

NORTHERN BAY COLLEGE

ANTI-BULLYING AND ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY NBC021

1. PURPOSE

Northern Bay P-12 College is committed to providing a safe and caring environment and culture which enables positive relationships to be formed between all students, parents and staff and which encourages self-esteem, cooperation, personal growth and a positive attitude to learning and teaching. A clear policy on bullying and harassment will inform the community that **bullying and harassment in any of its forms will not be tolerated.**

This policy aims to:

- 1.1 Reinforce within the College community that no form of bullying is acceptable.
- 1.2 Alert everyone within the College community to signs and evidence of bullying and stress that everyone has a responsibility to report it to staff whether as observer or victim.
- 1.3 Ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are followed up and that support is given to both victim and perpetrator.
- 1.4 Seek parental and peer-group support and co-operation at all times.

2. BROAD GUIDELINES

- 2.1. This policy operates within normal legal parameters and as such if a law is broken it will be dealt with under the appropriate sanctions.
- 2.2. Where a law has been broken we are obliged to involve the police.
- 2.3. **Bullying** is repeated oppression, physical or psychological, of a less powerful person by a more powerful person or group.
- 2.4. **Cyber-bullying** consists of covert, psychological bullying, conveyed through the electronic media such as cell-phones, web-logs and web-sites, on-line chat rooms, 'MUD' rooms (multi-user domains where individuals take on different characters) and Xangas (on-line personal profiles where some adolescents create lists of people they do not like). It is verbal (over the telephone or mobile phone), or written (flaming, threats, racial, sexual or homophobic harassment) using the various mediums available.
- 2.5. **Harassment** is any verbal, physical or sexual conduct (including gestures) which is uninvited, unwelcome or offensive to a person.
- 2.6. Northern Bay College will actively promote a positive and welcoming personal environment for all members of the College community. When people are bullied or harassed some effects might be anger, embarrassment, fear and humiliation, loss of self-confidence and reduced function and potential. Bullying and harassment will be addressed, individual differences will be respected and students and staff will be enabled and supported in their pursuit of learning and teaching.
- 2.7. A College-wide approach will be taken to deal with bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment in a consistent and systematic way.
- 2.8. All new students and staff will be informed of the anti-harassment policy and practices at the commencement of their time at the college.
- 2.9. All complaints of harassment will be heard in confidence and taken seriously.
- 2.10. Northern Bay College will organise preventative curriculum programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving.
- 2.11. Staff programs will occur periodically to keep staff informed of current issues/strategies for dealing with these issues.
- 2.12. There will be disciplinary consequences, covering a range of strategies, for those in breach of the Anti-Bullying (including cyber bullying) and Anti- Harassment Policy, guidelines and procedures (**Appendix A**)

3. IMPLEMENTATION

- 3.1. Constructive strategies to deal with harassment will include: education in coping strategies; assertiveness training; problem solving and social skills; counselling and behaviour modification. These strategies will be employed in preference to punitive sanctions and negative consequences.

- 3.2. The Anti-Bullying and Anti-Harassment Policy of the College will be widely promoted to students, staff, parents/carers and the local community.
- 3.3. A summary of the policy will be included in the Student Enrolment Package while new staff will receive extensive documentation as part of the College induction process.
- 3.4. The College Leadership Team and the staff will work together to ensure the safety of all College members in situations of bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment, by thoroughly investigating all complaints while respecting the need for confidentiality, notifying parents/carers and planning interventions.
- 3.5. If a staff member feels a student is at serious and imminent risk from bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment then it is their professional duty to pass on the information to an appropriate person in order to ensure appropriate support for the student. It is important that teachers fully document their interaction with the student and to verify the actions taken.
- 3.6. Student programs will be organised to raise student awareness about bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment, to provide a forum for discussion of matters and to aid development of attitudes. Some matters will be dealt with formally in the curriculum and in peer support programs, leadership programs, extra-curricular programs and occasional activities run by external health and wellbeing specialists and/or school wellbeing staff.
- 3.7. Professional development will be provided for staff relating to bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment and proven strategies to address these issues in classrooms will be shared with all staff.
- 3.8. Disciplinary consequences for bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment will comply with the College's Wellbeing Policy. The Campus Principal or their nominee will provide disciplinary consequences including suspension in accordance with Department of Education and Training (DET) guidelines.

4. EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed annually or more often if necessary due to changes in regulations or circumstances.

Document #	Committee Responsible	Review Date	Public Location	Ratified by School Council:
NBC021	College Leadership	April 2021	Website Compass	May 2108
Student engagement and inclusion				
SWPBS				
User Agreement				

NORTHERN BAY COLLEGE

ANTI-BULLYING AND ANTI-HARASSMENT POLICY

Appendix A Anti-Bullying and Anti-Harassment Procedures

1. What are Bullying, Cyber- Bullying and Harassment?

1.1 BULLYING

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is when someone, or a group of people, who have more power at the time, deliberately upset or hurt another person, their property, reputation or social acceptance on more than one occasion.

Types of Bullying

There are three broad categories of bullying:

1. **Direct physical bullying** – e.g. hitting, tripping, and pushing or damaging property.
2. **Direct verbal bullying** – e.g. name calling, insults, homophobic or racist remarks, verbal abuse.
3. **Indirect bullying** – this form of bullying is harder to recognise and often carried out behind the bullied student's back. It is designed to harm someone's social reputation and/or cause humiliation. Indirect bullying includes:
 - lying and spreading rumours
 - playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate
 - mimicking
 - encouraging others to socially exclude someone
 - damaging someone's social reputation and social acceptance
 - cyber-bullying, which involves the use of electronic means to humiliate and distress
 - Being excluded from activities, interaction, games and such

What Bullying is Not

Many distressing behaviours are not examples of bullying even though they are unpleasant and often require teacher intervention and management. There are three socially unpleasant situations that are often confused with bullying.

Mutual Conflict

In mutual conflict situations, there is an argument or disagreement between students but not an imbalance of power. Both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution to the problem. However, unresolved mutual conflict sometimes develops into a bullying situation with one person becoming targeted repeatedly for 'retaliation' in a one-sided way.

Social Rejection or Dislike

Unless the social rejection is directed towards someone specific and involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others, it is not bullying.

Single-episode acts of nastiness or meanness, or random acts of aggression or intimidation

Single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. If a student is verbally abused or pushed on one occasion they are not being bullied.

Nastiness or physical aggression that is directed towards many different students is not the same as bullying.

1.2 CYBER-BULLYING

Consists of covert, psychological bullying, conveyed through the electronic mediums such as cell-phones, web-logs and web-sites, on-line chat rooms, 'MUD' rooms (multi-user domains where individuals take on different characters) and Xangas (on-line personal profiles where some adolescents create lists of people they do not like). It is verbal (over the telephone or mobile phone), or written (flaming, threats, racial, sexual or homophobic harassment) using the various mediums available.

1.3 HARASSMENT

Is any verbal, physical or sexual conduct (including gestures) which has the intention to harm and is uninvited, unwelcome or offensive to a person.

2. **Why do we have a Policy on these?**

To provide a safe and friendly college environment for students and staff and to encourage care, courtesy and respect for others. All persons have a legal right to protection from harassment under the *Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act* and the *Victorian Equal Opportunity Act*.

3. **What are the effects of Bullying and Harassment?**

- poor health - anxiety, depression
- lower self esteem
- reduced study performance
- missed classes, social withdrawal
- reduced career prospects
- reduced resilience

3.1 **Am I bullying or harassing someone?**

If you are not sure about your behaviour you can:

- check it out by asking if it is offensive or inappropriate
- stop it
- apologise
- take it seriously if someone says they are feeling uncomfortable
- talk it over with an adviser or somebody who has an understanding of the issues

3.2 **What are some of the feelings victims of bullying or harassment may experience?**

- *"I will ignore it and it will go away."*

If anything it will make things worse - you will give the impression that you agree with the situation.

- *"I don't want to cause trouble."*

Most causes of harassment are sorted out quite simply. By speaking up, action can be taken to address the problem.

- *"Am I to blame?"*

Victims of harassment or bullying sometimes feel that it is their fault. Victims are made to feel guilty by the offender and often blame themselves. It is your right to have a safe environment free from harassment or bullying.

- *"Am I imagining things?"*

Often our hunches are correct. Rather than put up with nagging doubts, talk to someone about your feelings.

