

Bullying Prevention Policy

Overview

All schools since 2006 have been required to have a Bullying Prevention Policy. Bullying is recognised in State and Federal Legislation and is against the law. This is in line with our college values of Inclusion, Innovation and Integrity.

This document outlines our core beliefs that harassment and bullying is not acceptable and will not be tolerated.

Scope

This policy applies to all staff, students, parents and community members of Whyalla Secondary College (WSC).

Detail

Bullying

Bullying is repeated verbal, physical or social behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons. Conflict or fights between equals and single incidents are not regarded as bullying. Bullying in any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders.

All forms of bullying, harassment and cyber bullying will not be tolerated at Whyalla Secondary College. Students found to be committing such acts will be dealt with under the terms of the WSC Learning Expectations to support student success document.

Examples of bullying:

- Physical: hitting, pushing, touching, grabbing, looks, stares, facial expressions, gestures, spitting, taking or damaging property.
- Verbal or written: spoken or written insults, threats, suggestive comments, name-calling, unfair criticism, spreading rumours.
- Cyber: using e-mail, voice and text messaging, social networking sites, photographic and video images.
- Graffiti: using pictures, tags or words.
- Social: forming groups to leave out, ignore and disrespect, negative influencing, encouraging or organising someone else to be involved in any type of bullying or harassment.

Harassment

Harassment is behaviour that targets an individual or group due to their identity, race, culture or ethnic origin, religion, physical characteristics, gender, sexual orientation; marital, parenting or economic status, age, and/or ability or disability, and that offends, humiliates, intimidates or creates a hostile environment. Harassment may be an ongoing pattern of behaviour, or it may be a single act.

Cyber-bullying

Cyber-bullying is bullying which uses digital technology/information and communication as a means of victimising others. It involves the use of service such as - e-mail, chat room discussion groups, instant messaging, web pages or SMS (text messaging) - with the intention of harming another person. Examples include communications that seek to intimidate, control, manipulate, put down or humiliate the recipient.

Reporting Bullying or Harassment

What to do about bullying:

Inform

- Your Subject Teacher
- SSO Wellbeing
- SSO Student Services
- Caregroup Teacher
- MIND Mentor
- Wellbeing Leader
- Assistant Principals
- Deputy Principal
- Principal
- Parent/caregiver
- Trusted adult

How to report bullying:

- Make an appointment with one of the people listed above. This can be done via the main Student Services or your Learning Community Student Services or in person.
- Email the school using the following address: dl.1035.info@schools.sa.edu.au.

If you are a bystander to bullying, you have a responsibility to report it.

When to report bullying:

- Report bullying to one of the people listed above as soon as it occurs
- Do not ignore it
- When bullying is ignored, it may become worse

How to recognise when a student is being harassed or bullied:

Students who are being bullied or harassed may not talk about it with their teachers, friends or families. They may be afraid that it will make things worse or that they are “dobbing”. A change in behaviour in students may be a signal that they are being bullied or have some other concern.

Some signs that a student is being bullied may be:

- Unexplained cuts, bruises or scratches
- Damaged or ripped clothing
- Vague headaches or stomach aches
- Refusal to go to school
- Asking for extra money or food
- Tearfulness, anxiety or difficulty sleeping
- ‘hiding’ information on mobile phones, emails or social networking sites

Actions

What we do about incidents of bullying at WSC;

- We will listen and talk to the person who has been bullied.
- We will discuss possible strategies for helping to deal with the bullying.
- We will negotiate what further follow up is required.

This may include:

- Supporting the person being bullied to deal with the bullying themselves. This may include some longer-term counselling to help them determine appropriate strategies.
- Having a restorative conversation with the person who has done the bullying. This will focus on helping that person to develop a sense of empathy for the person they have bullied. This may include some longer-term counselling to help them improve their relationships with other people. An informal warning also occurs at this stage. This means they have been given an opportunity to change their behaviour without further consequences being enacted.
- Issuing a formal warning to the person doing the bullying. This means that their parents/caregivers will be informed and invited to be a part of the process to help their child to change their behaviour. A “Harassment Warning” letter will accompany this warning, which will outline the possible future consequences if the person doing the bullying does not change their behaviour.

If the person doing the bullying does not change their behaviour, possible consequences include:

- Removal from the yard during recess and lunchtime and/or exclusion from social activities
- Suspension from school
- Referral to other Department or Government agencies
- Exclusion from school

It is important to note that these steps may change. At WSC, we use a Case Management approach, according to the frequency and severity of incidents and personal circumstances.

Under the Regulations pursuant to the Education Act, principals can suspend or exclude students from school if they act in a manner that threatens the safety or wellbeing of a student or member of staff or other person associated with the school (including by sexually harassing, racially vilifying, verbally abusing or bullying that person).

Principals can use these Regulations for incidents that occur off-site and/or out of school hours, if another student’s safety or wellbeing has been threatened, in particular during cases of cyber bullying and violence.

Prevention strategies include:

- Inviting guests, such as the Sammy D Foundation and SAPOL, to present to our students and support their understanding of bullying and being an effective bystander
- Using the curriculum to teach students about respectful relationships, civics and citizenship
- Developing student voice opportunities to help students participate and have a say in their learning
- Teaching students about violence prevention, conflict resolution, anger management and problem solving and developing policies which promote student safety
- Teaching for and about diversity
- Providing professional learning for staff

Intervention strategies include:

- Counselling students who have been bullied
- Talking with parents or caregivers about the situation
- Putting consequences in place for those who bully others
- Teaching students to be responsible bystanders
- Ensuring that all staff know how to address bullying effectively and respectfully

Post-intervention strategies include:

- Monitoring the situation between the students to ensure that their safety and wellbeing are maintained
- Follow up counselling for students who are victims or perpetrators of bullying to ensure they feel safe at school and remain connected to the school following an incident
- Talking with parents or caregivers about strategies
- Reviewing and evaluating behaviour codes, procedures and policies to make sure they are effective

Definitions

SMS – Short Messaging Service

WSC – Whyalla Secondary College

SSO – School Services Officer

SAPOL – South Australian Police

Supporting Information

[WSC Respectful Behaviour Policy](#)

[DfE School Behaviour Support Policy](#)

[Harassment Warning Letter](#)

[Case Management Key College Process Statement](#)