

Whyalla High School Policies



Policy: Bullying and Harassment

date – September 2012

Background:

Bullying is a specific form of harassment which is repeated over time and involves a power imbalance between the parties involved. Bullying causes distress and affects well-being and reduces the capacity to learn and socialize. Bullying can be verbal, physical, social or psychological. It can be done in person, by manipulating others to take part, or by electronic means such as email, text-messages, Facebook or chat room.

Policy Statement

Underlying Principles

At Whyalla High School all members of our community have underlying principles which support our stand against bullying. Respect, care and consideration and co-operation are fundamental to providing an environment free from bullying and harassment, to this end:

- Cultural, social, and personal diversity are respected.
- All members of the school community are entitled to a safe learning and working environment
- Freedom from bullying and harassment are essential to the wellbeing of all school community members: staff, students, parents/caregivers and volunteers/visitors
- Each member of the school community has a responsibility to make a stand against bullying and harassment
- All members of the school community have 'duty of care' responsibility to act promptly on allegations or evidence of bullying and/or harassment
- Whole school procedures and practices educate and reinforce positive values and actions, and support both the targets of bullying and those who choose to bully.

Bullying Includes:

Direct or Overt bullying:

Physical:

- Hitting, kicking, punching, pushing, shoving, spitting, making rude gestures.
- Taking or damaging something that belongs to someone else.
- Forcing others to hand over food, money or something which belongs to them.
- Forcing another student to do something against their will.



Verbal:

- Name calling, teasing, threatening
- Making fun of someone because of their appearance, physical characteristic, cultural background or beliefs
- Making fun of someone's actions
- Coercing another student to do something against their will

Indirect or Covert bullying:

- Excluding others from the game or the group
- Spreading untrue stories about others
- Hiding books or belongings.
- Threatening gestures e.g. "looks"
- Graffiti
- Put downs
- Unwanted physical contact

Cyber bullying:

- Teasing, spreading rumours or sending unwanted messages using electronic methods such as:
 - email
 - Social network sites
 - Instant messaging
 - SMS
 - Prank calling

How to recognize a student being bullied

Some signs a child or young person is being bullied or harassed may be:

- Reduced ability to concentrate and learn
- Refusal to attend school, excuses not to go
- Unexplained cuts, bruises, or scratches
- Stolen, missing, lost or damaged possessions/clothing
- Headaches or stomach aches
- Asking for extra pocket money or food
- Acting out, tearfulness, sadness, lack of interest in usual activities
- Unwillingness to discuss or secrecy about their online communications (e.g. mobile phone Texts, Facebook comments)

Responsibilities

Responsibilities of Leadership Team Members

- Model courtesy and consideration of others
- Clarify system responses of bullying and harassment
- Alert Care Group teachers to their roles as promoters of timely and proactive discussion

- Ensure student diaries and other documents with policy statements are written in up-to-date terms
- Place information in the staff and student handbooks, newsletters, staff and student bulletins, highlight expectations at staff meetings, parent meetings and student assemblies.
- Ensure all reports acted upon

Responsibilities of Teachers

- Model courtesy and consideration of others
- Be aware of and watch for signs of bullying
- Be aware of the underlying principles of this policy and act to create a supportive teaching and learning environment, free of bullying and harassment
- Be aware of incidents of harassment in their classes and while on duty in the school
- Be aware of the serious nature of sexual harassment and the legal implications for this misconduct by any member of the school community
- Support students in developing confidence in making a stand against bullying and harassment
- Report all incidents of bullying so that those bullied can see that the school acts to prevent bullying
- Complete a bullying notification report form and pass it on to an appropriate year level co-ordinator.
- Advise Counsellor, DP of the impact of bullying on their students.

Staff will address issues related to bullying as an integrated part of the school curriculum, in line with the Child Protection Curriculum, Mind Matters, Student Well Being, TfEL and The Australian Curriculum.

Responsibilities of Students

- Treat everyone with courtesy
- Be aware of what can be interpreted as harassing or bullying comments and behaviours
- Be aware of the serious nature of sexual harassment and the legal implications for this misconduct by any member of the school community
- Tell a bullying person that he/she doesn't like the behaviour and to stop. If not confident, ask an adult to act on his/her behalf
- Take appropriate action when they observe others being bullied.
- Be compassionate, empathetic and understand the effects of bullying on individuals and groups in our society.
- Report incidents of bullying whether it happens to you or not.

Empathy, compassion and respect are words which require a great deal of discussion. Time will be allocated within the school curriculum to ensure a common understanding of their meaning and context.

Responsibilities of parents & caregivers

- Model courtesy and consideration of others.
- Know the signs of possible bullying and watch for them.
- Be aware of the range of bullying comments and behaviours.
- Speak to children about what constitutes bullying and harassment.
- Be aware of the serious nature of sexual harassment and the legal implications for this misconduct by any member of the school community.
- Inform the school of any incidents of bullying.
- Support the school in addressing bullying.
- Remind children and young adults that they are highly valued and assist them in maintaining a positive self worth.
- Discuss positive strategies rather than getting even.
- Be available and ready to listen to reports of bullying

Procedures

Reporting

Reporting Procedures

All acts of bullying and harassment will be recorded and acted upon. A bullying incident report form will be available to all staff, students and parents/ community members. The form when completed may be forwarded to a member of the leadership team for action.

