

Anti Bullying Policy

Introduction

Barrenjoey Montessori School provides a complete Montessori program which considers the emotional, intellectual, physical, and social development of the total child by addressing the uniqueness of each in a nurturing, emotionally secure and academically excellent environment.

At Barrenjoey Montessori School, we reject all forms of bullying or harassment behaviour. We are committed to anti-bullying, peace and collaboration.

We seek to provide a safe, inclusive, and respectful learning community that promotes tolerance and respect and accepts differences in others.

All staff are firmly committed to seeking an end to acts of bullying. We believe that it is the responsibility of students, staff, families, and the community to contribute to the development of a happy, safe school.

Montessori schools establish relationships which are grounded in love, compassion, reconciliation and justice. In witnessing these values, we reject ideas, beliefs and behaviours which marginalise or victimise people.

Definition of Bullying

To bully is to use intimidating and/or inappropriate behaviour, or to persistently subject a person to unwanted attention. It includes behaviour that is unsolicited, unwelcome, uninvited and unreciprocated, which may cause offence or distress to a person.

NSW Education Standards Authority - *“Bullying is an ongoing misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that causes physical and /or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power over one or more persons. Bullying can happen in person or online and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert).”*

Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals whether in person or online are not defined as bullying (National Definition of bullying, “Bullying No Way!”)

Key features of bullying are:

- It involves the intentional misuse of power in a relationship.
- It is ongoing and repeated.
- It involves behaviours that can cause harm.

Examples of bullying behaviour include, but are not limited to, the following categories:

- **Physical Bullying.** When a person or group of people use physical actions to bully such as repeated and intentional hitting, poking, tripping or pushing, taking or hiding or damaging belongings.
- **Verbal Bullying.** Using negative words repeatedly and intentionally to upset someone. This could include name calling, insults, racist remarks, threats, 'put downs', belittling others etc.
- **Social/Emotional Bullying.** This may include lying, spreading rumours, playing nasty jokes, repeatedly mimicking someone, deliberately excluding, ostracising; influencing others not to like or play with someone.
- **Psychological Bullying.** When someone repeatedly or intentionally uses words or actions which cause psychological harm. Examples include intimidation, manipulation and stalking.
- **Cyber Bullying.** When someone uses technology to bully. This can happen in chat rooms, through social networking sites, emails or mobile phones.
- **Sexual Bullying.** This might include unwanted sexual inferences.
- **Bullying based on prejudice.** This may include discrimination of any kind based on racial, religious or sexual orientation.

The following are some behaviours, which, although they might be unpleasant or distressing, are not bullying:

- Mutual conflict which involves a disagreement, but not an imbalance of power (unresolved mutual conflict can develop into bullying if one of the parties targets the other repeatedly in retaliation).
- Single episode acts of nastiness or physical aggression, or aggression directed towards many different people.
- Social rejection or dislike is not bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.

Harassment

We ensure all families and staff attending our school understand that any type of conduct or action that is not asked for and not wanted, and that might be reasonably expected to cause offence, humiliation or intimidation is harassment.

Harassment, which can include bullying in any form or combination of physical, verbal, visual, social or psychological, interferes with this environment and will not be tolerated.

We all share a responsibility to foster, promote and restore right relationships. This policy builds on various other policies of the school to provide clear procedures and strategies to prevent, reduce and respond to bullying. The school rejects all forms of bullying behaviour, including online or cyberbullying.

Discrimination

Discrimination occurs when people are treated less favourably than others because of their race, culture or ethnic origin; religion; physical appearance/characteristics; gender; sexual orientation; marital, parenting or economic status; age; ability or disability. Discrimination is often ongoing and commonly involves exclusion or rejection.

Violence

Violence is the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against another person(s) that results in psychological harm or injury. It may involve provoked or unprovoked acts and can be a single incident, a random act or can occur over time.

Strategies

- Barrenjoey Montessori School provides age-appropriate education for children with a focus on prevention by teaching social and emotional learning through our Grace and Courtesy lessons and the 'Grow your Mind' program.
- Barrenjoey Montessori School acknowledges that preventing and responding to bullying is the shared responsibility of all school staff, volunteers, and contracted staff employed by schools, and students, families/carers.
- Educators and other school staff are provided with support and professional development to discourage, prevent, identify and respond to student bullying behaviour.
- Reports of student bullying can be made to any staff member at Barrenjoey Montessori school by students or families/carers. The school will treat all matters seriously and address the reported bullying in a timely manner. If families/carers believe that a matter is not being dealt with effectively, they can refer the matter to the school's Principal, Principal's delegate or the Avalon Montessori School Board for resolution.
- BMS staff support students to be inclusive and respect other children, all BMS staff, and community members, and to not engage in behaviours that bully, harass, intimidate, or discriminate against anyone in the school.

At Barrenjoey Montessori, we reject all forms of bullying behaviour. We seek to provide a safe, inclusive, and respectful learning community that promotes children's wellbeing.

School Procedures

Bullying can affect everyone and is linked to many negative outcomes including impacts on mental health. Children who are bullied can experience negative physical, social, emotional, academic and mental health issues. Children that bully others are also at risk, potentially engaging in violent risky behaviours. All members of the School community have a responsibility to respond to incidents of bullying.

The prompt management of an incident by staff, encourages student accountability while supporting the children involved on all sides of the incident. Early intervention is important. We maintain a consistent and unconditional duty to provide care and attention to every one of our students. Therefore, we do not pass judgement on students for their misguided behaviours, but work with them to always be the best person they can be.

These guidelines are to be read in conjunction with related school policies including: Student Discipline Management, Behaviour Management Procedure, Student Code of Conduct, Complaints & Grievance Policy.

Action

Bullying complaints will be taken seriously and responded to sensitively. For matters where bullying is identified with children, the Educator may:

- ask to speak with an individual child or group
- counsel the student accused of bullying about their behaviour and its impact
- counsel the student who has reported the bullying providing guidance and strategies to deal with bullying behaviours targeted towards them (perceived or otherwise)
- conduct 'circle time' and other classroom activities to address the bullying behaviour
- provide mediation with both the student being accused of bullying and the student who has reported the bullying
- mediate social relationships by ensuring that each child involved has an equal voice / opportunity to communicate their feelings / impact / solutions regarding unhelpful behaviour
- provide counselling/support/guidance for those involved
- organise a discussion with family/carer
- follow grievance policy procedures and safe environment policy when needed

Students can expect to:

- be treated with dignity
- know that their concerns will be taken seriously and handled in a sensitive manner
- be provided with appropriate support for both the target and the child accused of bullying
- know that severe cases of bullying will have consequences

Consequences of Bullying

Following counselling, mediation, support and other methods, if bullying continues, the following actions may be necessary.

- questioning the child about their behaviour and their understanding of the fact that it is considered to be bullying.
- explaining why the behaviour is inappropriate
- final warning that the bullying is not acceptable and should cease immediately.
- in some cases it may be appropriate to:
 - suspend the student from play time, or from school
 - terminate the student's enrolment

School Responsibility

All BMS staff aim to support children to be inclusive and respect other children, all school staff, and community members, and to not engage in behaviours that bully, harass, intimidate, or discriminate against anyone in our school.

Educators

- support the school in maintaining a safe, inclusive and supportive learning environment
- model and promote appropriate relationships and behaviours
- promote a school culture where bullying is not acceptable
- teach students to identify, report and respond to bullying at school and online
- manage reports of bullying and escalate matters to the principal (or delegate) when necessary.
- engage in professional development to learn about bullying and best practice ways to prevent and manage bullying.
- will monitor student behaviour in and out of the classroom, and discourage bullying whenever it is observed.
- be diligent with playground supervision.
- will act quickly, and where possible use low profile techniques to positively redirect inappropriate behaviour.
- use incident record form when an incident occurs.
- keep all records up to date and in the Transparent Classroom App and student files in the Principal's office.

Non-teaching staff

- refer any report of bullying to an Educator or Principal, Principal's Delegate or Avalon Montessori Association Board Director.

Students

- Students behaviour includes behaviour that occurs
 - at school
 - on the way to and from school
 - on school endorsed activities that are off site
 - outside of school hours and off school premises where there is a clear and close connection between the school and students' conduct
 - when using social media, mobile devices and/or other technology involving another student or staff member, where there is a clear and close connection between school and students conduct.
- Students are expected to accept increasing responsibility for their behaviour
- Students immediately seek help from a trusted adult if they are aware of or involved in a bullying or cyberbullying incident.
- Students will have access to peer mediation opportunities – positive interaction between the students of all stages.

