



Melrose High School



Values 'RESPECT'.

Resources, Effort, Self, Peers, Environment, Community, Teachers

Melrose High School - Safe School Policy

Rationale

Melrose High School seeks to create a learning community based on our negotiated community values of RESPECT, including Respect for Resources, Effort, Self, Peers, Environment, Community and Teachers. (See appendix #1). These values have been created, refined and articulated by the Melrose High School community – students, staff and parents. These values reflect the way all members of the community conduct themselves. All members are expected to uphold promote and demonstrate these values at all times.

Therefore, we do not tolerate bullying or harassment in any form.

Definitions

Bullying is:

- An act of aggression intended to violate another person's sense of safety and self worth
- A deliberate, unjustifiable and often repeated behaviour.
- Intended to cause fear, distress and/or harm to another.
- May be physical, verbal or indirect / relational.
- Conducted by a more powerful individual or group against a less powerful individual who is unable to effectively resist.

Underlying most bullying behaviour is an abuse of power and a desire to intimidate and dominate. (Sharp & Smith. 1994a)

Harassment is:

- Harassment is any type of deliberate uninvited and unwelcome, behaviour that may offend, embarrass and / or scare.
- It may occur because of a person's race, age, disability, sexuality or religious beliefs.
- Some harassment is unlawful.
- All harassment is undesirable and may take the form of minor irritation, pestering, aggravation or major forms of stalking and persecution.

Being bullied or harassed implies that someone is subjected to behaviour that is hurtful, threatening and frightening.



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Use of Terms

- Bully: The person responsible for an act of bullying.
- Target: the victim of an act of bullying.
- Bystander: peer of the bully and/or target.

Bullying and harassment can take a variety of forms such as:

Physical:

unwanted physical contact, hitting, tripping, pinching, spitting, pushing, fighting, throwing objects, stealing, taking, hiding or damaging possessions, obscene threatening gestures, standing-over or invading someone's personal space or damaging the property of others.

Verbal:

Name calling, unfriendly teasing and belittling put downs, spoken threats, offensive language, insults, extorting and demanding money, favours or possessions, hurtful gossip and spreading rumours intended to shame and embarrass.

Social:

Deliberate exclusion from a group, ignoring, offending others through jokes or showing inappropriate material, disrupting the learning of others, pressuring someone to do something against their will and non-verbal acts such as 'greasy' looks etc.

Cyber:

Inappropriate use of cyber technology: the internet, E-mail, social networks (example Facebook), chat rooms, messaging via a phone or computerised device; to intimidate, offend or harass another person. This could be by a variety of ways such as fake photographs, spreading rumours etc.

Psychological:

Victimisation, instilling fear from extortion (forcing a student to hand over money, possessions, or food) forcing other students to do assignments, homework, etc threats of harm, action or consequences. Condoning the harassment of others by failing to act, eg laughing or acting towards others with disrespect.

Sexual:

Making sexual comments, jokes or repeated questions associated with an individual's body, voice tone or that of a group repeated questions about a person's private life non-verbal acts, or body gestures of a sexual nature display of offensive pictures, posters or graffiti.



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Rights and Responsibilities

Melrose High School will not tolerate any action that undermines a person's right to feel safe, respected or to learn.

- **Every person has the right to feel safe.**
- This means we have to think about others (not just ourselves) in the classroom and in the playground.
- The right to feel safe means we all have a responsibility to consider how we speak and act towards others.
- Bullying takes away a person's sense of security.
- The right to safety means that any bullying of any kind is unacceptable.
- **Every person has the right to be treated with respect and fairness.**
- This means we show respect to other people, and their property in the class and in the playground.
- The right to receive respect and fair treatment requires from us the responsibility to show manners and courtesy towards each other.
- **Every person has the right to learn.**
- This means we do not adversely affect the learning of another student.

At school it is everyone's responsibility to take the necessary steps to stop bullying behaviour, therefore all staff, students and parents have the following responsibilities:

- To speak, act and behave in a manner consistent with the Melrose High School community RESPECT values at all times
- Be familiar with the school's bullying policy and procedures.
- Watch for evidence of bullying
- Listen to reports of bullying.
- Act upon these reports.
- Protect the person being bullied from further harm.
- Inform the Student Services Team.
- Act to stop the behaviour recurring: and
- Record identified bullying incidents on MAZE and/ or Bullying Register (staff only).



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Student processes

Students who are bullied need to communicate about it with:

- A teacher, staff member or trustworthy student and their parents and give them full details of the event; and
- Write details about the event on an incident report form ASAP and forward it to Student Services.

Student witnesses to bullying should:

1. Intervene if they are able;
2. Seek teacher assistance; and
3. Document the incident on an incident report form if requested.

