

## MSTYP Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy

Marian St Theatre for Young People Inc, a New South Wales Incorporated Association, (**MSTYP**) is committed to providing all students, staff, contractors, parents, guardians or carers and volunteers with a safe, courteous and creative environment where students can learn and achieve.

MSTYP applies a policy of 'zero tolerance' to acts of harassment, intimidation, bullying, cyber-bullying, disruptive or violent behaviour. All members of the MSTYP community have a responsibility to ensure that the MSTYP environment is free of bullying.

### Scope

This policy applies to all members of the MSTYP community, which includes students, staff, volunteers, parents, guardians and carers and Committee members.

### Definition of bullying

Bullying is repeated unwelcome or unreasonable behaviour directed towards another person or group of persons. It is conduct that demeans, humiliates or intimidates people either as individuals or as a group.

Bullying can take many forms. Some examples of bullying behaviour are:

- **verbal:** teasing, using offensive names, ridiculing, spreading rumours and innuendo, abusive and offensive language, insults;
- **physical:** physical intimidation, hitting, pushing, tripping, kicking, spitting on others;
- **social:** hurtful non-verbal signs (e.g. rolling eyes, continued staring, finger signs, undesirable looks), offensive notes or drawings (including via electronic communication), deliberately excluding others from the group, refusing to sit next to someone, ignoring someone, practical jokes, stealing or hiding another's property;
- **psychological:** sending of offensive/threatening images and hurtful comments, rumour spreading, threatening to take someone's possessions, food or money; and/or
- **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.

### Definition of harassment

Harassment is a form of discrimination and involves a person being subjected to unwanted or unwelcome behaviour because of certain attributes (such as race, religion or sexuality).

Sexual harassment is a specific and serious form of harassment. It is unwelcome sexual behaviour, which could be expected to make a person feel offended, humiliated or intimidated. Sexual harassment can be physical, spoken or written.

## Rights and responsibilities

### **MSTYP responsibilities**

MSTYP undertakes to promote a caring and respectful culture amongst its students, staff and parents, guardians and carers. MSTYP will endeavour to do this by taking action to prevent bullying and harassment situations. This action will include:

- raising the MSTYP community's awareness about bullying and harassment:
  - staff: professional development that will allow them to effectively recognise and manage bullying and harassment situations;
  - parents, guardians and carers: outline and provide information on obligations and responsibilities; and
  - students: relevant preventative programs and intervention;
- adopting a consistent and appropriate response when dealing with bullying and harassment issues;
- developing a community where diversity and differences are valued and positive relationships between staff, students and parents, guardians and carers are fostered; and
- not tolerating bullying or harassment by students, staff or parents, guardians or carers in any form.

### **Staff responsibilities**

MSTYP staff must:

- not engage in bullying or harassing behaviour towards other staff, students or parents, guardians or carers;
- promote a respectful and caring culture for all;
- model appropriate language and behaviour for students at all times;
- identify and respond to signs of distress that may indicate that a student or another staff member is being bullied or harassed;
- intervene immediately and sensitively in any situations of bullying or harassment;
- discourage activities that promote exclusion (e.g. students choosing their own work partners, bus partners, groups); and

- be aware of and act on MSTYP's Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy.

### **Parent, guardian and carer responsibilities**

Parents, guardians and carers of students who participate in MSTYP classes or productions must:

- not engage in bullying or harassing behaviour towards staff members, other parents, guardians or carers or students of other parents, guardians or carers;
- help their child develop an empathic and tolerant attitude towards others by modelling respectful behaviour at home and during all interactions related to the wider community;
- be willing to listen and support their child when he/she wants to talk about bullying or harassment incidents;
- affirm the positive ways in which their child can manage bullying or harassment;
- communicate with MSTYP if their child reports any incidents of bullying or harassment, or shows any changes in behaviour that may indicate that they are feeling unsafe at MSTYP;
- support MSTYP in its preventative and reactive actions to address bullying or harassment;
- discourage activities that promote exclusion (e.g. students choosing their own work partners, bus partners, groups); and
- be aware of and act on MSTYP's Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy.

### **Student responsibilities**

Students who participate in MSTYP classes, workshops and/or productions must:

- not engage in bullying or harassing behaviour towards other students, staff members or parents, guardians or carers of other students;
- treat others with respect and care;
- if possible, take action if you are being bullied. For example:
  - remove yourself from the location where the bullying is occurring, and avoid locations where you consider this to be a high risk;
  - where possible, have a friend or ally near you in situations where you perceive bullying to be a possibility;
  - let the person know that their actions/words are hurtful and tell them to stop; and/or

- tell a trusted adult/s and seek assistance from parents, guardians and carers, MSTYP staff and/or tutors); and
- if they witness bullying, take some action. For example:
  - tell someone they trust about the incident of bullying;
  - do not become involved in the bullying behaviours;
  - where appropriate, let the person who is bullying know that their behaviour is unacceptable;
  - walk away with the person who is being bullied;
  - provide comfort and support to the person who is being bullied; and/or
  - encourage the person who is being bullied to seek adult assistance.

### Reporting concerns

Students who feel they are being harassed, bullied or intimidated may report this concern to the Artistic Director (Nathan Gilkes [nate@mstyp.org.au](mailto:nate@mstyp.org.au), 0408 441 232) or the student's tutor using any means of communication with which they feel comfortable.

### Other relevant policies:

- Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Child Safe Policy
- Code of Conduct

### Policy review

This policy will be reviewed annually or more often as circumstances require.

Date of approval by MSTYP Committee:	05/04/2019
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