

---

## Bullying and Harassment

### Rationale

- Bullying is defined below.
- Many distressing behaviours are not examples of bullying even though they are unpleasant and often require teacher intervention and management.
- Mutual conflict involves an argument or disagreement between people but not an imbalance of power. Both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution. Unresolved mutual conflict can develop into bullying if one of the parties targets the other repeatedly in retaliation.
- Social rejection or dislike is not bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.
- Single-episode acts of nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. If someone is verbally abused or pushed on one occasion they are not being bullied. Nastiness or physical aggression that is directed towards many different people is not the same as bullying. However, this does not mean that single episodes should be ignored or condoned as these are unacceptable behaviours.

### Purpose

- To create a safe and respectful school environment and prevent bullying, cyber bullying and other unacceptable behaviours.
- To ensure Bayside P-12 College complies with DET policy and guidelines.
- To further empower children who are key stakeholders within our organisation.
- To ensure the school has in place strategies to enhance compliance with the Child Safe Standards 2, 4 and 7.
- To ensure the school discharges its duty of care towards children

### Definitions

**Harassment** is any unwelcome, uninvited attention, contact or behaviour that an individual finds humiliating, offensive or intimidating. The intention of the person harassing is to cause distress for his/her own gain or gratification or to enhance his/her own power.

For the purpose of this document, harassment is sub-divided into the following categories – Sexual, Racial and Bullying.

**Sexual harassment** is any verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature that is unwelcome and offensive. Sexual harassment does not refer to occasional compliments or common courtesies.

There are three basic categories of sexual harassment - subtle, explicit and criminal action.

**NONE IS ACCEPTABLE AND NONE IS TOO TRIVIAL TO WARRANT COMPLAINT.**

**Subtle** forms of sexual harassment tend to be the most common. They include:

- Offensive staring and leering
- Suggestive comments about a person's physical appearance or sexual preference
- Offensive comments or jokes
- Question or comment about another's sexual morality
- Physical contact, e.g. purposely brushing up against another's body
- Offensive name calling

**Explicit** forms are easier to identify as they are often overtly offensive or intimidating behaviour. They include:

- Pinching, patting, touching, embracing
- Repeated requests to go out with someone, especially after prior refusal
- Offensive jokes and comments
- Sexually provocative remarks
- Displays of sexually graphic material

- Requests for sexual favours

**Criminal action** may include some of the above but also includes:

- obscene letters or making obscene phone calls

### **RACIAL HARASSMENT**

Racial harassment happens when someone is treated less fairly because of their race, colour, descent, It is illegal to:

- write racist graffiti in public places
- make comments or jokes based on race or religion
- display racist posters or stickers in a public place
- make offensive racist comments in any publication, including Internet and email

### **BULLYING**

**Bullying** is when someone, or a group of people, deliberately upsets or hurts another person or damages their property, reputation or social acceptance on more than one occasion. There is an imbalance of power in incidents of bullying with the bully or bullies having more power at the time due to age, size, status or other reasons.

Bullying can take several forms:

- **Physical**  
Hitting, scratching, throwing objects at a person or damaging or taking a person's property
- **Verbal**  
Name calling, spreading gossip and rumours, hurtful comments or 'putdowns', writing or telephoning unpleasant comments about another person
- **Gesture**  
Particular looks that convey a message of scorn, threat or ridicule
- **Exclusion**  
Deliberately excluding a person from a group or activity, deliberately breaking up friendships
- **Extortion**  
Using power to take money or belongings from another person
- **Cyberbullying**  
Using social media or other electronic forms to bully another person

### **Implementation and Prevention**

#### **STATEMENT OF BELIEF**

Essendon Keilor College is committed to providing for staff, students and parents, a working and learning environment based on mutual respect and the dignity of each individual. **All forms of bullying and harassment are unacceptable and will not be tolerated at Essendon Keilor College.**

- The wellbeing of every child and young person at the school is our highest priority.
- The school encourages everyone to speak up when bullying or harassment is encountered
- The school will:
  - promote and support safe and respectful learning environments where bullying is not tolerated
  - provide clear definitions of what is and what is not bullying, including descriptions of the different subtypes of bullying
  - put in place whole-school strategies and initiatives as outlined in DET's anti-bullying policy
  - develop a Student Engagement Policy that includes processes and strategies to prevent and respond to incidents of bullying and other forms of unacceptable behaviour.
  - Involve children, staff and parents/carers in updating the Student Engagement Policy.
  - take a whole-school approach focusing on safety and wellbeing
  - consistently respond to all incidents of bullying that have been reported to the school and ensure that planned interventions are used to respond to these incidents
  - ensure that support is provided to any child who has been affected by, engaged in or witnessed bullying behaviour

- provide regular updates, within the bounds of privacy legislation, to parents/carers about the management of incidents
- address cyber bullying as part of its *Internet Use/Social Media Policy*
- The school will ensure the policy is easily accessible within the school community and published on the school's website.
- If circumstances warrant, the school may consider using [Bullying No Way!](#) and the [National Safe Schools Framework](#).
- For further information, including information on sexual diversity, the school will refer to the DET resources at the website below.
- Please refer also to the school's *Duty of Care Policy*, the *Student Engagement Policy* and the Child Safe Standards.