Guidelines for Students

Students are encouraged to;

- Use prevention strategies such as assertive behaviour techniques and communication skills, self-esteem building and resilience development.
- Treat those around them with RESPECT and consideration as outlined in our schools community values
- Take some positive action to stop an incident of bullying or harassment they observe. Remember bullies continue if they get away with it.
- Be aware that by doing nothing when aware of bullying occurring is condoning it and allowing it to continue.
- Tell someone if they know of anybody who is being made miserable by bullying.
- Report the incident of bullying or harassment to anyone they can trust.
- Make it clear to their peers that bullying or harassment is not acceptable.
- Trust the school to deal with the matter without anyone knowing who has reported it.
- Know that the name of the person reporting bullying will not be disclosed.



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Parent processes

Parents should:

1. Listen sympathetically to reports of bullying;
2. Speak to relevant school personnel (not the alleged students concerned); and
3. Work with the school in seeking a permanent solution.

Parent witnesses should:

1. Be limited to verbal intervention;
2. Seek teacher assistance; and
3. Document the incident if requested by school staff.

Guidelines for Parents

If a parent believes that a student is being bullied or harassed, it is the role of parents to:

- Reinforce our community values of RESPECT by using this shared language when talking to their student at home
- Emphasise high expectations of effort and behaviour at school
- Do all possible to give your children confidence and belief in themselves
- Support the School and tell your child that bullying or harassment in any form is not acceptable
- Encourage your child to talk to you if she/he believes she/he is being bullied or harassed at school and let her/him know you will be supportive
- Listen carefully and sympathetically to your child and get all of the relevant facts
- Provide your child with strategies for taking action, such as seeking assistance from a teacher about behaving more assertively or encouraging her/him to ask for support from friends, informing their Year Advisor, making a report in Student Services
- Decide when to discuss the problem with the School. This will depend on the severity of the bullying or harassment and the wishes of your child
- Support the Safe School Policy by informing the relevant staff member, trusting them to deal with the matter in a sensitive and effective way
- If the School informs you that your child has been bullying others and requests an interview, be prepared to work out a plan with the School to bring about a change in your child's behaviour



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Staff Processes

Guidelines for Staff

It is the role of staff members to:

- Explicitly teach and model the RESPECT community values in your classrooms and whilst in any Duty Of Care situation
- Set a personal example by not engaging in any bullying behaviours
- Pay specific attention to the social development of students
- Notice how they are relating
- Teach them about resilience and appropriate social behaviours
- Make it clear you will not tolerate bullying
- Don't allow any student to humiliate or criticise another student in the class
- Follow up all observed and reported incidents
- Address the issue with both the bully and the victim
- Check if it is an ongoing pattern or recurring in other settings
- As a general rule, do not give the name of an informant if they ask to remain confidential, rather, consider looking for opportunities for the reported behaviour to be observed by adults
- Be on the alert for any change in a student's behaviour, which may indicate he or she is being bullied
- Take notice of any student who often asks to go to the Sick Bay or go home, and take seriously any frequent absences or reports from parents that a student does not want to come to school
- Stop any incident of bullying or harassment as encountered and take immediate steps to remove the source of distress without putting the victim at further risk

THE MOST IMPORTANT ACTION STAFF CAN TAKE IS TO MAKE EACH STUDENT FEEL VALUED.

Fear of reprisal is one reason why victims don't report bullying; embarrassment is the other. Research shows that many victims come to believe the fault is with them, and accept the bully's definition of the situation. This has a devastating effect on the bully's victim, who loses all self-confidence and wants as few people as possible to know about the believed deficiency. It is vital that in any conversation about bullying the inadequacies of bullies generally are emphasized, so that victims see matters in the right perspective.



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Consequences of Bullying, Harassment and Violence

All bullying, harassment and violence is treated seriously at Melrose High School. Consequences will be determined by the nature and severity of the incident and the history of the bullying behaviour. At all times the school will take into account the individual nature of each student and select appropriate responses to best meet the student's needs. The following are a range of disciplinary responses which would be used as appropriate.

- Use of the Pikas 'No Blame' Approach
- Recording of incident on Bullying Register
- Explanation and reminder of the rules of respect and our rights and responsibilities.
- Warning
- Time out
- Formal apology
- Community service
- Denial of privileges with a way back eg. playground restriction or suspension
- Counselling
- Peer mentoring
- Conferencing
- Detentions
- Mediation
- Behaviour contract or Individual student management plan
- Parent-School interview
- Referral to outside agency for eg. a mental health professional or other support agency
- Suspension
- Removal to another more appropriate educational setting
- Report made to the Police



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Proactive anti-bullying strategies and Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) programs at Melrose High School

Melrose high School implements a range of whole school, year group and targeted programs that teach explicit anti-bullying messages and skills, social and emotional skills , as well as promote RESPECT, tolerance, inclusion and equity.

