



MAMRE ANGLICAN SCHOOL

**ANTI-BULLYING POLICY
& PROCEDURES**

2021

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POLICY STATEMENT / RATIONALE

The School has the responsibility to ensure that, while at school, all students are given opportunities to develop positive attitudes and appropriate values. All students need to develop tolerance and understanding of others and their needs. At MAS all students have the right to feel safe and to be treated as unique persons made in the image of God. They in turn must acknowledge, through their actions, their duty to respect the rights of others.

At MAS it is our belief that:

- Bullying is not an acceptable behaviour and will not be tolerated. Students who engage in bullying will be dealt with appropriately.
- Staff, students and parents must work together to endeavour to stamp out any bullying that occurs at MAS.
- It is the responsibility of all members of the School community to report bullying when they know it is happening or when it is happening to them. A person's silence is saying that bullying is acceptable.
- The School will seek to be pro-active in promoting an environment in which everyone understands that bullying is wrong and that individuals have a responsibility to report bullying if they become aware of it.

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying is a pattern of uninvited behaviour directed by a person or group to intentionally or unintentionally hurt, injure, embarrass and/or distress a person or group. Bullying may be physical, verbal, psychological or social.

EXAMPLES OF BULLYING

Verbal

Name calling, taunting, belittling, criticizing, threatening, ridiculing, put downs, sexual or racist comments.

- For the difference between teasing and taunting – see Appendix 1
- For the difference between flirting and sexual bullying – see Appendix 2

Physical

Hitting, pushing, punching, poking, biting, pinching, scratching, choking, spitting, inappropriate touching, damaging property, rude gestures.

Psychological

Ignoring, victimizing, employing stand over tactics, creating fear in another, extortion (forcing other students to hand over money, food, possessions).

Social

Excluding, spreading rumours, gossiping, writing/sending nasty notes or graffiti about others.

Cyber Bullying

Cyber bullying involves bullying which is carried out through an internet service such as Facebook, email, chat room, discussion group or instant messaging; it can also include bullying through mobile phone technologies such as short messaging service (SMS).

Examples of bullying commonly include spreading rumours online, sending unwanted messages, harassment, exclusion, outing and defamation.

Anyone can be bullied online or through mobile phones and they can be bullied by groups of people such as class groups or collective members of an online community or even individuals. Signs that a child may be suffering from cyber bullying could include:

- being secretive about internet activities
- spending a lot of time on the computer
- having trouble sleeping or having nightmares
- feeling depressed or crying without reason
- loss of interest in social events
- mood swings
- feeling unwell
- becoming anti-social and losing friends
- falling behind in homework
- drop in school grades and motivation

HARASSMENT OF ANY KIND IS A FORM OF BULLYING

SIGNS OF BULLYING

At times bullying may be hard to detect as perpetrators rarely “perform” in view or earshot of staff and victims are often unwilling to admit their situation. The people most likely to know what is going on first hand are other students. Some general physical and behavioural signs that parents and staff should look for include:

- bruises, scratches or cuts that the student cannot really explain
- torn or damaged clothing
- damaged or missing belongings
- headaches, stomach aches and other pains that the student cannot explain
- unexplained tears or depression
- unusual outbursts of temper
- refusal / reluctance to attend school
- not seeking to socialise with peers or participate in other activities
- seeking alternative means or route to/from school
- quality of academic work decreasing

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Within the MAS community all students and staff have certain rights. However, along with those rights come certain responsibilities.

	Rights:	Responsibilities:
Students and Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• to feel safe, cared for and respected at MAS.• to an enjoyable day at school in a pleasant, comfortable environment.• to be free of bullying.• to access and receive help and support if they experience bullying.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• to personally abstain from bullying others in any way.• to actively discourage bullying when it occurs.• to give support to victims of bullying.• to use the appropriate channels to report incidents of bullying.• to consider the impact of their actions on others.• to respect the property and rights of staff and students (including their own).• not to accept bullying, but to report it.

Responsibilities particular to staff:

- to provide a safe, secure learning environment for the students.
- to provide an environment free from bullying, harassment, intimidation and abuse.
- to act on any bullying incident that they become aware of.
- to be role models in word and action at all times.
- To teach children the difference between telling and tattling/ “dobbing”. (See Appendix 3).

