



MASADA COLLEGE

Anti-Bullying Policy

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CONTACT PERSON	College Principal
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VERSION	3



Introduction

The College and all its staff and students must continually seek to reduce and take consistent actions to minimize bullying, but at the same time be aware that to expect a total absence of it is unrealistic. Bullying is a school and community issue.

Masada College's Rationale

The College seeks to promote and affirm each person's worth, dignity and vocation. Bullying behaviour strikes at the basis of these values and may prevent students reaching their potential. Our school community does not condone bullying or harassment in any form.

Staff are entitled to work free from humiliation, offensive abuse.

Students are entitled to receive their education free from humiliation, oppression and abuse. Bullying affects everyone, not just those directly involved in incidents of bullying. It also affects students who may witness violence, intimidation, and the distress of the person being bullied. It can damage the atmosphere of the class, playground and the overall climate of the school.

Masada aims to be proactive rather than reactive in its approach to social interaction.

Masada is focused on the development of each student's well-being and development: intellectually, socially, emotionally, spiritually and morally. We continually focus our education on socialization, developing the values of respect and kindness.

Masada Encourages:

Student / Staff to take on the responsibility of providing:

- A strong background in Jewish values
- Leadership opportunities
- Encouragement of sound standards and personal conduct, consideration and respect for others,
- An environment that provides good role models from all members of the school community.
- Service to others
- Embracing a sense of shared responsibilities

Bullying – What is it?

Bullying is "repeated oppression, psychological or physical, of a less powerful person by a more powerful person or group of persons" (Rigby, 1996).

There are three critical points in this definition:

Power: children / staff who bully may acquire power through various means: physical size and strength, status within a peer group or recruitment within a peer group to exclude others.



Frequency: Bullying is not a random act; it is characterised by its repetitive nature and thus children / staff who are bullied not only have to survive the humiliation of the attack but live in constant fear of its re-occurrence.

Intent to harm: Bullies usually deny any intent to harm others and may not always be fully conscious of the harm they cause. Causing physical and emotional harm however, is usually a deliberate act. It puts the person who is bullied in a position of oppression by the person who bullies.

Bullying takes various forms and is not limited to the instances listed below.

Physical: kicking, punching, pushing, shoving, spitting, fighting, damaging or destroying other people's property, jostling, pinching, touching, or any unwelcome physical intimidation such as gestures or stares.

Verbal: offensive or abusive language, sarcasm, crude jokes and comments, ridiculing appearances, actions or beliefs, obscene or threatening phone calls and emails, teasing or putting other people down (sledding and pay outs), verbal intimidation, whistling.

Social: exclusion, spreading rumours, gossip, racial or sexual comments, graffiti and notes about others, emails, SMS text and chat rooms.

Emotional: victimization, instilling fear in others, extortion (forcing students to hand over money, food or other possessions), forcing students to do other's work.

Rights and Responsibilities

Within the Masada community, all students and staff have rights. However, along with these rights individuals also must take responsibility for their own actions.

All students and staff have the right

- To feel safe, cared for and respected at Masada.
- To be free from threat and intimidation
- To have a healthy and safe environment.

All students and staff have the responsibility

- To consider the impact of their actions on others.
- To respect the property and rights of the school community.
- Not to accept bullying, but to report it.
- To follow the College ethos, policies and rules.

All staff members have the further responsibility

- To strive for a safe, secure learning environment for our students, free from bullying, harassment, intimidation and abuse.
- To engender a culture where to 'ignore' bullying is to condone it.
- To be role models in word and action at all times.
- To follow College policy and conditions of employment.



What are we doing at Masada College to Prevent Bullying?

All students and staff upon entry to the College are informed of the anti-bullying policy.

- Providing an explanation of and reference to this policy during assemblies, classes and publication to parents.
- Running sessions promoting positive peer interactions in Peer Support, Patron periods and other peer related programs.
- Use of the curriculum to examine aspects of bullying.
- Promoting the messages: "DOB- Don't Obey Bullies" and "it is okay to report bullying".
- Providing visual advertising around the school.
- Expecting vigilant teacher observation of students in and out of classes.
- Ongoing professional development of staff.
- Documenting the incidences of bullying.
- Running Patron meetings, which look at individual and group dynamics.
- Counselling for anyone affected by bullying.