3.3 **Bullying or harassment can often make people feel:**

- embarrassed or ashamed
- offended or humiliated
- intimidated or frightened
- uncomfortable

4. **What should you do if you see another person being bullied or harassed?**

Tell the person that you witnessed the incident and advise them to report it to an appropriate person. However, if your friend is harassing another person, let them know that their behaviour is unacceptable. Bystanders who do nothing to stop bullying may be contributing to the problem by providing an audience for the bully.

4.1 **Bullying can involve**

- grabbing, aggressive staring, hitting, pinching kicking, pushing and shoving
- publicly excluding a person from your group
- knocking a person's books or belongings out of their hands or off their desk
- teasing a person because of their looks
- making repeated statements about a person

4.2 **Cyber-bullying can involve**

- *Flaming* – online fights using electronic messages with angry or vulgar messages
- *Harassment* – repeatedly sending nasty, mean and insulting messages
- *Denigration* – posting or sending gossip or rumours about a person to damage his/her reputation or friendships

- *Outing* – sharing someone’s secrets or embarrassing information or images online
- *Exclusion* – intentionally and cruelly excluding someone from an online group
- *Cyber-stalking* – repeated, intense harassment and denigration that includes threats or creates significant fear

4.3 Harassment is usually directed at a person because of their gender, race, creed or abilities – it can be subtle or explicit

Subtle (the most common) they include:

- offensive staring and leering
- unwanted comments about physical appearance and sexual preference
- racist or smutty comments or jokes
- questions about another person’s sexual activity
- persistent comments about a person’s private life or family
- physical contact e.g. purposely brushing up against another’s body
- offensive name calling

Explicit (obvious) they include:

- grabbing, aggressive hitting, pinching and shoving, etc
- unwelcome patting, touching, embracing
- repeated requests for dates, especially after refusal
- offensive gestures, jokes, comments, letters, phone calls or e-mail
- sexually and/or racially provocative remarks
- displays of sexually graphic material – pornography
- requests for sexual favours
- extreme forms of sexual harassment will lead to criminal prosecution

5. What do you do if you are being bullied or harassed?

- tell the person you don’t like what they are doing and you want them to stop
- discuss the matter with a Coordinator, Student Wellbeing Coordinator or peer mediator, peer support leader or a teacher that you feel comfortable with
- the school will take your concerns seriously - all complaints will be treated confidentially

5.1 How will your complaint be dealt with?

Your concerns will be taken seriously. All complaints will be treated confidentially. School procedures for responding to a student who bullies or harasses others are set out below.

Level 1

If the bullying or harassment incident is minor or first time occurrence, staff may elect to use one or more anti-bullying practices:

- stopping the bullying/re-statement of rules and consequences
- restorative questioning
- think time detention
- private conference
- shared control discussion

If the student does not take control over his/her behaviour, an Incident Report Form should be completed and submitted to either the student wellbeing coordinator, home room teacher, appropriate Year Level Manager, Assistant Principal or Campus Principal.

Level 2

If the bullying or harassment continues or in instances of severe bullying or harassing, a referral should be made to the Student Wellbeing Coordinator.

Here, the Student Wellbeing Coordinator (or another who has responsibility for student welfare) may:

- meet with the student to develop a behaviour contract using the college template
- provide discussion/mentoring of different social and emotional learning competencies including structured learning activities
- conduct a restorative conference separately with the perpetrator and “target”

Level 3

For 'at risk' students (many risk factors, few protective factors) whose bullying or harassing behaviour is severe and for other non-at risk students whose bullying or harassing and other aggressive behaviour is resistant to change, an individual 'strength building' plan should be developed by the Student Wellbeing Coordinator in consultation with student, parents/carers and teachers. Individual strength-building plans and associated interventions help connect the student to positive people, programs and actions in the community, school and home as well as develop the student's inner social and emotional strengths (skills, values). The common college template will be used by all wellbeing staff.

Level 4

Students whose severe bullying or harassing behaviour resists school efforts and represents a significant threat to the safety and wellbeing should be referred to outside agencies for evaluation. Student Wellbeing Coordinators will need to be familiar with those community agencies and organisations that can offer more intensive services to the student and student's family.

Note: The College may choose, if bullying or harassment persists or the initial incident is of such magnitude, that parents/carers will be contacted and consequences implemented consistent with the College's Student Code of Conduct. Furthermore, the College Principal may commence formal disciplinary action in line with '*Effective Schools are Engaging Schools - Student Engagement Policy Guidelines*' (DET) at any stage in the process depending on contextual information relating to the severity of the bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment.