeated and unjustified negative behaviour by an individual or group against a target individual or group. Bullying is about an imbalance of power. Bullies engage in their behaviour to establish and maintain a position of power over other people. Bullying can take many different forms including;

- Verbal – name calling, put downs, teasing, unappreciated jokes, threats and intimidation
- Physical – unwanted physical contact including pushing, hitting, kicking, punching etc.
- Social – excluding an individual or orchestrating negative social group dynamics
- Psychological – non-verbal threats and intimidation including gestures and intentionally getting into people's personal space
- Cyber – inappropriate or threatening messages or photos being sent/shared through social media, email or SMS.

Harassment is negative behaviour intended to annoy or trouble another person and is often based on differences such as gender, race, religion, culture, sexual orientation, disability or socioeconomic status.

Violence includes intimidation, abuse, threatening or aggressive behaviour and physical assault resulting in injury or destruction of property.

Management of Bullying, Harassment and Violence in the school environment

Preventative Measures

- Education of students about bullying, harassment and violence through; curriculum, pastoral care programs, targeted information sessions, positive role-modeling and teaching practice and focus events such as the National Day of Action Against Bullying and Violence
- Professional learning for staff including; how to identify warning signs, conflict cycles, conflict resolution techniques, mediation and restorative practices
- Diligent supervision of students in classrooms and on the playground
- Provision for supervised, structured play activities at lunchtime

- Early intervention of conflict between students and groups of students
- Communication between teachers, parents and carers
- Records relating to bullying, harassment and violence are be maintained
- Members of the Student Services team undergo Safe and Supportive School Contact Officer (SASSCO) training and deal with issues of sexual harassment or racism

Complaint Management

Complaints relating to incidents of bullying, harassment or violence can be made to any staff member by students and/or parents/carers. Initial reports can be made verbally, however staff must make a written record of the complaint and students may be asked to complete an Incident Report form. All allegations will be responded to promptly, thoroughly and with sensitivity to the students involved.

Learning

Endeavour

Respect

Pride

When a complaint is made, the alleged perpetrator will be approached and;

- Treated fairly and impartially,
- Informed of the complaint and given an opportunity to respond,
- If appropriate, supported to engage in restorative processes with the student who made the complaint,

Support for Students experiencing of Bullying, Harassment or Violence

Mount Stromlo High School staff and in particular, members of the Student Services team (including Youth Workers, nurse, School Psychologist and SASSCO officers) will provide ongoing support and counselling for students who have been bullied, harassed or subjected to violence.

Response to Perpetrators of Bullying, Harassment or Violence

Student Services staff have a range of intervention strategies to respond to students who have harassed, bullied or used violence against another member of the school community. Appropriate responses usually include both restorative processes and disciplinary consequences. The severity of the incident, habitual nature of the behaviours and impact on other students and staff involved are considered when responding to harassment, bullying and violence.

Restorative processes focus on repairing the harm done to others by: labelling the inappropriate behaviour, teaching acceptable behaviours, building empathy for others and remorse for the harm caused. Through the principles of mediation and conflict resolution healthy relationships, personal boundaries and self-regulation are developed.

Disciplinary consequences range from community service duties, playground or excursion restrictions and after school detentions through to long periods of suspension from school.

School staff will work with students and their families to provide ongoing education and support to students who repeatedly bully, harass or use violence towards other members of the school community. This may include referrals to other Government and community agencies or alternative education pathways.

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