PREVENTATIVE MEASURES

The School seeks to be proactive in an effort to reduce the incidence of bullying.

Curriculum based

School staff will undertake to use and create opportunities within the curriculum to raise and discuss issues surrounding bullying. This is particularly appropriate in subject areas such as English, Christian Studies and PDHPE.

Staff professional development and initiatives

The School undertakes to ensure that there is ongoing development of staff skills in pastoral care, in recognizing bullying and in dealing with both perpetrators and victims appropriately.

In addition, the School undertakes to ensure that staff are aware of the need to promote a positive attitude to mental health in accordance with the School’s Christian ethos.

School staff will undertake to be vigilant in observing students both in and out of the classroom.

School staff will undertake to include sessions promoting positive peer interactions both within and out of the classroom and as part of extra-curricular activities.

The School undertakes to seek opportunities to promote effective peer support. The Kindergarten and Year 6 Buddy system is an example of this.

Raising Awareness of Bullying as an issue

- Visual advertising around the School (e.g. Posters)
- Community Education: Upon entry to the School, all students, staff and parents will be made aware of and educated about the School's anti-bullying stance.
- The language of bullying will be used regularly in public meetings and in correspondence. For example: At Assemblies, Year Meetings, in 'The Mamre Messenger' (the School fortnightly newsletter).
- Ensuring that the message 'It is okay to report bullying' is actively promoted by all staff and students.

WHAT CAN YOU DO IF YOU ARE BEING BULLIED?

Most bullies want to get a reaction that will give them a sense of control. Therefore it is important to not retaliate or react in a way that encourages the bully to continue.

Understand that bullying is not the victim's fault. The responsibility for the behaviour lies with the bully not those on the receiving end.

If you experience bullying, in the first instance you may:

- ignore the bullying. Simply walk away from the bully or bullies.
- be assertive and confident toward the bully. Stand straight and tall. Look them in the eye and say firmly but in a calm manner that you do not like the way they are treating you. For example:
 - "I want you to stop making fun of me." or
 - "Why are you trying to give me a hard time?" or
 - "You must be having a bad day. I do not deserve this. I am out of here."
- use humour. Most bullies back down when they don't get the response they expect or hope for.
- think about anything in your behaviour that might lead to you being bullied. For example: do you have a habit of calling out silly things to people? Do you try to attract attention to yourself? Do you insult people? Do you boast? Do other students tell you to be quiet? Do you irritate or annoy others? Does your body language suggest that you are always scared and frightened?

It is important to note that a bully's behaviour is never acceptable, even if your behaviour might be inappropriate as well. However, positively changing your behaviour may lead to a positive change in the behaviour of the bully.

It is important that you enlist the support of friends/adults to counter bullying.

REPORTING BULLYING

At MAS we would encourage all students and staff to report bullying.

Student Reporting

- This can be done by talking to a teacher, or an Executive member.
- It can also be done by filling in a “Student Report on Bullying.” (See Appendix 5)

Staff Reporting

Staff have the responsibility, in the first instance, to deal with all incidents of bullying to which they are witness. If the matter is ongoing or is of a more serious nature, staff have the responsibility to report the matter.

To do this, staff will fill in the form “Bullying Incident: Staff Report”. Copies of this form will be available in the Staff Handbook and from the Principal and Head of Junior School. A copy is also attached to this document (See Appendix 6). It is the responsibility of the staff member reporting the incident to deliver the form to the Head of Junior School or the Principal.

HOW CAN YOU HELP SOMEONE BEING BULLIED?

If you witness an incident of bullying you are a **bystander**. Bystanders have important roles to play in helping to stamp out bullying and support victims. It is the responsibility of those who witness bullying to do something about it.

- **Firstly confront the perpetrator.** Tell the bully that you and your friends strongly disapprove of his or her actions by making a clear statement such as “You need to stop doing that. It is not okay.”
- **If you are aware of bullying report it to an adult.** The person being bullied may be too scared or upset to tell anyone. Remember that **NOBODY** deserves to be bullied.
- **Offer support to students who are bullied.** Let them know they can do something about it. (For more information on the role of bystanders see Appendix 4)

IF YOU DO NOTHING, YOU ARE PART OF THE PROBLEM

ADVICE FOR PARENTS

Some people think bullying is a normal part of growing up and that children need to learn to stick up for themselves. Bullying, however, can make children feel lonely, unhappy, frightened, unsafe and insecure. In serious cases, it can lead to depression and even suicide.

