



MLC
SCHOOL

Anti-Bullying for Students

Policy & Procedures

Name of Document	Anti-Bullying Policy & Procedures (v4)
Policy Status	APPROVED by Executive Committee
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Policy Owner	Deputy Principal
Policy Contact	Head of Senior School Head of Junior School
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Anti-Bullying for Students Policy

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to document the strategies undertaken by MLC School as part of their zero-tolerance to any form of bullying and harassment.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all students and staff of MLC School.

POLICY STATEMENT

MLC School is committed to a high expectation of respect for others. All students and staff have the right to learn and to teach in a supportive and caring environment. This right also carries with it the responsibility that nothing done, felt, or said interferes with the learning and teaching of others. Bullying and harassment in all forms – physical, verbal, electronic, emotional, psychological, and social – are totally unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

KEY PRINCIPLES

The key principles of this policy are:

- i. Bullying at MLC School is not tolerated.
- ii. All bullying incidents must be reported.
- iii. They will be dealt with quickly, sensitively, and firmly.
- iv. Dealing with allegations of bullying is a priority and will be managed as such.
- v. Allegations of bullying will be individually managed, with impartiality in the investigation and decision-making process.
- vi. All investigations will be managed with procedural fairness. All parties have the right to impartiality in the investigation and decision-making process; and the right to an absence of bias in the decision-maker.
- vii. While it is understandable that girls, and parents/carers who report incidents of bullying wish to remain anonymous, this is not always possible. The School needs to be open about all reports of bullying received. Every effort will be made to ensure there are no repercussions, and that a girl who is the target of bullying is treated compassionately and sensitively, while the incident itself is managed firmly to reach a positive outcome.

DEFINITIONS

TERM	MEANING
Bullying	<p>Bullying is repeated and often deliberate hurtful behaviour by an individual or a group of individuals towards another person that causes distress, intimidation, or undue pressure.</p> <p>It is often characterised by a power imbalance between bully and target. Bullying is not only done in person. It can also happen online via social media, and/or SMS.</p> <p>Examples of repeated and often deliberate behaviours that constitute bullying include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Any form of physical violence or threats of violence• Verbal abuse; name calling, malicious teasing, belittling, ridiculing, or insulting someone• Any form of harassment on the basis of race, religion, or sexuality• Offensive gestures, or subtle but intimidating body language• Damaging or hiding another person's property• Excluding, or encouraging others to exclude, someone from a group• Spreading rumours or telling lies to damage someone's reputation• Any form of cyber bullying <p>It is important to remember that not every unpleasant action is bullying. Bullying is repeated and often deliberate behaviour that causes hurt or distress. It is distinct from playful teasing, even though that may appear to be mean at times.</p> <p>Changing social groups, arguments and mutual conflict can be part of school life. It is when these issues involve repeated and often deliberate attempts to belittle, distress or isolate that it becomes bullying.</p>

Anti-Bullying for Students Procedures

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to document the strategies undertaken by MLC School to address any form of bullying or harassment.

2. SCOPE

This procedure applies to all students and staff of MLC School.

3. KEY PRINCIPLES

The general key principles are to be taken into account:

- i. All bullying incidents must be reported and dealt with quickly.
- ii. An immediate and sensitive response will send a strong message to the MLC School community that bullying is not tolerated and is seen as a priority.
- iii. While a situation may not be resolved immediately, the process must start immediately.

4. PROCEDURES

4.1 Junior School

- i. Any member of staff who witnesses bullying or receives a report regarding a bullying incident in the Junior School must inform the student's Stage Coordinator immediately. The Year Coordinator will inform the student's classroom teacher and the Deputy Head of Junior School – Wellbeing. This group will decide on the appropriate course of action between them.
- ii. The Year Coordinator and Deputy Head of Junior School – Wellbeing will also ensure other relevant staff are informed in a timely manner, which may include the Head of Junior School, the Deputy Principal, the Principal, parents, the School Counsellors, and relevant staff. Other staff and students will be informed as appropriate.
- iii. The Deputy Head of Junior School - Wellbeing will then:
 - Investigate the incident sensitively and carefully. The alleged target, the alleged bully and any bystanders should be interviewed – separately – in the spirit of finding a solution to the problem for all concerned.

