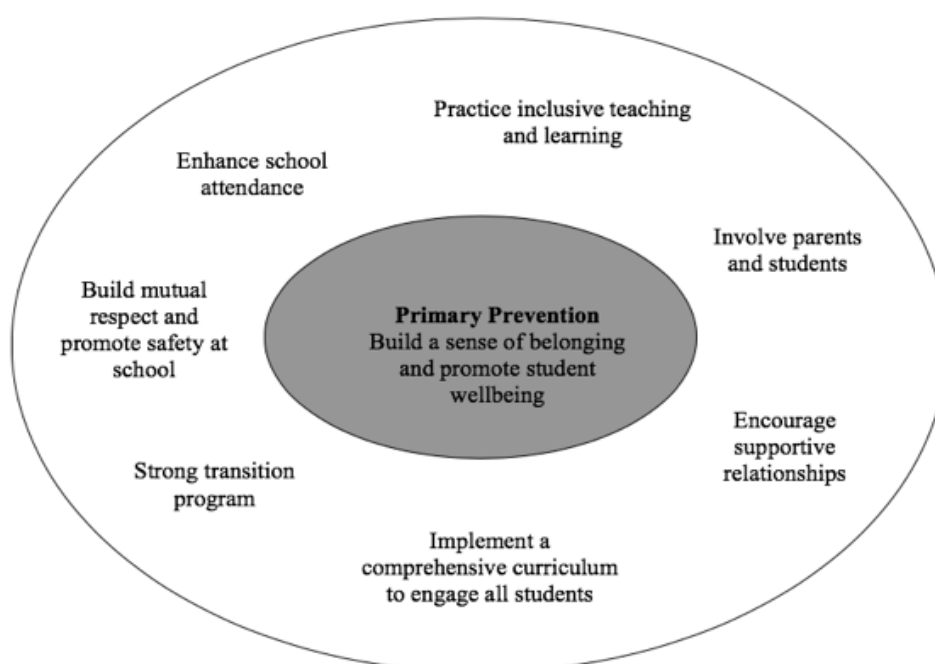




## Mount Lilydale Mercy College Anti-Bullying Policy

### 1. RATIONALE

- 1.1. Mount Lilydale Mercy College, strives to foster a culture that encourages the development of self-assured, skillful young people and a community where relationships are based upon the core Mercy Value of Respect. Mount Lilydale Mercy College is committed to learning, to the care of others, to forming character and to building a supportive community where individuals are accountable for their own behaviour. Mount Lilydale Mercy College views bullying and harassment as negating what it is essentially striving to achieve.
- 1.2. It is the responsibility of Mount Lilydale Mercy College to ensure there are specific policies and procedures implemented in the school to develop and maintain a culture of shared concern in which bullying behaviour is not accepted under any circumstances.
- 1.3. To effectively prevent bullying, Mount Lilydale Mercy College takes a whole school approach that focuses on wellbeing and safety. Such issues need to be viewed not as a separate policy, but rather as a central component of an effective school.



### 2. SCOPE:

- 2.1. Mount Lilydale Mercy College is committed to providing a safe and caring environment and culture which enables positive relationships to be formed amongst all students and staff and which encourages self-esteem, cooperation, personal growth and a positive attitude to learning and teaching. A clear policy on bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment will inform the community that **bullying and harassment in any of its forms will not be tolerated.**

## 2.2. **Such a policy should:**

- 2.2.1. Reinforce within the school community that no form of bullying is acceptable
- 2.2.2. Ensure all within the school community are alerted to signs and evidence of bullying and has a responsibility to report it to staff whether as observer or victim.
- 2.2.3. Ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are followed up and that support is given to both victim and perpetrator
- 2.2.4. Seek parental and peer-group support and co-operation at all times.

## 3. **POLICY STATEMENT**

Mount Lilydale Mercy College is committed to an environment where bullying and harassment in any of its forms will not be tolerated.

This policy provides guidance on how bullying/harassment is viewed and handled at Mount Lilydale Mercy College.

The College strives to prevent bullying and harassment by:

- 3.1. Providing a safe environment for all members of its community
- 3.2. Providing a supportive environment which encourages positive relationships between students staff and parents/carers
- 3.3. Assisting students to develop skills for resolving conflict and dealing with bullying/harassment incidents e.g. Peer Support, Resilience Programs and counselling staff
- 3.4. Maintaining a Pastoral Care system which enables students to develop a feeling of connectedness, belonging and trust
- 3.5. Providing curriculum material and discussion that focuses on appropriate social skills and behaviour. Lessons will be delivered to all students during Pastoral Care sessions
- 3.6. Providing ongoing professional development for staff to raise awareness of the issues involved with bullying/harassment

## 4. **DEFINITION**

4.1. Bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons.

### 4.2. Bullying involves

- 4.2.1. a desire to hurt
- 4.2.2. a hurtful action
- 4.2.3. repetition of the behaviour
- 4.2.4. an unjust use of power
- 4.2.5. evident enjoyment by the aggressor
- 4.2.6. a sense of being oppressed on the part of the victim.

### 4.3. **Types Of Bullying** - There are four broad categories of bullying.

- 4.3.1. **Direct physical bullying** e.g. hitting, tripping, and pushing or damaging property.
- 4.3.2. **Direct verbal bullying** e.g. name calling, insults, homophobic or racist remarks, verbal abuse.
- 4.3.3. **Indirect bullying** - This form of bullying is harder to recognise and often carried out behind the bullied student's back. It is designed to harm someone's social reputation and/or cause humiliation. Indirect bullying includes:
  - 4.3.3.1. lying and spreading rumours
  - 4.3.3.2. playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate

- 4.3.3.3. mimicking
- 4.3.3.4. encouraging others to socially exclude someone
- 4.3.3.5. damaging someone's social reputation and social acceptance
- 4.3.3.6. social exclusion including ostracism, ignoring, alienating etc.

4.3.4. Cyber bullying - involves the use of any information communication technology by an individual or group to carry out deliberate, isolated or repeatedly hostile behaviour that is intended to harm others, or is undertaken recklessly without concern for its impact on others. Examples of cyber bullying include sending insulting or threatening text messages, stealing someone's on-line identity in order to harm them in some way, putting pressure on a person to send explicit or compromising images of themselves, forwarding another person's private emails, messages, pictures or videos without permission. This list is not exhaustive.

4.3.5. Harassment is any verbal, physical or sexual conduct (including gestures) which is uninvited, unwelcome or offensive to a person.

#### 4.4. **WHAT BULLYING IS NOT**

4.4.1. 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:

##### 4.4.2. **Mutual conflict**

4.4.2.1. 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.

##### 4.4.3. **Social rejection or dislike**

4.4.3.1. 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.

##### 4.4.4. **Single-episode acts of nastiness or meanness, or random acts of aggression or intimidation**

4.4.4.1. 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.

4.4.4.2. Nastiness or physical aggression that is directed towards many different students is not the same as bullying.

Version	Date Released	Next Review	Author	Authorised by:
2.0	August 2023	August 2025	Deputy Principal – Pastoral Care	MLMC Advisory Council

*Version control added to policy commencing with V2.0 All previous versions are called 1.0 and have been archived and stored accordingly.*