This policy is to be read in conjunction with the Responsible Behaviour Plan. (2009)

A. Statement on Bullying
Mount Gravatt State School is committed to providing a learning environment that is safe for all. Students are encouraged to grow as safe, responsible and respectful students.
Members of the school community have the right to a safe, supportive learning environment. For this to occur, all school community members have a responsibility to prevent and respond to reports and observations of bullying.

B. Definition of Bullying
Bullying refers to hurtful behaviour, generally repeated over time. A person who bullies intimidate, exclude, threaten or hurt others. Bullying is a clear form of harassment.

C. Types of Bullying
  - Verbal bullying – Repeated use of words to hurt or humiliate an individual or group. This may include put-downs, insulting language, name calling, swearing, nasty notes and racist or sexist comments.
  - Psychological bullying – May include stalking, threats or implied threats, unwanted email or text messaging, abusive websites, threatening gestures, manipulation, emotional blackmail or threats to a person’s reputation or personal safety.
  - Relational bullying – Often involves repeatedly ostracising others by leaving them out or convincing others to exclude or reject an individual; making up or spreading rumours and sharing or threatening to share another’s personal information.
  - Physical bullying – Includes repetitive low level hitting, kicking, pinching, pushing tripping, “gang up”, unwanted physical or sexual touching and damage to personal property.
  - Cyber bullying – Involves the use of Information & Communication Technologies such as email, text messaging, instant messaging and websites to engage in the bullying or harassment of individuals or groups. This technology provides an alternative means for verbal, relational and psychological forms of bullying.
Bystanders to bullying – A bystander may be someone who sees bullying or knows about it but he or she is usually not directly involved. Everyone at our school can have a role in supporting those who are bullied. All members of Mount Gravatt State School should be aware of their role in supporting those who are bullied and their responsibility to discourage bullying behaviours when they observe them. Bystanders are encouraged to report to someone who can help, such as a member of school staff.

Research indicates that many problem behaviours are peer maintained. That is, peers react to bullying in ways that may increase the likelihood of it occurring again in the future. Reactions include joining in, laughing or simply standing and watching, rather than intervening to help the person being bullied. Whilst our school would never encourage students to place themselves at risk, our anti-bullying procedures include teaching the entire school a set of safe and effective responses to all problem behaviour, including bullying, in such a way that those who bully are not socially reinforced for demonstrating it.

D. Responses to Bullying

Prevention

Universal support

- Our universal behaviour support processes will always remain the primary strategy for prevention of problem behaviour, including preventing bullying.
- All students will be taught the three school rules and the expected behaviours attached. The rule of RESPECT will be intrinsically tied to prevention of bullying.
- Positive reinforcement will be at high levels for demonstrated modelling of expected behaviours.
- All students in each class, each term will have specific lessons related to identifying bullying, steps to take if a bystander, steps to take if bullied, steps to take if bullying.
- Students will have options for reporting bullying to a staff member and will be taught these options.
- Playground supervision and activities will be reviewed regularly, in line with behaviour data, to ensure a safe environment.
- Peer support programs, school wide positive behaviour lessons, philosophy lessons and HPE lessons will be used to directly teach students about bullying and its consequences.
Targeted support

Students who have been identified as requiring additional support in preventing either demonstrating bullying behaviours or possibly being the victim of bullies, will be offered additional support of:

- Individual discussions with Principal / Teachers
- Guidance Officer counselling and support
- Referral to Behaviour Support Services
- Additional monitoring
- Referral to external agencies (EG CYMHS)

Intervention

*Incidents of bullying will be dealt with according to these guidelines and the procedures identified in the Responsible Behaviour Plan (2009).*

1. Students will have (and be explicitly taught) several options of reporting issues of bullying. Bystanders will be strongly directed to report any concerns of bullying.

2. Preferred reporting method will be directly to a staff member as soon as possible after the bullying event. Students will also be given the option of reporting in writing to the school office or via email.

3. As soon as possible after the report, the issue will be documented and investigated.

4. Statements will be taken from victims, bullies and bystanders. A "Report of bullying" will be taken and kept on file.

5. Parents will be notified.

6. Both bullies and victims will be offered counselling and support.

7. Instances of cyber bullying will be responded to by removing the student’s privilege of accessing the school’s network for a period of time.

8. Intervention for the student bullying may include:
   - Shared Concern approach / Circle of Friends
   - Peer support approach
   - No blame approach
   - Social problem solving methods / Social stories
   - Community conferences
   - Small group / individual conferences
   - Referral to Behaviour Support Services / School Special Needs committee
   - School disciplinary action if needed

9. Students identified as demonstrating serious bullying behaviour may be subject to disciplinary procedures, as per our Responsible Behaviour Plan. This may include detention (Peace Room), withdrawal
of privileges or suspension. Each case is treated individually with the outcome of all students being safe and happy as the goal. The use of sanctions as the first strategy may result in retaliation against those who have reported or experienced the bullying. However, when other options have been exhausted or where the bullying is of such a serious nature that the use of restorative processes only is not sufficient, then sanctions will be considered.

Mount Gravatt State School is conscious that punishment alone will not usually solve bullying issues, but rather an approach that teaches social skills and empathy can help build positive, supportive citizens.

**Ongoing support**
- Reinforcement of positive behaviours
- Additional monitoring as appropriate
- Individual and group meetings
- Ongoing social skilling and support
- Debriefing as needed.