

APPENDIX 3: BULLYING / HARASSMENT PREVENTION POLICY

DEFINITION

Bullying/harassment refers to any behaviour which acts against the fundamental rights of another to feel safe and to be treated with respect. Bullying behaviours may be physical, verbal, visual or social in nature and may be conducted by an individual or a group and may be directed against any individual in a less powerful position and unable to defend themselves in a given situation. It is the severity as well as the frequency of the behaviour that is of concern.

It is the responsibility of all members of the community to work together towards the elimination of intimidatory behaviour. **Teachers on staff have direct responsibility to take action in response to the reporting of bullying behaviours. (Duty of Care, Student Protection 2003, Code of Conduct 2003).** Bullying issues are addressed through form class meetings, year assemblies and specialised curriculum programs.

EXAMPLES OF BULLYING BEHAVIOURS

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| PHYSICAL | Inappropriate, threatening or offensive conduct. e.g. pushing, punching, striking, deliberately damaging or taking another's school work or equipment or belongings; forcing another to commit an inappropriate act; stalking |
| VERBAL | Inappropriate verbal, written or drawn material that is offensive, insulting or hurtful. e.g. remarks, name calling, teasing. |
| ELECTRONIC | Inappropriate text messaging or emailing that is offensive, insulting or hurtful; unsolicited photographing of another. |
| GESTURE | Inappropriate actions which invade another's personal space or personal comfort. e.g. shaking fist in a person's face (intimidation), rude gestures, continuous staring, intimidating glares, mimicking, stalking. |
| EXTORTION | Demanding something from another against the person's will. e.g. pocket/lunch money, food, clothing, school work or equipment, forcing another to steal money, sweets, cigarettes, alcohol etc. |
| EXCLUSION | Socially isolating another person. e.g. cruel injection of one of the group members, being left out on purpose, refusing to work alongside another, rejection on the basis of personal characteristics i.e. appearance, achievement, disability, gender, any form of |

harassment which is racist, ethnic, religious in its origins.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT Any behaviours that constitute sex based harassment will be regarded as sexual harassment. (Students may wish to consult the Personal Safety Officer)

What should students do if they are bullied?

Students should report behaviours which make them uncomfortable. If the behaviour continues even after the offending student has been warned, it is preferable that the student report the behaviour again to the same teacher. If not possible, another teacher should be approached.

Class Seniors allocated to Year 8 classes provide valuable support to Year 8 students.

Special expectations of Staff in relation to bullying behaviours:

1. Treat complaints seriously and deal with them as quickly as possible.
2. Impress upon students that it is essential that they return to inform should the bullying behaviour continue after the teacher's intervention.
3. Affirm the student that he/she has a right to attend school without being harassed in any way.
4. Assist the student to seek Guidance support if the harassment has been ongoing.
5. Document any intervention. Inform a Deputy Principal if continuing behaviour warrants recording on SMS.

Working with the Student who has bullied or been identified by others as such:

- Adopt a **“No Blame Approach”**. This does **NOT** mean that there shouldn't be consequences. It means helping the offender to empathise with the person who was bullied. It also means offering them support to cease the offending behaviour.
- Emphasise the importance of discouraging friends from acting on the offender's behalf. Any difficulties in this area should be discussed.
- Negotiate appropriate consequences
 - e.g. - removal of privileges
 - restricted access to school grounds etc
 - participation in a Bullying Intervention Program run by Guidance may be appropriate for ongoing offenders (referral by Deputy Principals)
- Explore any way in which the student might **repair the harm** that has been caused.
 - e.g. - apology – private or public
 - appropriate personal gesture

- replacement/restoration of property

- A written agreement might be useful. Make a photocopy of the agreement and give one copy to the offending student and one to student making the complaint. Ensure that both are fully aware of the consequences should the behaviour continue.
- Inform the student of the consequences should he/she fail to modify the behaviour and thus breaking the agreement i.e. proposed disciplinary action.

Website Reference: www.bullyingnoway.com.au

With the Complainant

It is essential that whoever deals with the incident makes a point of going back to the person harassed or bullied and explains in detail what action has been taken and what has been said to the offender. It is beneficial to ask the complainant if they are happy with the way the problem has been dealt with.

Staff should also stress that should any inappropriate behaviour recur the person harassed must return to report the behaviour again so that a higher level of discipline can be applied.

The student may need to be referred to Guidance for ongoing support, social skills development, self-protection or assertion strategies.