Take an active interest in your child’s social development, social life and acquaintances.

Be alert to signs of distress in your child.

If your child is the victim of bullying:

- work with the child in trying to solve the problem, don’t try to solve it for them
- talk to your child, and help them to understand that it is not their fault
- positively reinforce your child’s self-esteem and sense of self worth

- ask them what they have done to deal with the bullying and encourage them by giving them strategies that could solve the problem. Together, explore possible ways in which to deal with the problem (See Section 7)
- discourage your child from retaliating and becoming part of the problem
- parents should encourage their children to report all bullying concerns to a trusted staff member. You should be prepared to alert the School yourself, if necessary, by contacting the relevant person. Assure your child that the problem can be solved.
- communicate and cooperate with the School until the problem is solved.
- keep the communication lines between home and school open
- support the School in its proactive and reactive responses to bullying

If your child is a bully:

- talk to your child to find out why they have been behaving in such a manner
- talk to your child to ascertain how they are feeling about themselves
- attempt to get your child to empathise with the victim. Ask them how they would feel if someone was bullying them.
- reinforce with your child the need to resolve conflict in a non-aggressive way
- model conflict resolution in a positive manner at home
- support the School in its efforts to deal with the bullying incidents

HOW THE SCHOOL WILL DEAL WITH INCIDENTS OF BULLYING

In line with the Welfare Policy:

Procedural fairness is a basic right when dealing with others. All students at Mamre Anglican School have the 'right to be heard', using the following procedure:

1. Students will be explained the bullying allegations related to the matter at hand and any other information which will be taken into account regarding the matter
2. Students will be explained the process by which the matter will be considered
3. Students will be given the opportunity to respond to the allegations and to explain their understanding of the events fully
4. Students will be explained the discipline determined to be appropriate regarding the bullying allegations and given opportunity to respond to the discipline determined
5. Students will be explained the process involved if they wish to seek a review of the decision made in response to the allegations

All students at Mamre Anglican School have the 'right to an unbiased decision'. This consists of:

- impartiality in an investigation and in the decision-making process
- absence of bias by a decision-maker

Step 1

- Dealt with on the spot by attending staff member
- If necessary this bullying incident will be referred to Step 2

**Step 2**

- Interview by the Principal or Executive where the issue is discussed, an apology to the victim is sought and the bully is made aware that the bullying must stop
- Parents of bully may be informed
- Parents of the bullied child may be informed
- The bullied child will be supported and offered counsel
- The report is kept on file
- If necessary this bullying incident will be referred to Step 3

**Step 3**

- Student/s referred to Executive
- Formal interview conducted with students involved
- Parents of the bully/bullies may be requested to come to the School for interview
- Consequences determined as appropriate
- Counselling may be recommended if appropriate
- Report is kept on file
- If necessary this bullying incident will be referred to Step 4

**Step 4**

- Formal interview with student(s) and/or parents may result in suspension from the School
- Mandatory interview with the Principal will be required upon student/s return to the School
- Report kept on file
- If necessary this bullying incident will be referred to Step 5

**Step 5**

If a student reaches this stage, the Principal will interpret this to mean that the student has chosen through his/her actions to exclude him/herself from the School.

The School reserves the right to assess each situation on its merits. Degrees of bullying will be taken into account. Incidents of severe bullying will be dealt with in the most appropriate way.

Information concerning incidents of bullying will be kept on file with the Head of Junior School or the Principal so that, if a student reaches Step 4 as set out above, the Principal has access to all previous incidents of bullying by the student/s and can review the process thus far.

EVALUATION

The policy to counter bullying will be evaluated and reviewed on a regular basis. As part of this, students, staff and parents will be surveyed to determine the extent of bullying within the School and the effectiveness of this policy in dealing with the issue.

THE SCHOOL DOES NOT TOLERATE BULLYING OF ANY KIND

APPENDIX 1

The Difference between Teasing and Taunting

Teasing is a fun thing to do with friends – with people you care about. Taunting is a choice to bully someone for whom you have contempt.

