Ashdale Secondary College

Preventing and Managing Bullying Policy

OBJECTIVE

This policy aims to prevent bullying behaviour, and enable the College to respond to bullying in an effective manner that promotes pro-social behaviour between students, by focusing on the College values of Respect, Cooperation, and Independence.

OUTCOMES

1. Teachers, students and parents are aware of the College's processes for preventing and responding to bullying.
2. Students who display bullying behaviour or experience bullying behaviour feel supported.
3. Students have strategies to improve resilience and increase pro-social behavior.

RATIONALE:

All members of our College community are committed to ensuring a safe and supportive environment where all members have the right to be respected and have a responsibility to respect each other. A whole of community approach is required to prevent and address bullying.

Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening.

Bullying can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time (for example, through sharing of digital records).

Single incidents and conflict or fights between peers, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.

Bullying involves:

- Verbal bullying: The repeated use of words to hurt or humiliate another individual or group. Verbal bullying includes using put-downs, name-calling, insulting someone about the way they look or behave, spreading rumours, and homophobic, racist or sexist comments.
- Emotional/Psychological Bullying: Includes repeated stalking, threats or implied threats, unwanted email or text messaging, abusive websites, threatening gestures, manipulation, emotional blackmail, and threats to an individual's reputation and sense of safety.
- Social/Relational Bullying: Involves repeatedly ostracising others by ignoring someone or keeping them out of conversations, convincing others to dislike or exclude an individual or group, spreading rumours, and sharing information or images that will have a harmful effect on the other person.
- Physical Bullying: Includes violent actions towards another person that involves hitting, pinching, biting, pushing, pulling, shoving, damaging or stealing someone's belongings, and unwanted touching.
- Cyber Bullying: Involves the use of technology to bully a person or group with the intent to hurt them socially, psychologically or even physically. Cyberbullying includes abusive texts and emails, hurtful messages, images or videos, imitating, excluding or humiliating others online, online gossip and chat.
- Bystanders: Bystanders are those who are aware of, or witnesses to, the bullying situation. An unhelpful bystander(s) is an individual or group of people who choose to promote, support or encourage bullying behaviours rather than intervening or seeking support. A supportive bystander (upstsander) will

use words and/or actions to support someone who is being bullied by intervening, getting teacher support or comforting them. All members of a school community need to know how to support those who are being bullied and how to discourage bullying behaviours.

Behaviours that **do not** constitute bullying include:

- Mutual arguments and disagreements (where there is no power imbalance)
- Not liking someone or a single act of social rejection
- One-off acts of unkindness, meanness or spite
- Isolated incidents of aggression, intimidation or violence

However, these conflicts will still be addressed and resolved.

Reference: Definition of Bullying | 2016 | Bullying No Way | www.bullyingnoway.gov.au

PREVENTION STRATEGIES:

Ashdale Secondary College provides our students and parent community with a number of programs, initiatives and engagement opportunities designed to foster positive relationships, including:

Curriculum – Students engage in relevant curriculum within and outside of the health program, including Cyber Safety curriculum, Social Emotional Learning for targeted groups, and Respectful Relationships curriculum.

Anti-Bullying Campaign Bullying No Way! – Bullying No Way! Is a government run organisation that supports schools in educating students through evidence-based research. As a College we use the resources to take a proactive approach to bullying education and prevention.

House System – All students and staff are aligned to one of our four College Houses (Curi, Gallileo, Tesla and Newton), designed to increase a sense of community, connection and belonging. Achievement and demonstration of College values are recognised at the yearly House Awards Ceremony.

Orientation and Targeted Transition Support – All year 7 students, and new to the College students in other year groups, participate in a structured transition and orientation program, including the outlining of college values and expectations for conduct at the College.

Co-Design – Student and community voice is regularly sought through various forums such as Student Leadership Group, Mentor Captains Program, Student Voice Forums, and regular Community Culture Surveys. These platforms provide the opportunity for students and the wider community to provide essential input into the continuing improvement of the College.

Guest Speakers and Presentations – All students have the opportunity to attend a range of guest speakers and presentations addressing safe social media usage and legal education talks (Surf Online Safe, Youthlaw).

Parent Information and Engagement Events – Parents are invited to regularly held information sessions such as Surf Online Safe, a suite of Teen Positive Parenting Program presentations, and Year 7 Transition evenings.

Reward and Engagement Activities – Student achievement, attendance, and pro-social behaviour are regularly acknowledged and rewarded with a variety of reward incursions, excursions, individual prizes, and fun events (lunchtime concerts, games, activities, BBQ's) run throughout the school term.