Pastoral Care whole school anti-bullying programs (all students) – including:

- Whole School Assemblies (Cyber bullying, Bullying, Tolerance, Inclusion etc)
- Wellbeing Themed weeks/days (Harmony Day, NAIDOC Week, Respect for Community Day, Wellbeing Week etc)
- Explicit teaching as well as verbal/ visual reminders of RESPECT Community Values which underpin all school relationships, pedagogy and curriculum

Pastoral Care and KLA based Year group anti-bullying and SEL programs – including:

- Rock and Water program (Year 7 Boys) – self control, emotional awareness, self-esteem, protective behaviours, respectful relationships
- Peer Support program (All Year 7 students)– self-awareness, self-esteem, friendship, bullying, conflict resolution, assertiveness training, adolescence, goal setting
- Peer Helpers program (Yr 10 students) – mentoring, listening, mental health promotion, mediation, conflict resolution, anti-bullying promotion and intervention skills.
- Yr 7/ 8 Drama rotation (All Year 7/8 students) - What is bullying, effects of bullying, protective behaviours, assertiveness training, prevention strategies, supporting others, empathy training
- Yr 7/8 IT rotation (All Year 7/8 students) – Cyber bullying, keeping yourself safe online, Acceptable Use of IT Policy

Pastoral Care targeted programs (Yr 7-10 targeted students) – including:

- Drumbeat Wellbeing Program
- Girls and Boys Challenge Groups
- Melrose Social and Emotional Health program (MESH)
- MESSENGERS Wellbeing program
- SCOPE Self-Esteem program



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Useful Online Resources

<http://www.enoughisenough.org.au/schools2009/?gclid=CPI4oOaq1qUCFQHabgod6E1XkQ>

These **youth programs** offer a practical and proactive approach to addressing conflict and dealing with bullying and anti-social behaviour in schools. Interwoven into each presentation are strategies for overcoming adversity, building resilience, developing personal responsibility and leadership skills. These programs are suitable for students, teachers, youth at risk and those who work with them.

www.bullyingnoway.com.au *Bullying. No way!* is created by Australia's educational communities: State, Territory and Commonwealth government education departments, and Catholic and independent education sectors, Students, staff, parents, agencies, education officers and community members from schools around the country. We are working together to create learning environments where every student and school community member is safe, supported, respected, valued – and free from bullying, violence, harassment and discrimination.

www.kidshelpline.com.au Ideas, options and information - a place where you can get help and connect

www.bullying.org Bullying.org's purpose is to prevent bullying in our society through education and awareness. We provide educational programs and resources to individuals, families, educational institutions and organizations. We make available online learning and educational resources in order to help people deal effectively and positively with the act of bullying and its long lasting negative consequences

<http://www.bully-busters.com/> So what is Bully Busters? A place for people who are being bullied, a place for people who want to help others who are being bullied, a place to make new friends who have been through the same things as you, somewhere you can build your confidence and self esteem. Bully Busters is a group of people aged 11 - 16 who work together to combat bullying issues and make sure no one has to suffer in silence.

<http://www.bully-busters.com/res/bullybusterkit.pdf> A handy online presentation made by kids for kids.

<http://www.theline.gov.au/> When it comes to relationships, sometimes there's a fine line between what's ok and what's not. What crosses the line for one person might be perfectly ok for another. It all comes down to respect. Respect for others, and understanding of what crossing the line means to them. And respect for yourself, so you can be clear about where you draw the line.



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THE MELROSE HIGH SCHOOL COMMUNITY VALUES:

WE EXPECT THAT YOU WILL...

RESPECT RESOURCES

- Value and care for school property
- Return everything you use in the condition you received it
- Keep the school buildings, classrooms, bathrooms, and equipment clean (no graffiti or vandalism)
- Return textbooks, library books so that others can use them
- Use equipment correctly and safely

RESPECT EFFORT

- Do your best at all times
- Set goals and strive for success
- Get involved
- Take pride in your own achievements
- Be supportive of the efforts of others and celebrate their success

RESPECT SELF

- Take responsibility for yourself and your own learning
- Keep yourself safe
- Have a positive attitude
- Give, seek and accept help if you need it
- Stay calm and in control
- Share your talents and abilities with others

RESPECT PEERS

- Treat others as you would like to be treated
- Allow other students to feel safe at school
- Allow other students in your class to learn
- Communicate with courtesy and politeness (positive tone of voice, appropriate body language)
- Use appropriate physical contact towards others (no violent, uninvited or intimate touching)
- Cooperate, share, offer help



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RESPECT ENVIRONMENT

- Demonstrate care and responsibility for the school environment and the world in which you live
- Clean up after yourselves and others if required
- Conserve resources (electricity, water, paper). Recycle or reuse where possible.
- Take action (join the Environmental Committee, Community Service Team, the SRC)
- Contribute to a peaceful, positive school atmosphere (smile, cooperate, create harmony)

RESPECT COMMUNITY

- Act in accordance with school rules and values
- Demonstrate pride in your school - wear dress code
- Be a positive role model in the community – demonstrate good manners, self-control and a positive attitude
- Take part in school and community events (join lunchtime activities, volunteer, give to charity)
- Value people from different social and cultural groups
- Use appropriate language (no swearing)

RESPECT TEACHERS

- Recognise teachers' authority within the school structure
- Allow teachers to do their job and teach without interruption
- Allow teachers to feel safe
- Welcome and value relief teachers
- Treat school staff with courtesy and good manners (be friendly and positive, no swearing or abusive language)
- Be on time for class and care for the classroom space