A Student

A student who is bullied, sees bullying occurring or is privy to a bullying incident may follow the outlined procedures:

- Complete a bullying incident report form located outside the Counsellors Office and hand the form to the front office or give it to a teacher..
- Complete an online bullying report form as located WWW.whyallahs.com.au
- Report the incident directly to a staff member.
- Report the incident to a parent/ guardian/ friend who may then contact a member of staff.
- May have an advocate to support them.

A Member of Staff

A member of staff who is informed of an act of bullying will:

- Complete a bully report form and pass on to a school leader for investigation and resolution
- A member of staff who witnesses an act of bullying will:
 - Intervene to support those been bullied then complete all necessary forms.
- A staff member who has been bullied will:
 - Follow the school's staff grievance procedures

A Parent or Community Member

A Parent or Community Member who is told of, is subject to, or witnesses an act of bullying may contact the school:

- School phone:
- School Email: bullyalert@whyallahs.sa.edu.au
- Bullying Incident Online Report: www.whyallahs.com.au
- Report the incident in person to a member of staff who will follow staff procedures.
- May have an advocate to support them.

When to report?

All incidents of bullying should be reported as outlined above.

Upon receiving a report a school leader will:

Upon receiving a report a school leader will enact the school bullying and harassment procedures.

- Ask the student if he/she wants to make a formal complaint of harassment to be recorded
- Offer support through advocacy, counselling or parent/caregiver
- Collect and record documentary evidence about the incident.
- Meet with the suspected bully to gather and record further evidence.
- Contact the parents or guardians of the students involved.
- In the specific case of perceived sexual, racial or religious harassment the school will investigate the matter which may include:
 - Asking for detailed information about what happened.
 - Examining any offensive material that has been shown, sent or given to you, which may also be confiscated/handed to the police
 - Gathering information from others at the school.
 - In the case of suspected criminal behaviour, such as an assault, a report to the police will be made

Intervention Strategies

When a school leader receives a report concerning an incident of bullying, a range of interventions is available to assist the response process, including;

- Counselling students who have been bullied.
- Talking with parents or caregivers about situations which arise at school.
- Informing the students about their role as bystanders.
- Ensuring that all staff know how to address bullying in respectful ways
- Enacting strategies for those who bully others including:
 - Parent / Guardian Meetings
 - Social skills programmes including the use of outside agencies
 - Counselling interventions
 - Restricted recreation time
 - Withdrawal from class
 - Internal Suspension
 - Suspension
 - Exclusion

Programmes may be made available to the targets of repeated bullying in an effort to equip them with a range of strategies which allow them some agency over their communication and relationships with others. Ongoing counselling and support structures will be put in place to support both the targets of bullying and those who bully.

A member of the leadership team may discuss an appropriate line of action with staff and other leaders. It is imperative that a range of considerations be undertaken when considering further actions in response to bullying. It is not equitable to treat all students the same and due consideration must be made to the impending dangers of suspension, exclusion and other punitive consequences.

Post-intervention strategies include:

- Monitoring the situation between all parties to ensure that their safety and well being are maintained
- Talking with parents or caregivers about strategies to address bullying behaviours.
- Reviewing and evaluating behaviour codes and policies.

Whyalla High School focuses on a range of preventative strategies embedded within its curriculum, these include:

- Using the curriculum to teach students about respectful relationships, civics and citizenship and as part of an integrated curriculum focusing on ethical behaviour.
 - Educating for Rights and Responsibilities
 - Year 8: In the Year 8 Care Group sessions anti-harassment topics will be delivered.
 - Year 9: In the Year 9 Care group sessions anti-harassment topics will be delivered.
 - Year 10: Students are led through preparation for Work Experience, in sessions defining workplace harassment and grievance procedures
- Developing programs to help students participate and have a say in their learning.
- Teaching students about violence prevention, conflict resolution, and problem-solving strategies.
- Develop policies which promote student safety.
- Teaching for and about diversity.
- Providing professional learning for staff in collaboration with local and state wide agencies.

Training and Development

All staff will be presented with information with respect to bullying and harassment, training in Mind Matters, The Child Protection Curriculum, Teaching for Effective Learning, The Student Well Being Document, The Australian Curriculum and Bullying Intervention Strategies will be an ongoing focus.

Review Date: - September 2013

Review to be managed by: Student Counsellor

Appendix 1

Whyalla High School Bullying Incident Report Form

I. REPORT

1. Name of Person Filing Report: _____

(Note: Reports may be made anonymously, but no disciplinary action will be taken against an alleged aggressor solely on the basis of an anonymous report.)

2. Tick whether you are the: Target of Behaviour Reporter (Not Target)

3. Check whether you are a: Student Staff member (specify role) _____
 Parent Administrator
 Other (specify) _____

4. Information about the incident:

Name of Target: _____

Name of Suspected Bully: _____

Date(s) of Incident(s): _____

Time when incident(s) occurred: _____

Location of incident(s): _____

5. Witnesses (List people who saw the incident or have information about it):

Name: _____ Student Staff Other _____

Name: _____ Student Staff Other _____

Name: _____ Student Staff Other _____

6. Describe the details of the incident (including names of people involved, what occurred, and what each person did and said, including specific words used).

Please use additional space on back if necessary.

FOR ADMINISTRATIVE USE ONLY

7. Signature of Person Filing this Report:Date:.....

8. Form Given to:.....Position:.....Date:.....

Signature:Date Received:

9. Action Taken

Date.....Signed.....

Bulling Incident Follow Up Report

1. Name of Person Filing Report: _____

2. Names of those associated with report

3. School Members

4. Parents or Guardians

5. Support Agencies

6. SAPOL

7. Actions Taken

Name.....

Signature.....Date.....