Teasing

- Allows the teaser and person teased to swap roles with ease
- Is not intended to hurt the other person
- Maintains the basic dignity of everyone involved
- Pokes fun in a light-hearted, clever and benign way
- Is meant to get both parties to laugh
- Is only a small part of the activities shared by kids who have something in common
- Is innocent in motive
- Is discontinued when person teased becomes upset or objects to the teasing

When kids tease one another, there is a playfulness that is not present in taunting. Both give it and take it equally. If a child inadvertently says something that is hurtful to a friend, perhaps intending to wrap in humour something that is difficult to say outright, he/she picks up his/her mistake by reading their friend's hurt and makes amends. The two are learning important lessons in relationship building and effective communication. They can practice with each other and safely learn limits and boundaries of teasing, as well as the power of words. They share strong feelings of affection, compassion and empathy. If they laugh at each other's foibles and mistakes, they are just as quick to be there to help the other clean up the mess. Good-natured ribbing reflects the closeness of two friend's relationship. Off-limits are attack about race, religion, gender, physical attributes or mental ability. Any attack is not teasing: it is taunting.

Taunting

- Is based on an imbalance of power and is one-sided: the bully taunts, the bullied kid is taunted.
- Is intended to harm.
- Involves humiliating, cruel, demeaning or bigoted comments thinly disguised as jokes.
- Includes laughter directed *at* the target, not *with* the target.
- Is meant to diminish the sense of self-worth of the target.
- Induces fear of further taunting or can be a prelude to physical bullying.
- Is sinister in motive.
- Continues especially when targeted kid becomes distressed or objects to the taunt.

When a bully taunts his/her target, there is no playfulness in the attack, no matter how much the bully may protest, "I was just teasing." The bullied kid was probably targeted because the bully knew he or she would not strike back. There is no good-natured give-and-take. The taunt is intended to isolate the target. It is intended to hurt, and the words used are demeaning and cruel. The bully may laugh, and so might the bystanders. The target is embarrassed, humiliated or shamed, living in fear of what will come next. There is no empathy or compassion; rather, there is glee, excitement or amusement over the success of the attack. The motive of the bully is not to make a new friend, engage in friendly banter, or lighten a difficult situation; it is purely to belittle and demean another child.

APPENDIX 2

Flirting and Sexual Bullying

Flirting

- Allows and invites both persons to swap roles with ease.
- Is not intended to hurt the other person – is an expression of desire.
- Maintains the basic dignity of both persons.
- Is meant to be flattering and complimentary.
- Is an invitation to have fun together and enjoy each other's company.
- Is intended to make the other person feel wanted, attractive and in control.
- Is discontinued when the person who is being flirted with becomes upset, objects to the flirting, or is not interested.

Flirting has playfulness about it that sexual bullying does not. It is never intended to harm and is an invitation for two people to get to know each other better. As with any other invitation, it can be accepted or rejected – and the person who initiated the flirting honours either response.

Verbal Sexual Bullying

- Is based on an imbalance of power and is one-sided: the bully sexually taunts, the bullied kid is demeaned and degraded.
- Is intended to harm and exploit.
- Is invasive and intended to assert the status of the bully.
- Is intended to be degrading or demeaning.
- Is intended to express control and domination.
- Is intended to violate the boundaries of the target.
- Is intended to make the other person feel rejected, ugly, degraded, powerless or uncomfortable.
- Continues especially when targeted kid becomes distressed or objects to the sexual comment.

In sexual bullying there is no invitation – just an attack. The target is embarrassed, humiliated and shamed and tends to feel powerless. It is not the intention of the bully to engage in healthy sexual flirtation with another person – the attack is meant to hurt. If the target protests, he or she is often labelled a “bitch” who is uptight and can't take a joke.

Physical Sexual Bullying

Physical sexual bullying can include, but is certainly not limited to, touching or grabbing in a sexual way, pinching, bra snapping, pulling down pants or pulling up skirts, brushing against a target in a sexual way, or “sexual assault.” It is important to note that criminal activity can have sexual bullying as one of its components.

