

## **MURRAY BRIDGE SPECIAL SCHOOL**

### **ANTI BULLYING**

#### **POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

##### **Mission**

*The mission of Murray Bridge Special School is for staff, our young people, families, and the broader school community, to work together to provide for the growth of each individual by building mutual respect and responsibility within a safe and supportive learning environment. This draws on the school's fundamental belief of valuing the intrinsic worth and dignity of each person, and of service to others. Each member of the Murray Bridge Special School community shares the collective responsibility to ensure every member feels safe, supported and valued at all times. Bullying in any form is never acceptable.*

##### **Scope Of This Policy**

*To provide a policy and associated procedures detailing strategies that can be used in the identification, management, reduction and/or elimination of bullying of and by our young people at Murray Bridge Special School through the use of a preventative action planning process. The specific focus of this policy and associated procedures is on bullying of and by our young people. For information on bullying between adults at the workplace please refer to 'Murray Bridge Special School Violence and Bullying at Work' policy.*

##### **Aims Of This Policy**

- to provide a safe, secure teaching and learning environment for all.*
- to create and maintain a supportive climate, and break any code of secrecy that may surround bullying.*
- to raise awareness of the issues involved with bullying and provide information to our young people, staff, families, and the school community.*
- to support and empower targeted young people.*
- to implement procedures to address bullying behaviour, and so develop in those involved respect for themselves and others.*

##### **Definitions**

- "Bullying" the persistent ill treatment of an individual by one or more other persons. It need not require physical violence but may involve such treatment as verbal abuse, threats, sarcasm, ostracism, and the sabotage of a person's work. It can either be dispute-related, arising out of an initial or on-going conflict, or predatory, where a victim may be an innocent and/or opportunistic target.*
- "abuse" is any unreasonable behaviour that involves the misuse of physical or psychological strength or power*
- "threat" a statement of the intent to harm the person or damage their property*
- "assault" any attempt to cause injury to a person and includes actual physical harm*

**Bullying may occur between any combination of the following groups:**

- *Learners*
- *staff*
- *managers*
- *families, parents and carers*
- *visitors*
- *contractors*
- *other external service providers*
- *the wider community.*

**School Context**

*Staffs at Murray Bridge Special School acknowledge the value placed on learning, what is considered important to learn, desired outcomes, and behaviour expectations and responses, are often determined by the children's families, parents, carers or guardian/s. These are based on interpretation of the values and attitudes of the culture to which the child's parent, carers or guardians belong.*

*Staff at Murray Bridge Special School acknowledge and respect the role of families, parents, carers or guardians for the primary care and initial education of their children.*

*The development and maintenance of responsible behaviour and personal accountability for actions is considered to be a whole of community responsibility.*

*The school is a valuable resource and support mechanism to the whole of our community in assisting plan and facilitate learning pathways for our young people.*

*The importance of the school and community working together in a co-operative partnership to assist our young people learn and demonstrate appropriate and responsible behaviour cannot be understated.*

*The ability of school staff to assist support our young people achieve continuous learning outcomes is dependent on the partnership between the home environment and the school. Consistency in application, reinforcement of concepts, rehearsal of developing skills, and transferral of skills learnt become powerful and positive in a cooperative learning partnership.*

*It is also acknowledged all learning is dependent on the learner's level of cognition, engagement, and personal cooperation in the learning process. For a number of reasons levels of motivation, engagement, and participation can vary significantly for our young people from day to day.*

*The range of behaviour expectations and responses our young people are assisted to learn and demonstrate successfully at Murray Bridge Special School are those considered appropriate and responsible by the local community and broader culture to which the school belongs.*

**Murray Bridge Special School staffs believe learners who;**

- *feel safe*
- *have their personal, and health care needs met in a timely and appropriate manner*
- *are provided with the opportunity to be engaged with relevant and challenging learning*

*are less likely to produce behaviour which interferes with their own and others right to teaching and learning.*

*Murray Bridge Special school policy is directly shaped by the Department for Education 'School Discipline' policy and the Federal 'National Safe Schools Framework'. From this policy and framework, Murray Bridge Special School has four local interpretive policies and procedures; 'Anti Bullying', 'Behaviour Code', 'Effective Communication', and 'Parent Complaints Policy' that dovetail to provide a broad range of strategies, and clear and explicit processes for the development of responsible behaviour and the management of inappropriate behaviour.*

*It is important to note the procedures for management of inappropriate behaviour outlined in the Department for Education 'School Discipline' policy of 'take home', 'suspension', 'exclusion' and 'expulsion' apply to all learners enrolled at Murray Bridge Special School.*

*At Murray Bridge Special school teaching pedagogies acknowledge the complexity and interrelationship of disability and behaviour.*

*Therefore the application of procedures suggested in the National Safe Schools Framework for the prevention and management of bullying, and the application of procedures for the management of inappropriate learner behaviour as outlined in the 'School Discipline' policy of 'take home', 'suspension', 'exclusion' and 'expulsion' may be directed by a range of considerations.*

*Considerations may include:*

- *the cognitive functioning of the learner*
- *the frequency and/or severity of the behaviour*
- *disability specific information provided by other groups or agencies*
- *The Principal's right to veto all considerations and action their perception of what is in the best interest of the school community.*

*Staff at Murray Bridge Special School work as part of a trans-disciplinary team whose aim is to create a safe and caring environment, where our learners have access to a learning and care package which is relevant, engaging, challenging, and planned to achieve specific continuous learning outcomes.*

*Our learners development of responsible and personally accountable behaviour is assisted by school staff through the encouragement of:*