### **School Specific Procedures**

At the first staff meeting of each year the school policy on harassment is to be explained to all staff, Team Leaders and students.

1. The Year 7 students will have the sexual harassment policy explained to them by Team Leaders in single-sex workshop settings and broader Harassment Policy in level assemblies.

The Year 8 to 9 students will revise the Policy through Focus Groups.

The Year 10, 11 and 12 students will have the Policy explained to them in an assembly or classroom at the beginning of each year.

The Bullying and Harassment Policy is to be presented for explanation and discussion at a general staff meeting at the beginning of each year.

2. The Bullying and Harassment Policy is to be provided for students in the Student Dairy.
3. Parents will be made aware of the Policy and harassment issues via College Newsletter, Website, Parent Meetings and College Council.
4. Copies of the Policy should be available for distribution to parents and new staff.
5. Promotion of the Bullying and Harassment Policy, including the harassment procedures should be incorporated into the transition program.
6. Strategies for the prevention of harassment are to be an integral part of the curriculum e.g. Social Studies units, Science-Human Development units, Health and Human Relations units. These strategies will include promoting assertiveness in girls and sensitivity and awareness in boys.
7. Self-esteem is to be promoted through developing a gender inclusive curriculum and a school environment which is as equally supportive to girls as to boys.

### **GENERAL GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

#### ***RACIAL HARASSMENT AND BULLYING***

1. All students will be encouraged to report any possible cases to a confidante, i.e. a teacher in whom they feel they trust.
2. The complainant's wishes will be respected. However, the complaint will be related to the Year Level Co-ordinator or Team Leader who will investigate further. The need for the investigation to be treated in confidence will be stressed.
3. After investigation, if it is found that harassment has occurred, the following procedures will be implemented:
  - the Level Co-ordinator is to document the incident

- the offender and the victim are to be counselled by the Level Co-ordinator/Student Welfare Co-ordinator/SSSO Psychologist
  - the parents of both the offender and victim may be notified, depending on the seriousness of the incident. A student living independently may access from the SSSO Psychologist or SWC
  - the offender may receive an appropriate consequence, determined by the Level Co-ordinator
  - the situation is to be monitored to ensure that the behaviour does not continue.
4. If the harassment continues or if the incident is serious, the matter is to be dealt with as follows:
- the Level Co-ordinator will conduct a thorough investigation and document all relevant information
  - the Level Co-ordinator will inform and hold preliminary discussions with the principal or an Assistant Principal, the Student Welfare Co-ordinator/ SSSO Psychologist and other relevant Level Co-ordinator(s)
  - a meeting, consisting of the Principal or an Assistant Principal, relevant Level Co-ordinator(s), the Student Welfare Co-ordinator/ SSSO Psychologist, a parent or guardian and the student, may be held to discuss the offending student's behaviour
  - the offender may be referred to an outside agency after consultation with the parent(s)
  - the victim to receive appropriate support/counselling

## **GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE**

### ***SEXUAL HARASSMENT***

#### ***Subtle and Explicit Incidents***

Refer to points 1, 2 and 3 of General Grievance Procedure (as above)

1. Offending student may be removed from class under the supervision of the Year Level Co-ordinator / Team Leader. The student will remain under this supervision until counselled or referred to the Student Welfare Co-ordinator
2. A contract giving assurance that this behaviour will not occur again must be prepared by the student during the time with the Year Level Co-ordinator/Team Leader
3. Copies of the incident report and student's contract are to be kept on the student's file and copies made available to the student, their parents or guardian
4. If the contract is broken, the parents of the student will be requested to attend a conference with the Principal and the Year Level Co-ordinator / Team Leader who will decide upon further action
5. If explicit sexual harassment behaviour is repeated, it will be dealt with under the procedure outlines for the Criminal Action incidents
6. Parents of complainants will be notified if it is deemed appropriate
7. The complainant will be offered counselling by the Student Welfare Co-ordinator/ SSSO Psychologist

#### ***Criminal Action Incidents***

1. Upon the reporting of this type of incident, the Administration will have discretionary powers to remove the student from the class and/or contact parents
2. After investigation, if it is established that Criminal Action or repeated explicit sexual harassment has occurred:
  - 2.1 The offending student should be removed from class, under the supervision of a member of the administration.
  - 2.2 The student will be placed under suspension, the number of days to be decided by the Principal
  - 2.3 The parents of the offending student will be required to attend a conference with the Principal and the

student will not be permitted to return to school until this conference has been convened

