

# Anti Bullying Policy

## Rationale

Young High School is committed to creating a safe and caring environment in which all students and staff can feel safe and valued, achieving success both socially and academically. Underpinning our daily operation are the key expectations and values of respect which engenders a school culture of tolerance, acceptance and recognition. Bullying if not challenged can lead to unwanted consequences, either short or long-term in nature, for both the bully and the bullied student. As a school community at Young High School we do not tolerate bullying or harassment of any kind and we will work together to prevent bullying occurring in our school.

Any bullying incident which comes to the attention of a student and staff or parents, should be dealt with according to the policy and procedures outlined below. Managing the incident swiftly and consistently enforces our zero tolerance of such behaviour within the school and promotes a safe learning environment for students and staff.

**Unfortunately in schools sometimes, things happen that no one either wants, expects or accepts. It is what a school does about them that is the measure of the quality of the school. Our policy is at all times operational under the DEC system wide policy and procedures governing all matters of bullying and its prevention, management response and desired eradication.**

## What is Bullying?

Bullying occurs when there is "repeated oppression, psychological or physical, on a less powerful person by a more powerful person or group of persons" (Rigby, K. 1996:15)

Bullying contains seven key features:

- an intention to be hurtful
- this intention is carried out
- the behaviour harms the bullied student
- the bully overwhelms the bullied student with his or her power
- there is often no justification for the action
- the behaviour repeats itself again and again
- the bully derives a sense of satisfaction from hurting the bullied student.

## WHAT BULLYING IS NOT

Many distressing behaviours are not examples of bullying, even though they are unpleasant and often require teacher intervention and management. There are three socially unpleasant situations that are often confused with bullying:

### **Mutual conflict**

In mutual conflict situations, there is an argument or disagreement between students but not an imbalance of power. Both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution to the problem. However, unresolved mutual conflict sometimes develops into a bullying situation with one person becoming targeted repeatedly for 'retaliation' in a one-sided way.

### **Social rejection or dislike**

Unless the social rejection is directed towards someone specific and involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others, it is not bullying.

### **Single-episode acts**

Single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. If a student is verbally abused or pushed on one occasion they are not being bullied. Nastiness or physical aggression that is directed towards many different students is not the same as bullying.

## **Forms of Bullying.**

Bullying can occur in a number of ways. When young people are involved bullying will often be one of the following:

**Physically bullying** – This may include but is not limited to fighting, kicking, punching, hitting, shoving, pinching, abusive gestures and moving in close on the bullied student's personal space.

**Verbal bullying** – This may include but is not limited to: Using words in a malicious way to cause distress eg. teasing, swearing, using "put-downs", spreading nasty rumours, using stand-over tactics and making repeated abusive phone calls.

**Extortion** - This may include but is not limited to: Blackmail, threatening /forcing handover of money.

**Visual bullying** – This may include but is not limited to: Passing insulting letters from student to student or placing them in the bullied student's bag, and graffiti.

**Exclusion** - This may include but is not limited to: Deliberately leaving a person out of a game or group, ignoring and not acknowledging their presence.

**Racial bullying** – This may include but is not limited to: Negative labelling, "put-down" comments and gestures about a person's race or religion.

**Sexual bullying** – This may include but is not limited to: Obscene drawings and gestures, rude jokes about the bullied student, brushing up against the bullied student, unwarranted touching and asking questions of a sexual nature to shame and embarrass.

**Cyber bullying** – This involves the inappropriate use of technology. It may include but is not limited to: Sending of SMS messages, inappropriate use of phone, sending of inappropriate emails, inappropriate use of social media sites, (e.g. Facebook) and inappropriate use of cameras and video recording devices.

## Important Role of the Bystander

A bystander is someone (student or teacher) who witnesses the bullying behaviour. Bystanders can play a powerful role in encouraging or discouraging bullying behaviours. Students are encouraged to support the student being bullied rather than actively or passively encourage the bully. At Young High School we expect our students and the wider school community to engage in "Positive Bystander Behaviour". We model this behaviour explicitly through our MindMatters program.

By being positive bystanders, students take an active role to prevent bullying. If they see someone being bullied students can:

- encourage their peer to walk away and then support that person.
- not join in.
- tell an adult (teacher/parent) or take the student being bullied to tell someone who can help (eg. Year Adviser).
- If in danger and for more serious incidents call a teacher for help immediately.
- ask the bullied student if he or she feels okay.
- show care for the bullied student by standing near him or her.
- ask the bullied student to join your group or activity.
- let the bully know that we do not tolerate bullying at this school.
- Seek support from your Care Teacher.

At Young High School all students engage in MindMatters lessons that actively address mental health and wellbeing. These lessons explicitly address issues such as bullying and positive bystander behaviour.

## Reporting Bullying

Students, parents and bystanders all have an active role to play in supporting students in our school and ensuring bullying issues are addressed. All parties must take an active role reporting incidents of bullying to the appropriate people. If incidents of bullying are not reported and the school does not know of any issues then the school is not in a position to provide individual and specific support. Everyone must work to report and stop bullying. When a student reports an incident of bullying it is their responsibility to follow up with staff on the issue ensuring they gain feedback and resolution has occurred. Where a student feels feedback has not been received or the issue has not been resolved the students must follow up with the appropriate staff member and report again.