Preventing and Managing Bullying Policy – PROCEDURES FOR RESPONDING TO INCIDENTS

STAGE 1: STUDENTS

- Share feelings & concerns with others, including teachers
- Be supportive of each other. No-one deserves to be bullied
- Initially try to ignore the behaviour. If the bully has no response and is not encouraged then s/he may stop
- **Remember though, if this does not work then**:
  - Seek help. Find an adult you trust and ask for their help. They will be able to get help or give strategies to help respond and cope
  - Do not retaliate as this is rarely effective and often escalates the situation
  - Seek support from class teacher, HoLA, Year Coordinator, Student Services or the College administration

PARENTS

- Awareness that negative behaviour and social conflict is not necessarily bullying
- Reassure the child being bullied that the fault does not lie with them
- Support the child by listening, not interrogating
- Year Co-ordinator can support with understanding of bullying and ways to confront the issue
- Need to be careful not to ignore or give the impression that the issue is unimportant
- Support child to follow procedures and seek support from teacher, HoLA, Year Coordinator, Students Services or the College administration

Increase Support ⇩ ⇧ **Repair & Rebuild**

STAGE 2: TEACHERS

Use of Classroom Management Strategies (CMS)

- Building a positive relationship
- Creating a cohesive classroom group
- Letter, email or telephone call regarding concern(s)
- Establish, as a class, a clear set of class rules
- Outline expected behaviour (reinforce often)
- Establishing mutual respect
- Appropriate, engaging & relevant curriculum
- Letter, email or telephone commendations
- Resolve conflict with low key response
- Reward systems

Implement strategies

When a bullying incident is first reported:

- Meet with those students concerned individually (student who is displaying bullying behaviour and student who is being bullied)
- Complete COMPASS entries of student account of events and inform parents and Year Coordinator

Depending on the range of seriousness:

- Meeting with parent and student to implement Class Behaviour Contract

Refer to Stage 3 – HOLA support as required

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STAGE 3: HOLA

Support of classroom teacher in implementing CMS:

- Support classroom teacher with Restorative Practices (Shared Concern, Mediation, Safe Classroom Plan)
- Possible after school, lunch or recess detentions
- Formal parent contact– by this stage the parents must be contacted
  Recommend a phone call indicating a level of seriousness
- Document strategies used and teacher follow up required on COMPASS

Refer to Stage 4 – Student Services support as required

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STAGE 4: STUDENT SERVICES

Year Coordinator

Continued use of CMS and conflict resolution strategies:

- Formal meeting with parents
- Review meetings with students, and teachers if necessary
- Provide support to build resilience in students being bullied
- Case management and referral to necessary agencies (e.g., Student Services Support Team/External Support Services)

Program Coordinator

- Support with documented planning (i.e., IEP, IBP, IAMP, RMP, SMP)
- Coordinate and manage resolutions
- Manage referrals via internal and external agencies
- Follow up with Year Coordinator and teachers as necessary
- Parent contact and a formal meeting with a Deputy Principal if necessary
- Refer to State-wide Services (e.g., School Psychology Services, SSEN:BE) if required

STAGE 5: Program Coordinator/Deputy Principal/Principal

SERIOUS INCIDENTS

- **Physical violence**
- **Abusive behavior**
- **Threats and Intimidation**
- **Sexual Harassment**

SOCIAL MEDIA CONFLICTS (OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL)

If a complaint is received about social networking conflicts outside of school, parents of all students involved may be contacted and the school may advise parents / guardians to:

- Collect evidence of bullying, intimidation or any other offensive behaviour as hard copy. This may involve screen shots or printing out transcripts making sure that this information is time stamped.
- Deliver this material to the appropriate authorities such as the Western Australian Police Force (www.police.wa.gov.au or 131 444) or the eSafety commissioner (www.esafety.gov.au) for due processing.
- Pursue legal advice considering civil action as appropriate.

PREVENTING BULLYING IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY

What we can all do:

STUDENTS

- Treat all members of the school community with courtesy and respect.
- Understand and value the importance of tolerance and inclusion.
- Speak with a staff member if they experience or witness bullying at school.
- Work with staff and other students to restore effective relationships.
- Act as a supportive and pro-social bystander to maintain a safe learning and social environment.

STAFF

- Use positive classroom management strategies (CMS).
- Listen to, report and refer reports of bullying to appropriate staff.
- Be present, active and visible on duty while wearing a fluorescent vest.
- Educate students using curriculum content.
- communicate and liaise with families to reach a positive outcome.

PARENTS

- Have an understanding of bullying (and non-bullying) behaviour, and watch for signs of your child possibly experiencing or perpetrating bullying behaviours.
- Encourage your child to talk about it. This can be difficult but be patient and supportive.
- Listen calmly, and give your child reassurance.
- Work collaboratively with the school to address bullying concerns.
- Encourage your child to treat all members of the school community with courtesy and respect.
- If an incident occurs on social media or outside of school, keep evidence and report to police (www.police.gov.au or 131 444) and/or the eSafety Commissioner (www.esafety.gov.au)
- Attend Teen Positive Parenting Program and Surf Online Safe parent information sessions hosted by the College throughout the school year.

USEFUL RESOURCES

Bullying. No way! www.bullyingnoway.gov.au
eSafety Young People www.esafety.gov.au/young-people
eSafety Guide www.esafety.gov.au/key-issues/esafety-guide
Report Online Harm www.esafety.gov.au/report
Kids Helpline www.kidshelpline.com.au or 1800 55 1800
eHeadspace www.headspace.org.au
Youth Law Australia www.yla.org.au