- 2.4 While under suspension, the student is to complete a unit of work on "Understanding of Issues of Sexual Harassment" or another appropriate unit
- 2.5 After suspension, the student must undergo a counselling session with the Year Level Co-ordinator/Team Leader before returning to class and ongoing counselling will be organised for the student if the Principal deems it necessary
- 2.6 In cases of physical assault of a sexual nature, DET regulations will be followed
- 2.7 Documentation of the incident must be accurately recorded on the student's file
3. If it is found that any student deliberately or falsely accused another student of sexual harassment, then the accusing student will be dealt with as an offending student and may face serious consequences

Where parents/carers are not satisfied with the action the school has taken they will be referred to the DET Complaints Management Policy.

## **STRATEGIES / RECOMMENDATIONS**

### ***DEALING WITH BULLYING, HARASSMENT AND RACISM - AT THE INDIVIDUAL STUDENT LEVEL***

#### ***BULLYING***

- If feeling vulnerable, stick with the group and avoid being last to leave buildings or rooms
- Stay in sight of peers and adults when possible
- Look the bully in the eye, stand up straight and try to look confident. Walk quietly and confidently away
- Try not to show any temper reactions, stay calm
- Speak slowly, clearly and firmly
- Think about arriving earlier, later or choosing a different route
- Leave expensive and treasure items at home. Do not brag about possessions or money
- Are you being provoking? Could you alter your behaviour in any way?
- If you are being bullied, ask a friend to accompany you
- Report incidents of bullying and help to break down the code of secrecy
- Become involved in lunchtime activities
- Join hobby and sports groups operating at weekends to boost your self esteem
- Talk to your parents about what is happening to you
- Reduce your points of contact – go to supervised places, stay near the duty teacher, look for other groups of friends
- Develop a network e.g. Home Group Teacher, Year Level Co-ordinator, SWC, College Psychologist, people you can easily contact and who will do something to help
- Self-talk – practice how you will deal with a situation

#### ***RACISM***

- Don't accept racist opinions, challenge them
- Refuse to participate in racist behaviour
- If you hear other students telling a racist joke, point out to them that it might hurt other people's feelings
- Tell teachers if you see students bullying others or calling them racist names
- Report to teachers any racist material you find

#### ***AT THE PARENT LEVEL – VICTIMS***

- Encourage your child to report incidents to a teacher
- Notify the school of any incidents of bullying/racism and seek their support and advice
- Encourage your child to develop potential talents and positive attributes
- Encourage participation in sport or some physical activity to help improve their 'body anxiety'
- Do not become 'over protective'
- Try to 'engineer' social contacts e.g. encourage friends over

- Determine whether any of the child's own behaviour is resulting in the bullying
- Listen to your child and talk about strategies
- Seek professional help for assertiveness training

**AT THE PARENT LEVEL – BULLIES RACISTS**

- Make it clear that you take the bullying/racism seriously and you will not tolerate the behaviour
- Follow through the sanctions
- Seek professional help
- Contact the College and discuss your concerns

**STRATEGIES / RECOMMENDATIONS**

**DEALING WITH BULLYING, HARASSMENT AND RACISM**

*Teacher Strategies*

**BULLYING AND HARASSMENT**

**AT THE CAMPUS LEVEL**

**Lunchtime and Recess Supervision**

We should aim to increase "teacher density" during yard duty

- identify and patrol 'hot spots'
- teachers must be prepared to intervene quickly and decisively
- intervene too early rather than too late
- consistent and determined intervention marks an important attitude 'we do NOT accept bullying'
- if a teacher refrains from intervening, his/her behaviour implies a silent condoning of bullying
- watch out for lone students
- report any incidents to the Year Level Co-ordinator or Student Welfare Co-ordinator
- intervene at the level of the group and state clearly 'This is not acceptable behaviour – we do not allow bullying here'

**Lunchtime Activities**

- enable students to become involved and go to 'safe' places e.g. Library, Sport training, etc
- board games provided in supervised area
- supervised music area at lunchtime
- organised sporting competitions

**Parent Education/Information Evenings**

- discussing how parents can and should contribute to help with the problem
- Year Level Co-ordinators are encouraged to involve the parents early, for both bullies and victims

**Curriculum Implementation**

- Personal and Physical Development
- Drama
- English
- Peer Support
- Classroom teachers to discuss values/issues when opportunity arises
- Implement strategies to build self-esteem e.g. co-operative learning problem solving