Principal (or their delegate)

- complete and implement an anti-bullying plan (see appendix 1)
- maintain a positive school climate that includes respectful relationships
- identify patterns of bullying behaviour and initiate school action to respond
- manage complaints about bullying in accordance with the complaints handling policy
- review the anti-bullying plan annually
- manage complaints about how a school has responded to a report of bullying in accordance with the complaints handling policy
- where required, assist the school to implement the anti-bullying plan, to best meet the needs of the school community

Family/Carer Responsibility

- collaborate with the school to support their child's growth towards self-discipline and to help their child accept responsibility for his/her actions and encourage them to work to repair any hurt they have caused
- set an example in their dealings with staff and other members of the school community and act in accordance with the school's Complaints and Grievance Policy should a grievance arise
- model appropriate behaviour that is indicative of our Montessori philosophy
- participate in ongoing learning and education evenings to learn more about bullying and harassment and its effects.

Barrenjoey Montessori School has high levels of family and community involvement. This involvement is strongly related to improved children's behaviour and learning. Our school proactively builds collaborative relationships with families

Appendix 1 - Barrenjoey Montessori School Anti-Bullying Plan

(to be reviewed annually in conjunction with the Anti-Bullying Policy)

Barrenjoey Montessori School engages in the following practices to promote a positive school culture:

- Fostering a welcoming and inclusive school culture.
- Ongoing staff communication and professional learning.
- Induction of new and casual staff members.
- Positive partnerships with families/carers and community.
- Open communication with families/carers.
- Access to up to date information and resources to support student wellbeing.

Fostering a welcoming and inclusive school culture.

All members of the school community are active participants in building a welcoming school culture that values diversity and fosters positive relationships. A key component of a supportive school culture is building respectful relationships and an ethos that bullying is not accepted.

- School staff will actively respond to student bullying behaviour.

Staff communication and professional learning.

Staff will be supported with professional learning that provides evidence-based ways to encourage and teach positive social and emotional wellbeing and discourage, prevent, identify, and respond effectively to student bullying behaviour.

- The Principal (or delegate) will work with staff to identify professional development opportunities.

Induction of new and casual staff members.

New and casual staff will be informed about the school's approaches and strategies to prevent and respond to student bullying behaviour.

- The Principal (or delegate) is responsible for ensuring all new and casual staff are informed.

Positive partnerships with families/carers and community.

Barrenjoey Montessori School has high levels of family and community involvement. This involvement is strongly related to improved children's behaviour and learning. Our school proactively builds collaborative relationships with families to create a shared understanding of how to support student learning, safety and wellbeing.

- All staff are responsible for building collaborative relationships with families and carers through open communication and involvement in the wellbeing of children.

Open communication with families/carers about bullying.

Barrenjoey Montessori School will provide current information to families/carers to help promote a positive school culture where bullying is not accepted, and to increase the understanding of how our school addresses all forms of bullying behaviour.

- Factsheets that define bullying and address signs that bullying may be happening to a child are readily available to families/carers through the office.
- Education sessions will be made available to families/carers if required.

Access to up to date information and resources to support student wellbeing.

Barrenjoey Montessori School's practices support student wellbeing and positive behaviour approaches that align with our school community's needs. Access to up to date information and resources help to inform Educators in order to deliver current and relevant information to all students in an age appropriate manner.

- Social and emotional skills related to personal safety, resilience, help-seeking and protective behaviour are taught across the curriculum in Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (PDHPE).
- For the preschool children, social and emotional skills related to personal safety, resilience, help-seeking and protective behaviours are part of our Grace and Courtesy lessons.

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Review Due: 2025

Creation / Revision Date	Comment	Created / Revised by	NESA	NQF	Education and Care Services National Regulations / Children (Education and Care Services) National Law NSW
March 2024	Policy re-written and re-formatted	Principal	Education Act Section 47 (1) (g) (i)	2.2	Reg 77, 78

Resources:

- <https://kidshelpline.com.au/teens/issues/bullying>
- <https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/>
- <https://education.nsw.gov.au/policy-library/policies/pd-2006-0316>
- National Safe Schools Framework