Relational Sexual Bullying

Add sexual overtones to all the ways kids use relational bullying to systematically diminish a bullied child's sense of self-worth and what you have is a hard-to-detect, easy-to-execute method of cutting to the core of the bullied kid. Some examples of relational sexual bullying would include sexual rumours about a student, sexual comments on toilet walls, leering or making obscene gestures. Add to all of these the displaying or circulating of sexually explicit material intended to shame or humiliate or degrade, the wearing of clothes that have sexually offensive sayings or pictures, or the existence of sexually explicit graffiti and you have the ingredients for creating a hostile environment that interferes with a student's ability to learn.

APPENDIX 3

Telling and Tattling – Discerning the Difference

Children need to know that they can and should tell an adult about the bullying, *even if they were able to stop the bullying themselves*. If not confronted, the bully will find another child to harass - one who may not be as capable of fending off the bully. A target who tells an adult in order to prevent someone else from sharing the same fate is playing the all-important role of witness.

Most bullying is done “under the radar” of adults, and children are hesitant to report it. We have to convince our children that we can be trusted, are powerful allies, and will act – if only they will tell us. That requires that we teach them to discern the difference between telling and tattling.

From the time our children begin telling tales on their siblings and peers, we admonish them, “Don’t tattle, don’t snitch.” Then, when kids keep potentially lethal information from us, we ask, “Why didn’t you tell me?” Even the words we use – tattle, snitch, rat, squeal, fink – have a harshness that communicates to our kids that it’s not a good thing to ever tell on anybody. These words entrench children in the deeply embedded code of silence. What is lost in this code is the immorality of that silence in the face of malice. We can teach them the difference between telling and tattling.

Definitions:-

- *Tattling: If it will only get another child in trouble, don’t tell me.*
- *Telling: If it will get you or another child out of trouble, tell me.*
- *If it is both, I need to know.*

This formula does not tell kids what to report to an adult. It is a tool to help them *discern* what to tell, no matter what kind of situation they are facing.

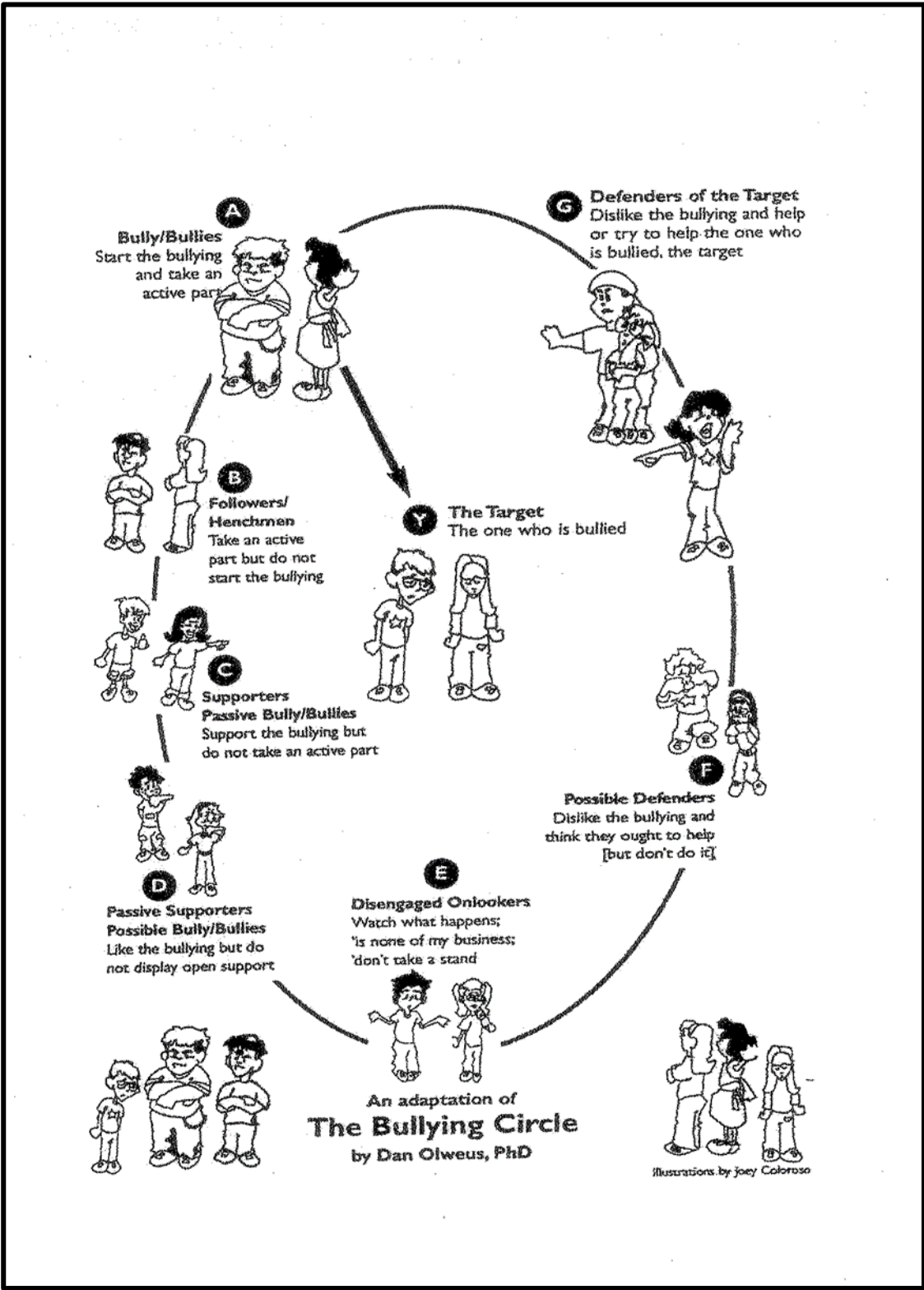
Using everyday events as opportunities to practise, you can start teaching four-year-olds the difference between telling and tattling. “James is sucking his thumb again.” (Telling me is an attempt to get him in trouble: don’t tell.) “James’s front tooth fell out, and his mouth is all bloody.” (Telling me can get him out of a mess; tell.) “James’s front tooth fell out when he was sucking his thumb, and his mouth is a bloody mess.” (It’s both; I need to know.) By the time kids are six, they can be taught the difference between teasing and taunting.

