

## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

### RATIONALE

Bullying is any act where power is used to hurt or scare another person. It may be deliberate or as a result of carelessness and is repeated over time.

Bullying may be a physical attack on a person or their property; it may be verbal teasing or insulting; it may be in the form of text messages or on chat lines; it may be indirect such as spreading rumours, excluding people from groups or manipulating others to mistreat another student.

Australian schools are some of the safest places in the community for young people. However, bullying, harassment and violence put that safety at risk.

In the school setting, young people experience bullying as a frequent challenge. Australian studies show that 1 in 5 students is bullied and 1 in 7 students bully.

It is important to counter views that bullying is an inevitable part of school life. The Mount Gambier High School community and particularly the adults within it must take responsibility for making it clear that bullying is an act of violence and will not be tolerated in any form.

At Mount Gambier High School every person has a right to feel safe. Any person who bullies another is denying them that right. Mount Gambier High School is committed to ensuring a safe and caring community.

### PURPOSE

The purpose of a bullying policy is to ensure that:

- All members of the Mount Gambier High School community understand what constitutes bullying
- All members of the Mount Gambier High School community understand their rights and responsibilities in regard to bullying
- All parties work together to seek solutions to bullying
- Strategies are developed so that all instances of bullying are challenged
- All parties work together to seek solutions to bullying
- Students are supported with strategies to deal with bullying situations
- Students who bully are assisted to change their behaviour
- Consequences for bullying are consistent.

### GUIDELINES

Key staff members will be identified to provide support for families and students who are bullied, who are involved in bullying behaviour and who are bystanders.

Staff, students and parents are encouraged to use the school's grievance procedure in relation to incidents of bullying behaviour.

Families new to the school are provided with relevant information re bullying behaviour and the Mount Gambier High School response to it.

A whole school approach to address bullying behaviour has been developed and documented so that:

- Staff knowledge and awareness of bullying issues is increased through training and development so that they are able to recognise instances of bullying and confidently challenge students who engage in bullying behaviour
- There is a common response by staff
- A clear and consistent procedure for the management of bullying incidents is in place
- All incidents of bullying behaviour are reported, recorded and monitored
- Staff are role models who promote non-bullying behaviour
- Students are actively involved in learning activities which enable them to recognise instances of bullying behaviour, have effective strategies to appropriately challenge and address bullying behaviour, build resilience and feel comfortable reporting instances of bullying behaviour
- Students are involved in learning activities which enhance their social skills and personal development
- Parents are provided with information about school policies and procedures in relation to bullying behaviour
- Parents confidently speak to relevant school personnel re bullying behaviour
- Parents are able to identify signs of bullying behaviour
- Parents are provided with strategies to help them deal with bullying situations
- A range of responses are developed which support the school policy
- Students are supported to develop an awareness of the impact of their behaviour on others through the Mediation process and Restorative Practice
- Students are supported through a counselling program to change away from bullying behaviours
- Consequences to address bullying behaviours range in severity depending on the incident and the frequency of the bullying behaviour, and include – detention, community service, suspension or exclusion
- Consequences are applied consistently whilst addressing individual circumstances

## **REVIEW**

This policy is to be reviewed annually by the Wellbeing Team and Leadership.

**Review Date: Term 4 2019**