

Anti Bullying Policy



Bullying is not acceptable at Melonba High School and is taken very seriously. The school's Anti- Bullying Policy reflects the Department of Education's Policy and stance against Bullying behaviours.

Bullying devalues, isolates, frightens and affects an individual's confidence, mental health ability to achieve. Those who bully, are subject to bullying or act as bystanders, may suffer long term effects of bullying.

The aim at Melonba High School is to ensure that students and staff:

- Feel safe against bullying and feel a sense of belonging
- Have a strong support network in the event of bullying
- Are provided with educational and prevention programs, literature and support to circumvent bullying and harassment
- Model and promote appropriate behaviour and respectful relationships

Melonba High School is an inclusive environment where all individuals regardless of age, background, ability, interests or race are respected. All members of our school and local community are committed to providing a safe and caring environment where students can thrive, are supported, encouraged and are proud of each other's achievements. The school is committed to building culture and inclusion and ensuring that students have quality education that provides for a positive future.

Bullying behaviour has three key features.

1. It involves the intentional misuse of power in a relationship.
2. It is ongoing and repeated (verbal, physical, social, psychological),
3. It involves behaviours that can cause harm. Cyberbullying refers to bullying through information and communications technologies including social media.

Bullying behaviour can be, but is not limited to:

- Verbal – name calling, teasing, abuse, put-downs, sarcasm, insults, threats
- Physical – hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting
- Social – ignoring, excluding, alienating, making inappropriate gestures
- Psychological – spreading rumours, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions, malicious SMS, email and social media messages and posts, inappropriate use of camera of phones
- Cyberbullying – hurtful texts emails or posts, images or videos, deliberately excluding others online, nasty gossip or rumours in group chats, imitating others online by using or stealing their log-in, taking inappropriate photos of others

Melonba High School has a range of intervention strategies and programs for students who are identified as being at risk of bullying or at risk of developing long-term difficulties in their relationships with others. The aim is to empower students, to create a student voice and a strong, committed supportive school and community network. All incidents of bullying will result in parent contact for both the victim, the perpetrator and any student who incites others to engage in bullying or harassment.

Holistic support which aims to create learning environments where students feel safe and can therefore thrive, may include:

- Student Representative Council (SRC) and Student Ambassadors
- Year 7 (new student) Induction Program
- Peer Support
- Student Wellbeing Team
- Learning and Support Team
- Internal and External workshops and programs
- Melonba High School Behaviour Policy and Department of Education Code for Students and Department of Education Behaviour Procedures

Harassment, victimisation and bullying

Harassment is targeted behaviour that offends, humiliates, intimidates or creates a hostile environment. Harassment occurs repeatedly and is intended to harm.

Victimisation is when a person is treated worse than others based on their perceived point of difference. Students who feel that they are being bullied, harassed or victimised (in relation to race, culture, religion, gender, economic status should report all incidents to their Teacher, Year Adviser, Head Teacher or Deputy Principal.

Parents/carers are encouraged to contact the school and report all incidents of bullying, harassment and victimisation.

Students who persist in the behaviour will be subject to Suspension and Expulsion procedures as deemed suitable by the Principal.

Roles and Responsibilities

Students have a responsibility to:

- Behave respectfully, following the Behaviour Policy as outlined by the school and by the Department of Education
- Behave as responsible **upstanders** (an upstander is a person who witnesses a behaviour and acts to support the victim and report the behaviour), responsible citizens and positive in their responses and relationships to and with others
- Report incidents of bullying in a timely manner
- Understand that their concerns will be treated seriously and responded to accordingly by school staff
- Understand that they will be supported in resolving incidents and building relationships