## Helping a friend.

Students do not always tell a teacher about bullying. A significant number tell a friend about bullying. We encourage the friends to tell a teacher or a parent who can then ensure that the school is informed of the incident. Once the school is aware of an incident it is then in a position to take action. Students can support their friends by first reporting to their Care Teacher and Year Advisors.

## **Consequences for bullies (follow the anti-bullying flow chart)**

There will be an escalating series of consequences for students who bully. The initial bullying incident should be referred to the relevant staff member. The staff member will address the issue and enter the incident onto SENTRAL.

If bullying behaviour continues, further actions will occur including parent involvement. Appropriate consequences will be put in place and may range from completion of bullying awareness and prevention activities, through to loss of playground privileges to removal from classes, level placement and/or suspension.

## **Support for students being bullied.**

At the same time there will be ongoing support for the student being bullied. After the initial bullying incident, the bullied student will be supported by the appropriate staff member which may include their Care Teacher and strategies for support will be put in place. This support will also be reported on SENTRAL.

Should this student continue to be bullied, further counsellor/parent support and intervention programs will be put in place. Where appropriate, this will include enlisting the expertise of outside agencies.

## **Parents Role.**

If a parent becomes aware of instances of bullying it is important to notify the Year Adviser as early as possible so that interventions can be put in place before the problem escalates. In addition, if your young person is either bullying or being bullied there are strategies you can try at home to assist them in all aspects of their lives. Some information on these strategies is available from the school.

There are many strategies and processes that can be implemented to support students at Young High School through the Anti-Bullying policy.

## **Strategies that can be used include the following:**

- Students will be encouraged to report bullying to a teacher, a friend and their parents.
- Friends are encouraged to report bullying to help the person who told them about the incident.
- All teachers are expected to deal with an incident in a timely manner.
- Violence will be reported directly to the Deputy Principal. When students complete an incident report a receipt will be issued by the collecting teacher.

First instances of bullying will be dealt with by the staff member the incident is reported to. The staff member responsible for addressing the issue is to record the names of both the bully and bullied students on SENTRAL along with the incident description and intervention outcome. Appropriate contact made with parents.

If a student is reported a second time for bullying the student will have further consequences and support put in place by the teacher addressing the issue. This may include referral to the Head Teacher.

If a student is referred a subsequent time for bullying, the student will be referred to the school counsellor, the parents will be informed and invited to help develop a plan to assist their young person. This may involve assistance from outside agencies. Students will be placed on a level. Students to stay on the level for up to 2 weeks. They will complete 2 sessions of no-blame counselling.

The minority of students who continue to persist in bullying behaviour will lose their privileges and discipline actions will be implemented as per school and DEC guidelines.

Some specific intervention strategies that may be implemented throughout the processes outlined above may include but are not limited to:

- MindMatters program
- Mediation
- Peer mediation
- Counselling
- Completion of anti-bullying awareness activities
- Parent interview
- Detention
- Withdrawal from playground
- Level 1 placement
- Level 2 placement
- In-school isolation
- Suspension
- External agency intervention

### **Strategies for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the plan:**

- Survey students, parents and staff each bi-annually and compare data.
- Track identified students bi-annually through SENTRAL as an indicator of effect of intervention.

### **Consequences for Bullying**

#### **First incident:**

- Report to the supervising staff member.
- Appropriate staff member to discuss with the bully and victim.
- Incident to be registered in SENTRAL.
- Parent contact made to parents of both parties.
- Issue resolved appropriately using intervention strategies previously outlined.
- Student advised to report to their Care Teacher if subsequent incidents occur.

### **Second incident:**

- Report to the Teacher.
- Teacher involved talks with the student and refers to the Care Teacher.
- The Care teacher notifies the Year Advisor.
- Care Teacher and Tea Advisor together manage the issue.
- Incident to be registered in SENTRAL.
- Parent contact made to parents of both parties by Care Teacher or Year Advisor.
- Parent contact to include a letter for bully.
- Issue resolved appropriately using intervention strategies previously outlined.
- Resolution will include detention and completion of anti-bullying awareness activities.

### **Third Incident:**

- Report to the Care Teacher.
- Care Teacher to discuss with the bully and victim. Care Teacher to refer to the Year Advisor.
- Year Advisor and House Head Teacher together manage the issue.
- Incident to be registered in SENTRAL.
- Parent contact made to parents of both parties.
- Parent contact to include an interview with parents of the bully by appropriate staff member.
- Issue resolved appropriately using intervention strategies previously outlined.
- Resolution will include counsellor referral for "no blame" counselling, Level 1 placement for up to 2 weeks and completion of anti-bullying awareness activities.

### **Subsequent Incidents:**

- Procedures as mentioned above.
- Further disciplinary measures used. Possibly including Level 2, isolation and suspension.