- Document the incident in detail and keep notes/records of each stage of the process. A student note should be placed on both students' files, under a confidential heading initially.
- Demonstrate complete support and care for the target and assure her there will be no repercussions and take all possible steps to ensure this.
- Demonstrate to the alleged target, the alleged bully and any bystanders, total abhorrence for the behaviour and re-iterate the School's position on bullying.
- Explain the seriousness of the situation and warn the students how serious the consequences will be if there are any repercussions or further incidents.
- Take immediate, short-term measures to remove stressors from the situation while it is being investigated. This may require girls to be separated in class, their activities to be amended, or the girls being monitored closely by checking in with staff at key points during the day.
- After investigation, start a process to resolve the issue for the two main protagonists. Depending on the situation, it may be beneficial to include some of the bystanders in the process.
- Further measures to improve self-esteem, self-discipline, social skills for either of both of the alleged target and the alleged bully may be required. Any course of action will be decided by the Year Coordinator, the Deputy Head of Senior School – Wellbeing and School Counsellors.
- Continue to monitor and document.

4.2 Senior School

- i. Any member of staff who witnesses bullying or receives a report regarding a bullying incident in the Senior School must inform the student's Head of Year immediately. The Head of Year will inform the student's Luminary and the Deputy Head of Senior School – Wellbeing. This group will decide on the appropriate course of action between them.
- ii. The Head of Year and Deputy Head of Senior School – Wellbeing will also ensure other relevant staff are informed in a timely manner, which may include the Head of Senior School, the Deputy Principal, the Principal, parents, the School Counsellors, and relevant staff. Other staff and students will be informed if appropriate.
- iii. The Head of Year and any relevant staff will then:
 - Investigate the incident sensitively and carefully. The alleged target, the alleged bully and any bystanders should be interviewed – separately – in the spirit of finding a solution to the problem for all concerned.
 - Document the incident in detail and keep notes/records of each stage of the process. A student note should be placed on both students' files, under a confidential heading initially.

- Demonstrate complete support and care for the target and assure her there will be no repercussions and take all possible steps to ensure this.
- Demonstrate to the alleged target, the alleged bully and any bystanders, total abhorrence for the behaviour and re-iterate the School's position on bullying.
- Explain the seriousness of the situation and warn the students how serious the consequences will be if there are any repercussions or further incidents.
- Take immediate, short-term, measures to remove stressors from the situation while it is being investigated. This may require girls to be separated in class, their activities to be amended, or the girls being monitored closely by checking in with staff at key points during the day.
- After investigation, start a process to resolve the issue for the two main protagonists. Depending on the situation, it may be beneficial to include some of the bystanders in the process.
- Further measurements to improve self-esteem, self-discipline, social skills for either or both of the alleged target and the alleged bully may be required. Any course of action will be decided by the Head of Year, the Deputy Head of Senior School – Wellbeing and School Counsellors.
- Continue to monitor and document.

4.3 Support & Resources

- i. Pastoral Care Programs and resources for Years K-12
 - UR Strong program in the Junior School.
 - Trust Mapping for Years 3 to 8.
 - Pastoral Care Programs for each year group
- ii. Contact details for support organisations and resources including the Police School Liaison Officer, Kids Help Line and Lifeline are available to every student in the School Diary. These are reviewed and updated annually.

5. ACTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The actions and responsibilities to be undertaken in respect of this procedure are set out below:

5.1 Students are responsible for:

- Reporting all incidents of bullying to a Luminary, a class teacher, a subject teacher, a Head of Year, a Stage Coordinator, or any member of staff with whom they feel they can communicate.

5.2 Teachers are responsible for:

- Informing the student's Head of Year or Stage Coordinator immediately after receiving a report of bullying from a student.
- Taking initial responsibility for demonstrating prompt, positive action, through assertiveness, no tolerance for the behaviour, and discussion if they witness an incident of bullying. The incident should then be reported promptly to the student's Head of Year or Year Coordinator.

6. RELATED POLICIES & SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- MLC School Diary
- Parent Handbook

7. ACCESS

Not restricted.

This document is available to all stakeholders via the School's Community website.

This document is available to all staff via Domus.

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