If this distinction is taught to children when they are young, it can pay off in the teen years. Adolescents will understand that it is not tattling, snitching, ratting or squealing to tell you that their friend who has been tormented by peers is giving his possessions away and saying subtle good-byes to classmates. Telling may help get him out of the mess he is in; not telling could be life-threatening.

As well as practising with everyday situations, keep the lines of communication open by being truly present and listening to what kids are saying-or trying to say- with their fumbled words, body language, and actions. Kids won’t say a word if they think their telling will be met with judgemental statements, disbelief or threats: “Don’t say such crazy things.” “Don’t tattle.” “He wouldn’t kill himself.”

“If I ever catch you doing something as stupid as he did, you’ll be grounded.” What teen would want to hear that his friend wouldn’t be stupid enough to kill himself, that fights like that don’t happen in this part of town?

APPENDIX 4 – THE BULLYING CYCLE AND THE BYSTANDER



APPENDIX 5 – STUDENT REPORT ON BULLYING

Please complete this form and give to a classroom teacher or PCG teacher

Name of Student reporting the incident: _____

Email of Student reporting the incident: _____

Date: _____

1. Type of bullying (Circle those which apply)

Verbal (saying things)

Physical (hitting, kicking, touching you)

Psychological (making you feel bad)

Social (leaving you out and not letting you have friends)

Cyber Bullying (social media/online)

2. Names of students involved

3. Where did it happen? (Circle those which apply)

Classroom

Playground

Bus

Canteen

Toilet Area

During Sport

Lining Up

4. When did it happen? (delete those which do not apply)

Before School

During Class

Recess

Lunch

After School

5. Has this happened before? _____

6. Have you told a staff member? _____

7. Which staff member? _____

8. Details of the incident:

APPENDIX 6 - STAFF REPORT ON BULLYING

Staff member reporting incident: _____

Date: _____

Students involved:

What occurred?

Where did it occur?

When did it occur?

Action taken:

Signature: _____

FOR USE BY EXECUTIVE MEMBERS ONLY

Date: _____

Parent Contacted? YES / NO (Please circle)

Action taken:

Signature: _____

APPENDIX 7 - CONTACT DETAILS

Mt Druitt Police LAC (including Youth Liaison Officers): 02 9675 0699