

Anti-Bullying Policy



Rationale

Glen Waverley Secondary College does not tolerate bullying or harassment in any form. All members of the College Community are committed to ensuring a safe and caring environment which promotes personal growth and positive self-esteem for all.

Aims

- The College encourages the active participation of all College community members in developing and maintaining a safe school community where diversity is valued
- To actively support young people to develop understanding and skills to keep themselves and others safe.

What is 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.

- It is an abuse of power
- It can be planned and organised or it may be unintentional
- Individuals or groups may be involved.

There are three broad categories of bullying:

1. Direct physical bullying e.g. physical violence, demands for money or possessions, damaging property.
2. Direct verbal bullying e.g. name calling, insults, gender based or racist remarks, verbal abuse.
3. Indirect bullying – e.g. spreading rumours, playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate, mimicking, social exclusion, damaging someone's reputation and social acceptance, cyber-bullying which involves the use of email, text messages or social media to humiliate and distress.

Some examples of bullying may include:

- Any form of physical violence such as hitting, pushing or spitting on others.
- Any form of verbal aggression, such as threats of violence, "put-downs", teasing, name calling
- Any form of non-verbal intimidation, such as invasion of personal space, leaving someone out of activities on purpose, giving people 'looks' or verbal signs aimed at intimidation, cyber bullying - using email, text messages or social media to humiliate and distress.

What is harassment?

Harassment is any behaviour, verbal or physical which is:

- unwelcome
- degrading, intrusive, violent, abusive, sexual in nature

- offensive to a person.

Some examples of harassment may include:

- unwelcome physical contact
- unwelcome questions about a person's private life
- comments about a person's sexuality or sex life
- sexual jokes
- wolf whistles, cat calls or unwelcome noises
- graffiti about people
- offensive pictures and written materials
- suggestive or offensive comments about a person's appearance or lifestyle
- racist comments.

Some signs that a child is being bullied may include:

- An unwillingness or refusal to go to school
- Feeling ill in the mornings
- Doing poorly in their school work
- Becoming withdrawn, starting to stammer, lacking confidence
- Suffering sleep difficulties, feeling ill in the mornings
- Asking for money or starting to steal (to pay the bully)
- Having unexplained bruises, cuts, scratches or damaged clothes or property
- Becoming aggressive and unreasonable
- Refusing to talk about what's wrong.

Implementation

- Students and staff have the expectation that they will be free of harassment of any kind when attending school.
- The College community has an involvement in preventing and reducing bullying. This means that everyone should report incidents of bullying.
- The College will provide a safe environment for students, teachers, other staff and visitors.
- The College will provide a supportive environment which encourages positive relationships between students, their peers and teachers.
- Implement College policies in a consistent and fair manner.
- Respond to all reports of bullying by students.
- Model appropriate behaviour on a consistent basis.
- Use Restorative Practices to assist students to develop skills for resolving conflict and dealing with bullying behaviour.
- All reports of bullying will be taken seriously and thoroughly investigated.
- As a School Community we will not allow cases of bullying and harassment to go unreported but will speak up. This requires staff to:
 - Be role models in word and action at all times
 - Be observant of signs of distress or suspected incidents of bullying or harassment
 - Make efforts to remove occasions for bullying or harassment by active patrolling during supervision duty
 - Arrive at class on time and move promptly between lessons

- Take steps to help victims and remove sources of distress without placing the victim at further risk
 - Report suspected incidents to the House Leader, Sub School Directors or the Assistant Principals, who will follow the designated procedures
 - Be committed to developing positive, supportive and psychologically, safe classrooms.
- This requires students to:
 - Refuse to be involved in any bullying situation. Being part of a group which is bullying someone else or being a bystander watching someone being bullied is just as bad as being the bully
 - If students are aware of bullying and harassment, report the incident or suspected incident to Director of Sub-School, House Leader/Year level Coordinator, or any other member of Staff, or encourage and support the victim to report the incident
 - make it clear that the person's behaviour is causing distress and request him/her to stop
 - do not retaliate
 - stay cool and walk away calmly
 - report the incident to the Head of Sub-School, House Leader/Year Level Coordinator or a member of staff with whom you feel comfortable, who will follow the designated procedures
 - speak to your parents
 - seek peer mediation and/or peer support (Year 7).
 - The College recommends that parents:
 - Watch for signs of distress in their child, e.g. unwillingness to attend school, a pattern of headaches, missing equipment, requests for extra money, damaged clothes, bruising, etc.
 - Encourage their child to tell a staff member about any incident of bullying or harassment
 - Inform the college if bullying or harassment is suspected, even if their own child is not directly affected
 - Assist their child to develop positive strategies and do not encourage their child to retaliate
 - Do not directly approach any other students who they believe may be involved in bullying their child or the parents of other students. This will make the situation worse
 - Work with the College to solve the problem. The College takes their responsibilities in relation to bullying seriously and will have more success when parents work with the college to establish a plan for dealing with the current situation and future bullying incidents
 - Be willing to attend interviews at the College if their child is involved in any bullying or harassment incident.

References:

<https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/>

(The GWSC Anti-bullying Policy should be read in conjunction with the Community Code of Conduct)

Review

- This policy will be reviewed every three years.
- Ratified by School Council February 2018.
- Next review February 2021.