Rationale
Maryborough Education Centre (MEC) is committed to ensuring that staff work in an environment where people are treated with mutual respect. It is important for a productive and harmonious workplace that staff are aware of the impact of their behaviours on others. Bullying in the workplace is inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour.

All employees have a legal responsibility to care for their own health and safety and that of co-workers, and therefore must treat other staff with respect and courtesy and not engage in acts which constitute bullying behaviour. Staff found to have either committed or condoned such behaviour in the workplace will be subject to disciplinary action which may include the termination of employment.

Definition
Workplace bullying is repeated, unreasonable behaviour directed towards an employee or group of employees that creates a risk to health and safety. The following types of behaviour where directed towards an individual and repeated, or occurring as part of a pattern of behaviour, could be considered to be bullying:

- Demeaning language or verbal abuse
- Threats, physical or verbal intimidation
- Outbursts of anger or aggression
- Psychological harassment or intimidation
- Excluding or isolating employees
- Giving employees impossible assignments
- Deliberately withholding information that is vital for effective work performance
- Deliberately changing work rosters to inconvenience particular employees.

The above list is not exhaustive. Other types of behaviour may also constitute bullying.

What is not bullying?
Reasonable management actions carried out in a fair way are not bullying.

For example:
- Setting performance goals, standards and deadlines
- Deciding not to select a worker for promotion
- Informing a worker about unsatisfactory work performance
- Informing a worker about inappropriate behaviour
- Implementing organisational changes
- Transferring a worker
- Constructive feedback.

Goals:

**MEC will not tolerate bullying under any circumstances and will:**
- Promote appropriate standards of behaviour at all times
- Treat complaints of bullying in a sensitive, fair, timely and confidential manner
- Implement training and awareness-raising strategies to ensure all employees know their rights and responsibilities
- Provide an effective procedure for complaints of bullying to be addressed
- Encourage the reporting of behaviour which breaches the bullying policy
• Ensure protection from victimisation or reprisals for persons reporting bullying.

Guidelines

What can I do if I believe I am being bullied?
Below is a summary of the steps that can be taken to address individual concerns and who to contact:

• If you can, try to resolve the problem yourself with the person(s) involved as soon as possible
• If you are unsure of how to handle the problem yourself or feel unable to take this course of action, you can report your complaint verbally by talking to your Principal or nominee or in writing by completing a Incident Report Form and giving it to your Principal or nominee (Appendix A)
• If your complaint is about your Principal you can report your complaint directly to the Senior Education Officer at the North Western Region of the Department of Education and Training, telephone 03 5440 3111.

If you observe an incident in which another employee is being bullied, you have a responsibility to bring it to the attention of your Principal or nominee.

If you do make a complaint about bullying, you are responsible for ensuring that you:

• Make the complaint honestly and in good faith
• Provide all the facts relevant to the complaint
• Co-operate with the investigation and resolution processes.

If a complaint of bullying has been made about you, you are responsible for ensuring that you:

• Cooperate with the investigation and resolution processes and maintain confidentiality
• Provide a written or verbal response to the complaint which has been made
• Provide all relevant facts to the person conducting the investigation.

Management responsibility
If an employee brings an allegation of bullying to your attention:

Do Not
• Ignore the complaint
• Tell the employee making the complaint to sort it out themselves
• Make a judgement about whether the complaint is true or not
• Say to the employee he/she should tolerate the bullying
• Talk to anyone about the issue except those involved in the investigation and resolution of the complaint.

Do
• Behave consistently with the Workplace Bullying Policy
• Resolve the complaint as quickly as possible
• Be empathic, sensitive and serious; the complaint is obviously serious to the person making it
• Enquire into the matter within 2 working days, and attempt to resolve it as soon as possible.
Principal or nominee action steps
- Principal or nominee to meet with the complainant and arrange for notes of the meeting to be recorded and made available to those in attendance.
- The Principal or nominee will determine who should investigate, and if possible, mediate the complaint.

Investigation and mediation
- Investigation of the complaint of bullying must commence within 2 working days of receipt of the complaint.
- The investigator must be someone who is impartial, and who has been trained to conduct investigations. This person may need to be sourced from outside the organisation.
- Mediation may be a consideration in resolving a bullying complaint. This form of dispute resolution is appropriate only if the person making the complaint agrees.

Outcome
In situations where bullying complaints are substantiated, management may take the following actions:
- Require an apology from the respondent
- Make changes to work practices
- Undertake disciplinary action
- Require employees to participate in training
- Place notes in personnel file
- Termination of employment
- Any other action deemed fair and reasonable.

Further Information
- Sex Discrimination Act.
- Race Discrimination Act.
- Disability Discrimination Act.
- Equal Opportunity for Women in the Workforce Act.
- Workplace Relations Act.
- Crimes Act.

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's 3 year review cycle.

This policy was last ratified by School Council on Wednesday 23rd November 2016

Signed:

Paul Rumpff
School Council President
Appendix A

Incident Report Form

Complete the Incident Report Form and deliver it directly to the Principal or nominee.

Part 1 – About you

The complainant

Name: ...........................................................................................................................................

Address: ......................................................................................................................................

............................................................................................................................................... Post code: ...........

Contact numbers:

Home: ......................................................... Mobile: .........................................................

Email: .............................................................................

Part 2 – The respondent

The person/s you are complaining about

Person 1

Name: ...........................................................................................................................................

Person 2

Name: ...........................................................................................................................................
If you are complaining about more than two people, please provide this additional information on an extra page.

Part 3 – About the complaint
Why are you complaining to the Principal or nominee?

Do you believe you have been discriminated against, bullied or harassed because of your:

☐ age
☐ breastfeeding status
☐ carer status
☐ disability (including physical, sensory and intellectual disability, work related injury, medical conditions, mental, psychological and learning difficulties, uses a guide dog for mobility)
☐ employment activity
☐ gender identity
☐ industrial activity
☐ lawful sexual activity
☐ marital status
☐ parental status
☐ physical features
☐ political belief or activity
☐ pregnancy
☐ race (including colour, nationality, ethnicity and ethnic origin), racial vilification
☐ religious belief or activity, religious vilification
☐ sex
☐ sexual harassment
☐ sexual orientation
☐ victimisation
☐ expunged homosexual conviction
☐ personal association with someone who has, or is assumed to have, one of these personal characteristics.
☐ I have been discriminated against, bullied or harassed for another reason.

Please state the reason:

..........................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................................
When did this happen to you?
Provide the date or dates of the events you are complaining about

What happened?
Describe the events that you want to complain about. You need to say what happened, who did it and where it happened. Put in as much detail as you can and explain why you think this happened, for example because of your race, sex, disability etc.
Part 4 – How has this affected you?
What loss or harm have you experienced because of what happened to you?

………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

Signature: ..................................................  Date: .................................

Part 5 – Results
What kind of outcome do you want to resolve your dispute?

………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………


Part 6 – Other ways you have tried to resolve the dispute
Have you made your complaint to another agency e.g. coordinator/supervisor

☐ Yes
☐ No

If YES, what was the outcome of your complaint?

..........................................................................................................................................................  
..........................................................................................................................................................  
..........................................................................................................................................................  
..........................................................................................................................................................  
..........................................................................................................................................................  
..........................................................................................................................................................  
..........................................................................................................................................................  

Part 7 – Documentation
Do you intend to attach additional documents to your complaint?

Documents could include medical certificates, relevant photos. If you have electronic documents or photos that will help our inquiry you should include them with this form.

☐ Yes
☐ No