What can you do if you are being bullied?

- Let the bully know that you are not ok with their behaviour.
- Any student who feels he/she is being bullied is encouraged to report his/her concerns immediately. Bullying usually continues if those responsible think they can escape detection and avoid consequences.
- Staff who feel bullied should refer to the Staff Grievance Procedure.
- Approach your Year Patron, Head or Deputy Head of School, classroom teacher, school psychologist, parents, any member of staff, or any other adult with whom you feel comfortable.
- Any report of bullying that you make to the College will be followed up sensitively and actions taken documented.
- Try not to show that you are upset, try to look confident. Bullies feel satisfied that they have upset you.
- If bullying continues, students/parents are encouraged to report it again. It is essential that bullies get the message that their behaviour will not be tolerated.
- Consider talking to the school psychologist for help in developing skills which can be useful in bullying solutions. There are a number of strategies a school psychologist can work through with you immediately to help you set limits, and communicate with a bully.

How can you help someone who is being bullied?

Consider the following:

- The person being bullied may be too scared or upset to tell anyone. Remember that NOBODY deserves to be bullied.
- If you are aware of bullying, report it to a member of staff who will refer the matter to the school, which encompasses Head or Deputy of School, Year Patron, and School Psychologist. Remember that reporting bullying is not 'dobbing'.



- Tell the bully that you and your friends strongly disapprove of his/her actions. A clear statement such as, “you need to stop doing that. It is not okay” may often be sufficient enough to deter the behaviour.
- Offer support to students who are bullied. Let them know they can do something about it.

Signs and symptoms of bullying in students

Parents, Staff, Adults, and other students should look for the below-mentioned signs;

- Frightened to walk to or from school
- Does not want to go on the school bus
- Wants to be driven to school instead of walking
- Changes their usual routine
- Is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- Truancy
- Becomes withdrawn and anxious
- Lacks confidence
- Attempts or threatens suicide
- Runs away
- Continuous crying
- Has nightmares
- Academic results begin to drop
- Comes home starving. This can be due to a child being too anxious to eat at school, or having his or her food stolen.
- Stops eating
- Is frightened to say what’s wrong
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- Is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- Is nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received
- Is bullying other children or siblings

Advice for Parents

- Watch for signs that your child might be bullied (see above).
- If you think that your child is being bullied, contact you son’s or daughter’s Year Patron, School Psychologist or Head or Deputy of School.
- Do NOT encourage your child to hit back or respond verbally.
- Support your child in developing their talents and participating in sports or other activities that will build confidence.
- Please do not take actions into your own hands and contact the parents of the alleged bully. Please remember that the school has a number of supports in place to advise and guide you in these matters.



Masada's Response to Bullying of Students

As our school community does not condone bullying or harassment in any form. A process has been established to help us deal with such unacceptable behaviour should it occur comprising in stages.

- Depending on the form, severity and impact of the bullying incident, the response may commence at any step of intervention and may lead straight to step 4.
- The interview process may include the Principal, Head or Deputy Head of School, School Psychologist, Year Patron or any other member of staff.
- Parents will be kept informed of all actions and decisions taken at appropriate stages of the process.

Step 1

When concerns are raised regarding bullying of a student, the Year Patron will manage the initial response and will seek to clarify what has happened in conjunction with the School Psychologist, and in consultation with Head of School.

Where appropriate, all students involved will be interviewed, and if the reported bullying incident is substantiated, and there is evidence to support this, the student responsible for bullying will be issued with an Official Caution Notice. A copy will be placed on the student's file.

Following this process, the Year Patron and School Psychologist will formulate an appropriate response to allow the victim and bully to move forward. Counselling may also be recommended to students involved. The Year Patron or School Psychologist will update the parents of all students involved as to the management of the situation.

Step 2

When a repeated incident is substantiated, the students will be referred to the Head of School who will:

- Provide a verbal and written response to the parents of the students involved.
- Request counsellor involvement to assist students involved in the bullying.
- Consult with staff, students and parents to develop and manage an appropriate and meaningful consequence and follow-up procedures.

Step 3

When a third bullying incident is substantiated there will be:

- A formal interview with the parents of the student responsible for bullying.
- A program of suspension and gradual re-integration with other students.
- A report placed on the student's file.
- Further counsellor involvement and or a recommendation for counselling outside of the school
- A behavioural contract to be signed.