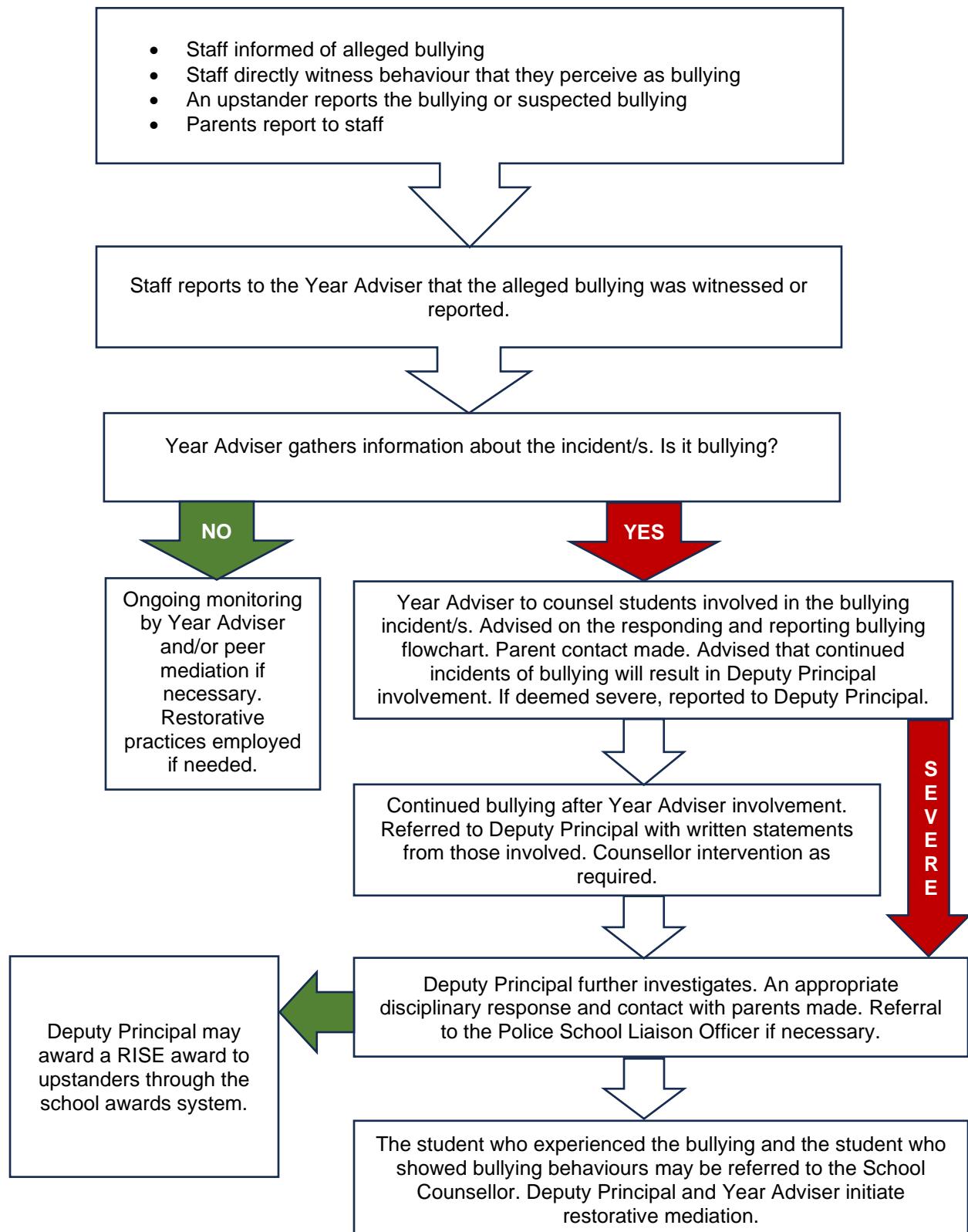
Parents and Carers have a responsibility to:

- Support their children to become responsible citizens
- Support their children in developing positive responses to bullying incidents in line with the school's policy
- Report incidents of school related bullying to the Year Adviser
- Work collaboratively and respectfully with the school to resolve incidents

Melonba High School Staff have a responsibility to:

- Provide safe and inclusive school and learning environments
- Investigate, intervene, act, diffuse and report all incidents of bullying
- Support all students and resolve all bullying complaints in a timely, respectful and supportive manner
- Contact parents and carers if bullying occurs
- Provide students, parents and carers with strategies which respond positively to bullying issues
- Resolve incidents of bullying
- Provide curriculum and programs which support students, parents and caregivers in understanding bullying and its impact on individuals and the community
- Participate in restorative practice programs
- Provide professional development relating to bullying awareness

Reporting and responding to bullying flowchart



My friend's being bullied - what should I do?

Be an upstander!

When you see bullying happening to someone else, you become a 'bystander'. You can help stop bulling from happening by:

- **Show you disapprove**, e.g. frowning at a mean joke, shake your head to show you don't think it's right
- **Interrupt the bullying by talking to the person being bullied**, e.g. "Hey Jack, there you are!"
- **Give the person being bullied an excuse to leave the situation**. e.g. "The teacher is looking for you" or, "Hey, can you come help me with something for a minute?"
- Let the person being bullied know that you saw the bullying, you don't agree with it and **offer support**; do this in private/once the person is safe from the situation. e.g. "I saw what was happening at lunchtime. It is not okay for them to act that way! Are you ok? How can I help?"
- **Report it to trustworthy adults**, such as a teacher, parent or Kids Helpline. If possible, report it together - being bullied can be very lonely. Having a friend through a tough time can make a big difference to someone being bullied.

Stand up to the bullying

A great way to respectfully challenge bullying is to say, "We don't do that here."

This is powerful as you're making it really clear that the behaviours that are happening are not ok - and you're doing it respectfully too (leading by example).