



# Marton Activity Centre

## MAC Policy

<b>BEHAVIOUR GUIDANCE - BULLYING</b>	Document ID	: POL005
	Amendment No	: 2
	Quality Area	: MACQA5
	Approved By	: Management
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*Bullying can occur among children of any ages, sex or background. In most instances, children need adult assistance to deal with bullying. This includes adults taking responsibility to develop strategies for the prevention of bullying, and for dealing fairly and effectively with allegations of bullying.*

*My Time, Our Place identifies secure, respectful and reciprocal relationships with children as one of the principles that underpin practice. Within the out of hours school community many different relationships are negotiated with and between children, educators and families. The way in which these relationships are established and maintained, and the way in which they remain visible impacts on how the community functions as a whole. Relationships directly affect how children form their own identity, whether or not they feel safe and supported, and ultimately, their sense of belonging.*

### **POLICY STATEMENT**

To create a safe and healthy environment for children where bullying behaviours are not tolerated. As reflected in our Service philosophy and The Framework 'My Time, Our Place', Educators will encourage positive relationships between children and their peers.

### **SCOPE**

This policy applies to the children, families, staff, management and visitors of Marton Activity Centre.

### **PROCEDURE**

**Marton Activity Centre does not tolerate bullying of any kind.**

The priority of our service is to ensure the safety of the child being bullied.

Although there may be underlying reasons causing a child to bully others, it is essential that the child being bullied receives the adult attention and support in the first instance. It is important that the needs of the child who bullies does not overshadow the needs of the child being bullied.

The relevant school the child attends may be contacted to ensure consistency between strategies used by the school and whilst in attendance at our service.

### **SIGNS OF BULLYING**

In many cases, bullying occurs without adults being aware of it. Bullying can include physical violence (hitting, shoving), teasing or name-calling, social exclusion, or intimidation. It often occurs over a period of time. Possible signs a child is being bullied might include:

- Unexplained cuts, bruises, scratches.
- Changes in behaviour, such as becoming moody, teary, depressed.
- Complaints of physical ailments such as headaches or stomach aches.
- Having few friends, or a breakdown in a previous friendship.
- Does not want to attend school/after school care/vacation care.
- Does not want to attend parties, visit other children.

Children may also disclose to a trusted adult that they are being bullied.

### **EFFECTS OF BULLYING**

Children who are bullied are more likely to be depressed, lonely, and anxious and have low self-esteem. They may frequently feel sick and avoid interactions with others.

### **PREVENTATIVE STRATEGIES**

Bullying thrives where there is not enough supervision. If required, and where possible, OOSH services should improve upon the staff to child ratios set by the National Standards of Outside School Hours Care and National Regulations. The program of activities should be designed to meet the needs and interests of all children in attendance to prevent periods of boredom. Staff are to model appropriate behaviours towards other staff and children, including refraining from teasing, humiliating, or talking 'behind another's back'. This should also include using appropriate language when dealing with behaviour management issues and assisting children to use the same. Children should be encouraged to verbalise their emotions and to develop empathy and compassion.

### PROCEDURE WHEN A CHILD DISCLOSES ALLEGED BULLYING

- Listen when a child attempts to tell you about behaviours that might indicate bullying
- Learn as much as possible about the children involved and the tactics used
- Empathise with the child and reassure them that it is not their fault
- Ask the child what they think could be done to help, what will make them feel safe
- Tell the child what action you are planning to take, including that you will need to talk to the alleged bully
- Notify all parents involved of the allegation of bullying
- Notify the Nominated Supervisor of the allegation
- Try to talk with the alleged bully and any witnesses without allowing them the opportunity to discuss what they may say (bullies often do not act alone, and the responses of the bully and friends may therefore differ from the victim)

Remember that bullies can be 'nice' children from 'good' families. Once the investigation is complete, advise the children, parents and Management of the outcome.

### PROCEDURE WHEN STAFF SUSPECT POSSIBLE BULLYING

- Pay closer attention to the suspected victim and their interactions with other children
- Tell the child that you are concerned about them and consider asking some questions such as "Do you have any special friends at after school care?", "Are there any kids at after school care who you really don't like?"
- Consider talking with the parents of the child to determine if they have similar concerns

### STRATEGIES FOR DEALING WITH BULLYING

- Make it clear to the bully that this type of behaviour is not acceptable
- Don't force a meeting between the bully and the victim. Forced apologies are not constructive
- Encourage the child who is being bullied to report any further occurrences to the staff
- Encourage and support the child who is being bullied to develop other friendships
- Ask the child who is bullying for possible reasons for the bullying. Address any issues raised as appropriate
- Discuss with the child who is bullying and their parents what the possible sanctions may be if the bullying continues.

## SANCTIONS

Possible sanctions will be dependent on each individual case, but may include:

- A warning
- Temporary exclusion from the OSHC Service
- Permanent exclusion from the OSHC Service.

## CONSIDERATIONS

### NATIONAL QUALITY STANDARDS (NQS)

<b>Quality Area 5: Relationships with Children</b>		
<b>5.1.2</b>	<b>Dignity and rights of the child</b>	The dignity and rights of every child are maintained.
<b>5.2</b>	<b>Relationships between children</b>	<b>Each child is supported to build and maintain sensitive and responsive relationships.</b>
<b>5.2.1</b>	<b>Collaborative learning</b>	Children are supported to collaborate, learn from and help each other.

<b>Quality Area 6: Collaborative partnerships with families and communities.</b>		
<b>6.1</b>	<b>Supportive relationships with families</b>	Respectful relationships with families are developed and maintained and families are supported in their parenting role.

### EDUCATION AND CARE SERVICES NATIONAL REGULATIONS AND NATIONAL LAW

<b>Education and Care Services National Regulations and National law NSW</b>		
<b>Reg</b>	<b>155</b>	Interactions with children
<b>Reg</b>	<b>156</b>	Relationships in groups

## SOURCE

Department of Community Services, Bullying Fact Sheet.
My Time, Our Place: Framework for School Age Care in Australia.
NSW Centre for Parenting & Research: Aggression in children and young people [fact sheet]: <a href="http://www.raisingchildren.net.au">www.raisingchildren.net.au</a>
Early Childhood Australia. Bullying No Way: <a href="http://www.bullyingnoway.com.au">www.bullyingnoway.com.au</a>

## SERVICE POLICIES / DOCUMENTATION

<b>Policies</b>	
Incident, Illness, Accident & Trauma	Australian Children's Education & Care Authority
Privacy & Confidentiality	My Time, Our Place
Family Communication	ECA Code of Ethics
Administration of Medication	Revised National Quality Standards
Asthma Management	Supervision Policy
Anaphylaxis Management	Administration of First Aid
Work Health & Safety	