**AT THE CLASSROOM LEVEL**

- moving the bully to another seat or class, not the victim
- providing time to listen empathically to what the student has to say
- use Home Group time to raise awareness and discuss issues

**Discussion of Classroom Behaviour Requirements**

- Should incorporate the following:
  - we will not bully other students
  - we will try to help students who are being bullied
  - we will make a point to include students who become easily left out (these actions act on direct and indirect bullying e.g. physical attacks, exclusion)

- Reassurance that action will be taken and it will be treated as serious
- Give positive reinforcement for positive behaviours e.g. towards one another and with their school work, for individual groups and even the whole class
- Give praise for:
  - intervening when one or more students try to bully another
  - for starting or participating in activities that include all class members and/or isolate class members
- Aggressive students and those easily influenced by others should also receive appreciation for not reacting aggressively under conditions which normally provoke them
- The best results are achieved through a combination of generous praise for positive activities and consistent sanctions for aggressive, rule breaking behaviour
- Encourage co-operative learning by using group work and stress that each group member must be involved and able to present the group's results
- Take care with group selection – avoid always letting students form their own groups. Construct a group made up of positive, friendly students with isolated students.
- It is not appropriate at an early stage to place a bully and a possible victim in the same group. Put the bully with a couple of strong and secure students who will not accept being bullied.
- Plan some fun activities for the whole class e.g. BBQ lunch, sport and games, watching a video
- Let parents know at Parent / Teacher interviews how their child is behaving and encourage parents to talk to their child
- Be productive in looking for anti-social behaviour because it is most often covert
- Teachers provide a good role model in language, manner, body language
- Look for opportunities to teach pro-social skills incidentally in your normal classes
- Remove opportunities for bullying to occur e.g. arrive at class duty on time, actively supervise high risk areas
- Talk with victim/s and give them strategies for coping
- The physical position of the teacher in the room is important – walk around the room and speaking from the back and sides not only helps give a feeling of cohesion to the group but also puts the teacher in a position to spot trouble

## ***RACISM***

### ***AT THE CAMPUS LEVEL***

#### **Challenge Racism Whenever it Occurs**

- Teach students what racist behaviour is and set clear expectations in terms of non-racist behaviour
- Challenge racist attitudes conveyed in the community, media and in popular culture
- When you see racist behaviour, deal with it immediately wherever and whenever it occurs
- Teach students about their rights and responsibilities in relation to racial discrimination
- Encourage students to report racist behaviour

#### **Be a Positive Role Model**

- Model inclusive, positive, non-racist behaviour in the classroom, playground and staff room

- Be consistent and fair in applying school policies and procedures
- Foster sensitivity to other people's practices and beliefs
- Share information about your own cultural background

#### **Assess Your Own Attitudes, Behaviour and Training Needs**

- Identify your own training needs in relation to education to counter racism, cultural understanding and inclusive teaching practice
- Be open to staff development opportunities which aim to increase cross-cultural understanding
- Obtain factual information about racism and its effects
- Consider debates on topical issues such as Reconciliation and immigration and form your own opinions based on the facts
- Evaluate your own teaching practice and teaching and learning materials for bias and sensitivity

### ***CURRICULUM IMPLEMENTATION***

#### **Create an Inclusive Learning Environment**

- Seek out, use and share learning resources which include the perspectives of culturally and linguistically diverse communities
- Incorporate material which challenges racist attitudes and facilitates cultural understanding into teaching and learning activities where appropriate
- Make sure that students from all backgrounds feel confident to participate in class
- Seek language support for students who need it
- Encourage positive interaction between students of different backgrounds
- Make sure that assessment tasks do not discriminate against some groups of students
- Ensure verbal instructions are easily understood by all students
- Recognise Aboriginal English as an acceptable variation of Australian English
- Refer to all students and groups living in Australia as "Australian"

### ***PARENT INVOLVEMENT***

- Encourage parents and caregivers from all communities to participate in school activities
- Make use of translations, interpreters and language support staff
- Seek feedback from all parents and caregivers in relation to the effectiveness of classroom activities and their child's progress

### ***IN THE CLASSROOM***

#### **Recognise and Value Cultural Diversity**

- Establish classroom practices that reflect and value the perspectives of culturally and linguistically diverse communities
- Find out about the cultural and language backgrounds of the students in your school
- Treat students as individuals – don't make assumptions based on stereotypes of particular groups
- Learn to pronounce students' names correctly
- Encourage students to express their own cultural identity or identities and maintain their home language
- Allow students to use their first language
- Discuss the importance of Reconciliation and cultural diversity

#### **Evaluation**

This policy will be reviewed annually as part of preparing the Annual Report or if guidelines change (latest DET update early July 2017).

Reference:

[www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/bullying.aspx](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/bullying.aspx)