- *calm and settled behaviours*
- *gentleness*
- *co-operation*
- *appropriate communication*

*Staff acknowledgment of our learners demonstrating any/all of these behaviours are consistent, deliberate and obvious.*

***Learners at Murray Bridge Special School are given access to learning and behaviour rehearsal that assists them to feel safe and secure.***

*Following are a range of recommended actions, consequences and suggested strategies our learners are encouraged to take if they are being bullied or are the bully. **These require a specific level of cognitive ability. It is acknowledged most learners enrolled at Murray Bridge Special School will not be able to successfully implement these actions or strategies, or comprehend consequences. Our learners who do not have the cognitive ability to interdependently implement the general recommended actions or strategies will have adults in the school act on their behalf as advocates.***

### ***Coping as the Incident Occurs***

*Strategies include:*

- *Stay calm, do not respond with aggression or violence*
- *Ignore (use self-talk and remember often those who bully are disguising their own problems.) and walk away.*
- *Have already identified a network of trusted adults and peers you can talk to. Seek support immediately from your network – you must let someone know what is happening.*

***Our Learners Are Always Encouraged To Seek Help from others – ‘persist and you will find someone to support you’***

*Strategies include:*

- *Go to an adult such as your learning facilitator, your school support officer, the principal, an adult in your family, another adult you trust, or an outside agency like Kids Helpline.*
- *Tell the adult everything.*
- *Decide with the adult on a plan.*
- *Your plan must include letting your learning facilitator, school support officer, or the Principal know about the problem. (non-negotiable)*
- *Keep on telling people until the bullying stops!*

### ***Consequences for Our Learners Who Bully***

*Learners found to be bullying face a range of consequences from counselling to losing their place at Murray Bridge Special School. All incidents will be placed on record. Any retaliation by anyone against someone who reports bullying will be dealt with very seriously.*

*Consequences may include a range of strategies such as:*

- *Electronic recording of the incident with the Department for Education*
- *counselling*
- *Appropriate apologies and restoration of relationships*
- *formal interviews*
- *restitution for any damage to property or personal possessions*
- *separation from other learners*
- *Suspension (for serious offences or persistent inappropriate behaviour.)*
- *Exclusion (for aggravated or persistent serious bullying.)*

***Families will be notified as soon as practical of incidences of bullying. Family participation in the school management process of incidences of bullying will range on a continuum from 'encouraged' to 'mandatory'.***

### **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

#### ***The Principal is responsible for:***

- *the maintenance of consultative process with staff and the school community to eliminate or minimise the occurrences of bullying of and/or by our learners*
- *supporting staff to access appropriate professional learning in the management of bullying*
- *supporting staff and the school community in the implementation of this policy and monitoring the effectiveness*
- *the implementation of the Department "Grievance Procedures for employees in Children's Services and School Sector"*
- *the implementation of the 'Murray Bridge Special School Parent Complaints Policy'*
- *ensuring their management style does not adversely affect the safety and well-being of our young people*
- *providing appropriate induction, information, and supervision to all stakeholders*
- *monitoring and reviewing procedures on a regular basis*
- *providing access to support services*
- *recording (electronic IRMS) of bullying incidents*

#### ***School staffs at Murray Bridge Special School are responsible for:***

- *ensuring their behaviour does not adversely affect the safety and well-being of our learners*
- *supporting their own safety and well-being at work*
- *using the "Grievance Procedures for employees in Children's Services and School Sector" and the local Murray Bridge Special school 'Effective Communication' policy to resolve conflict*
- *ensuring they and others they line manage know what to do if bullying occurs*
- *supporting continuous improvement and implementation of:*
  1. *induction, training and supervision*
  2. *work systems – e.g.: behaviour*
  3. *effective grievance, conflict and complaints resolution*
- *supporting victims and witnesses of bullying, e.g. first aid, counselling*
- *reporting and recording of bullying incidents*
- *reporting bullying incidents directly to the Principal*
- *referring to support services*
- *Supporting policies and practices in the school that assist maintain a safe and supportive learning environment for all learners.*

#### ***Families, school community members, volunteers, visitors and contractors are responsible for:***

- *ensuring their behaviour while on school premises or school duties does not adversely affect the safety and well-being of our learners*
- *supporting their own safety and well-being at work*

- *using the "Grievance Procedures for employees in Children's Services and School Sector" and the local Murray Bridge Special school 'Effective Communication' policy and/or the 'Parent Complaints Policy' to resolve conflict*
- *reporting incidents of bullying to the learners learning facilitator, and the Principal*
- *Supporting policies and practices in the school that assist maintain a safe and supportive learning environment for all learners.*

***Learners enrolled at Murray Bridge Special School are responsible for:***

- *Supporting policies and practices in the school that assist maintain a safe and supportive teaching and learning environment.*

***References***

- *WHS Regulations*
- *Department for Education WHS Policy*
- *Department for Education Grievance Procedure*
- *Department for Education School Discipline Policy*
- *Department for Education WHS Management Systems and Training Program (Hazard Management)*
- *Department for Education Bullying and harassment at school – Advice for parents and caregivers*
- *Public Sector Management (PSM) Act, Code of Conduct for Employees*
- *Resource Pack - Responding To Concerns From Parents and Caregivers In Department for Education Schools and Preschools*
- *Murray Bridge Special School Effective Communication Policy*
- *Murray Bridge Special School Behaviour Code*
- *Murray Bridge Special School Staff Code of Conduct*
- *Murray Bridge Special School Violence And Bullying At Work Policy*
- *Murray Bridge Special School Outdoor Duty And Inclement Weather Policy*
- *National Safe School Framework*