Step 4

When a fourth bullying incident is substantiated, the Principal will interpret this to indicate that the student has chosen, through his/her actions, to exclude himself/herself from the College at this point in time.

Masada's Response to Bullying of Staff Members

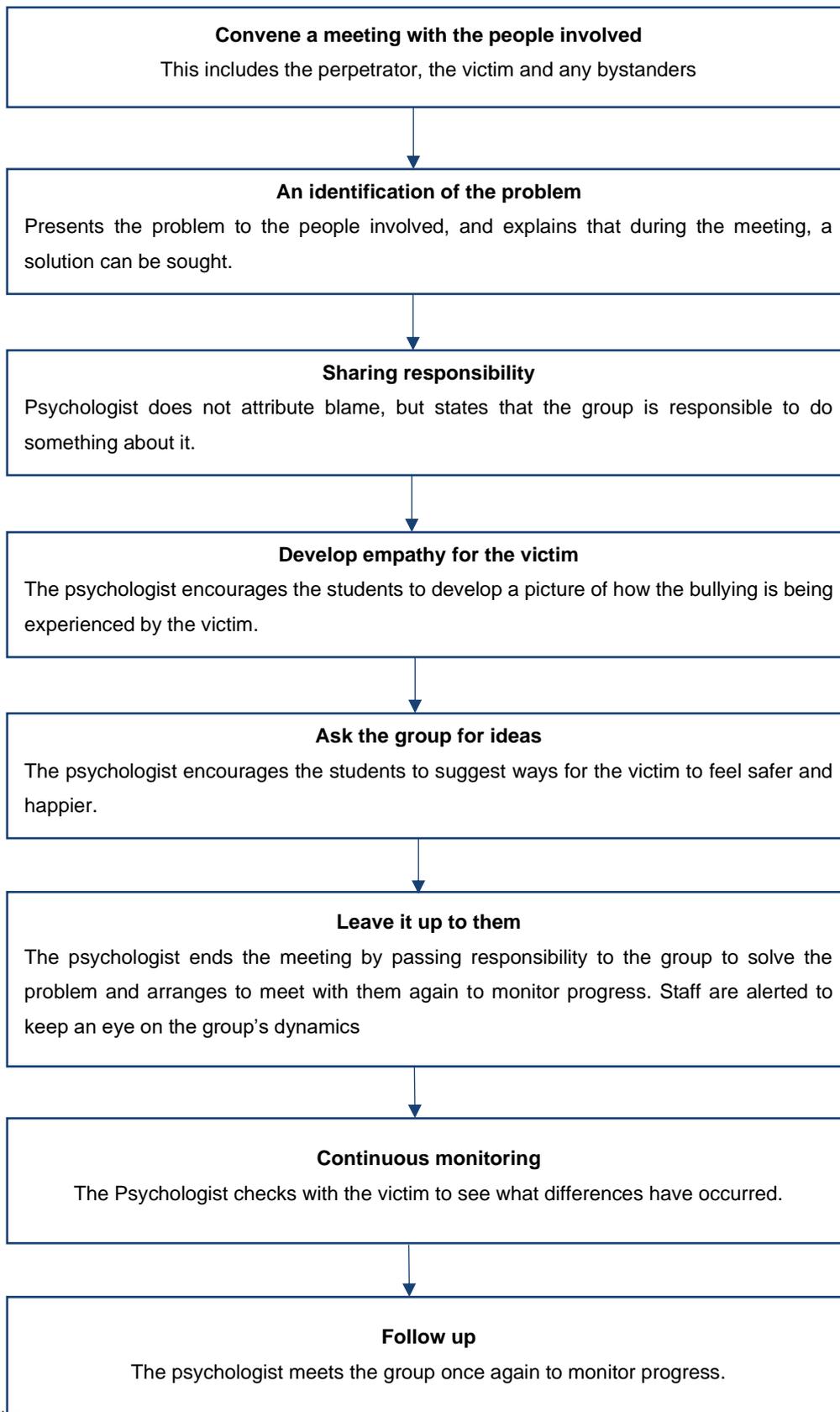
We follow our Grievance Procedures for staff complaints.

The School Psychologist will take different approaches according to the severity of the bullying incident.