## **Support for Students Being Bullied**

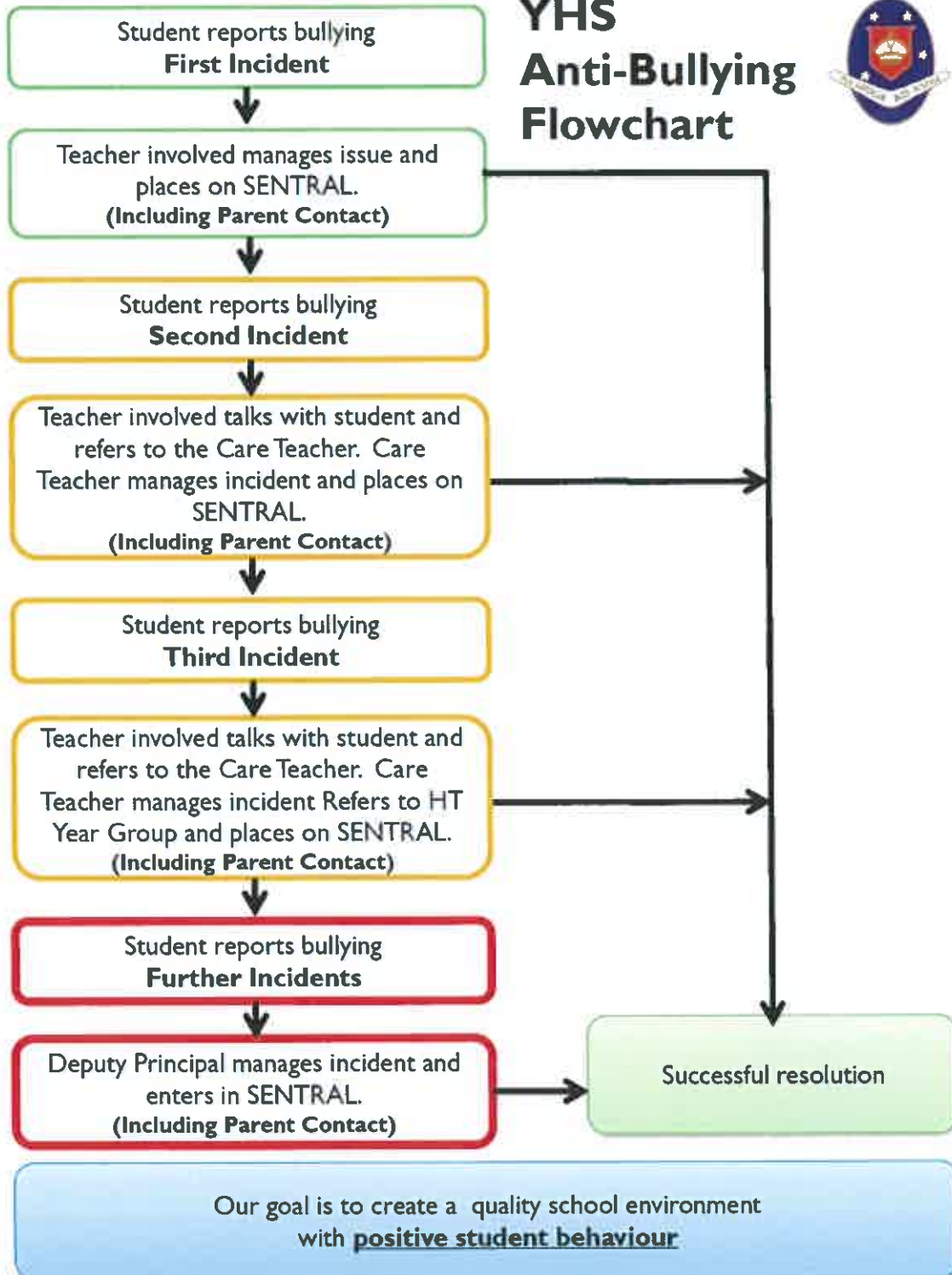
Assistance for students that have been bullied is designed to be non-confrontational and supportive. Through any bullying situation students will be offered the following opportunities to engage in support.

- Talk with teacher at the scene.
- Work with the Care Teacher.
- Work with the Year Advisor.
- Work with the Girls Advisor.
- Work with the School Counsellor.
- Parent interview with appropriate welfare team members to develop a support plan.
- Work with external agencies to build capacity within the student.

While none of these support structures are compulsory the school strongly recommends that students experiencing bullying seek assistance and use the support offered.

## Anti Bullying Policy Flowchart

## YHS Anti-Bullying Flowchart



- SENTRAL is updated of the after-school detention defaulters (those present at school who were a 'no show' without any explanation).
- Lists of after-school detention defaulters are followed up upon by the Head Teacher(s) supervising after school detention. 'On the run' reminders to those on after-school detention can assist in increasing completion rates.
- Repeat offenders are provided to the relevant Deputy Principal for Pre-Suspension Warning letters.
- Letters of Pre-Suspension Warning are distributed face to face with the offenders by the staff member supervising after-school detention or the relevant Deputy Principal.
- Record keeping lists are made of those who have completed and those owing after-school detention. Defaulters are given ONE pre-suspension warning letter and may be suspended on the next instance of defaulting an after-school detention without reasonable excuse and/or school approval.