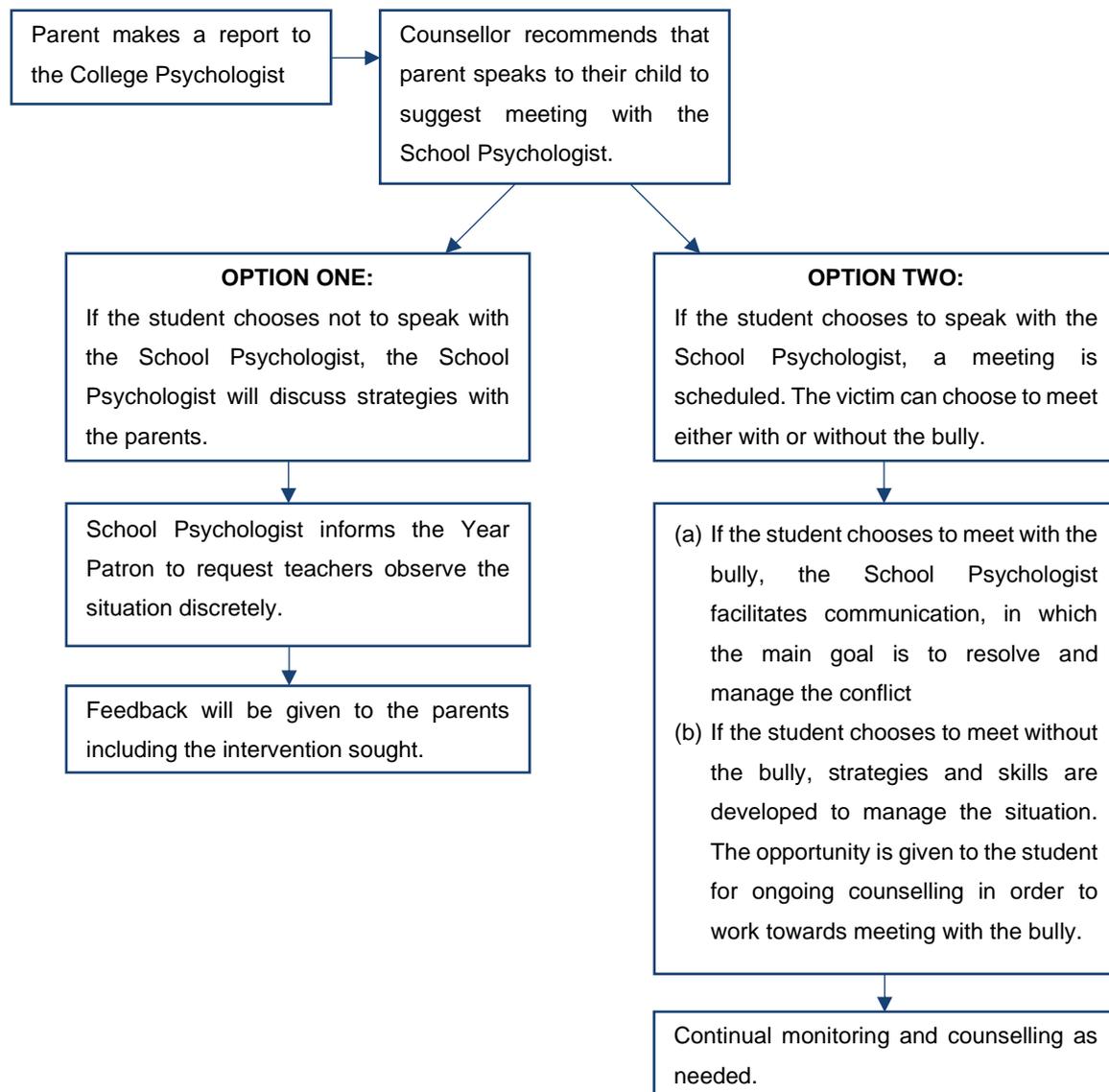


The College Psychologist's typical response in managing a bullying incident reported by students

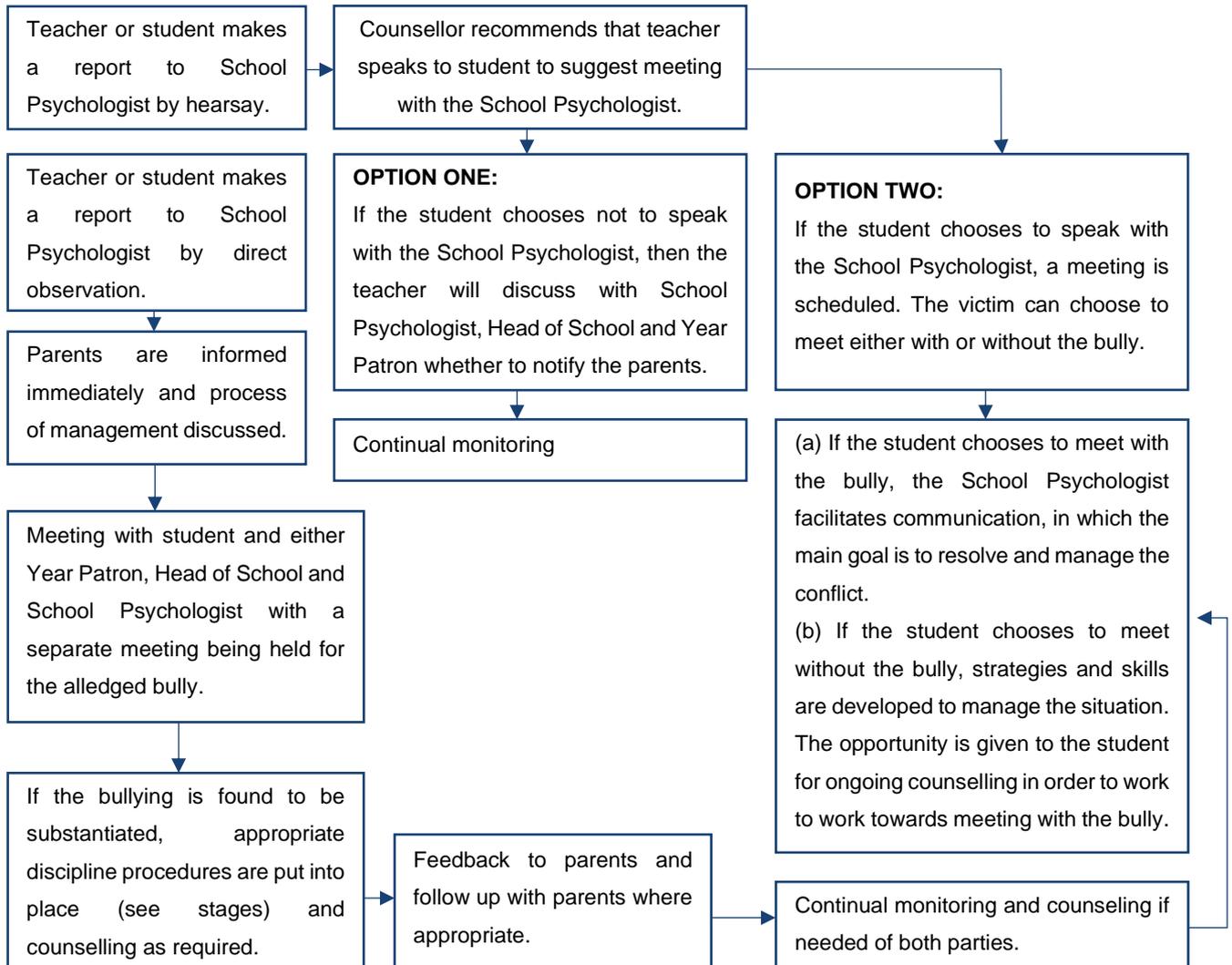
No Blame Approach for Mild Cases



The College Psychologist Role - When a Parent Makes a Report



The School Psychologist Role- When a Teacher or Student Makes a Report



The School Psychologist facilitates the process of communication between the bully and the victim. This is done in a sensitive manner, in which there is an opportunity to communicate without fear and to formulate strategies to resolve and manage the situation. Students will be encouraged to give feedback after the meeting to ensure a resolution of the situation.

Masada College has a close relationship with the:

- NSW Police Liaison Officer who can be contacted at Hornsby Police Station Tel 9476 9799
- Jewish Care – North Shore Office St Ives 9488 7100; Woollahra 1300 133 660
- KYDS David Citer, Lindfield Tel 9416 9824