

KELMSCOTT SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Bullying & Harassment Policy

Rationale

All members of the Kelmscott SHS community have the right to be respected and to enjoy a safe and supportive environment. The school will endeavour to address all bullying issues occurring within the school context in a timely and effective manner.

Violence, harassment and bullying affect everyone not just the bullies and victims. They affect other children who may witness violence and aggression and the distress of the victim. These behaviours damage the atmosphere of a class and the climate of the school. Violence, harassment and bullying, both verbal and physical, will not be tolerated in this school. It is everyone's responsibility to prevent these behaviours happening in order to develop a school-wide ethos of cooperation.

The school will react firmly and promptly to all identified threats and acts of violence, harassment and bullying. There are a range of sanctions against these behaviours available depending on the seriousness of the situation. Some of these include discussions with parents and students together, referral to senior staff for further action, withdrawal of favoured activities, isolation from other students during lunch time, counselling and mediation with bullies/victims, and suspension from school.

The school will support students who are being bullied at the school, class and individual levels by a wide range of strategies including detailed records, contacting parents, enforcement of rules, problem solving and conflict resolution processes, appropriate modelling, curriculum, and supervision, safe areas, counselling, mediation, discussion, and role-play. Records will be obtained of students with a history of violence, their behaviours will be monitored closely with appropriate parental contact and sanctions. Staff will be informed.

Everyone will be involved in preventing violence, harassment and bullying, including parents, teachers and students. Support includes being aware of bullying actions through discussion and anti-bully days, refraining from bullying behaviours ourselves, reporting bullies, warning off offenders, encouraging bullied students, mediating, and by contacting and gaining support of parents.

Overview

Violence, harassment and bullying are wilful conscious desires to hurt, threaten or frighten. These acts can be physical, verbal and/or written in nature and can include property damage, assault, racial and sexual harassment, rude gestures, spreading rumours, negative comments designed to humiliate, online harassment, intimidation and extortion. It must be recognised that harassment and violence, harassment and bullying are ongoing in nature and that bullies are reinforced by another's pain, fear and humiliation. Some students are both victim and bully.

Bullying may involve:

- **verbal bullying:** The repeated use of words to hurt or humiliate another individual or group. Verbal bullying may include using negative comments, insulting language, name-calling, swearing, and racist or sexist comments.
- **emotional/psychological bullying:** May include 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.
- **relational bullying:** May involve repeatedly ostracizing others by leaving them out or convincing others to exclude or reject another individual or group, making up or spreading rumours, and sharing or threatening to share another's personal information.
- **physical bullying:** May include repetitive low level hitting, kicking, pinching, pushing, tripping, 'ganging up', unwanted physical or sexual touching and damage to personal property. More serious violent behaviours are not necessarily treated as bullying and may be better managed through the school's discipline processes.
- **cyber bullying:** May involve the use of information and communication technologies such as email, text messages, facebook, instant messaging and websites to engage in the bullying of other individuals or groups. This technology provides an alternative means for verbal, written, relational and psychological forms of bullying.

- **Written bullying:** May include notes, online messages or harassment in any written form.

What is not bullying:

- While fighting between two students is a serious concern involving violence, it is not bullying unless it is recurring and deliberate abuse of power over a period of time.
- Teasing, done in mutual fun and jest, where all individuals are involved and feel capable of responding, is not bullying. However constant, continual teasing that is done in a mean and hurtful way, is bullying.

Policy Details

Kelmscott SHS will support students who are being bullied at the school, class and individual levels.

1. School Level

- The school will maintain an anti-bullying ethos by valuing and supporting people and modelling anti-bullying behaviours in relationships between teachers and students.
- Be actively concerned about violence, harassment and bullying for students travelling to and from school.
- Use MAZE for recording incidents of violence, harassment and bullying in a consistent way that allows for monitoring of such behaviour.
- Survey perceptions of bullying behaviour to develop a profile of the extent of the problem.
- Providing good supervision during breaks and intervening quickly in bullying situations.
- Providing a special 'safe' areas during break.
- Discuss appropriate standards of behaviour and school rules with all students.
- Use Student Support Services where necessary to help the victim and perpetrator.
- Involve the police and other agencies such as necessary.
- Let the school community know that violence, harassment and bullying are unacceptable ways for solving disputes.
- Provision of curriculum that addresses the issues of violence, harassment and bullying by training students in peaceful methods of conflict resolution.
- Provision of a Code of Conduct to all students, community and staff members which outlines acceptable and unacceptable behaviours.

2. Class Level

- Create classroom rules addressing bullying behaviour.
- Utilise class discussion, where relevant, to raise awareness about the impact of bullying, for dealing with bullying behaviours, for 'neutral' students to counteract bullies, to stop passive approval of bullying and to stop bullying
- Reinforce appropriate behaviour, such as defending bullied students and standing up to aggressors, when safe to do so.
- Follow through with logical consequences for undesirable behaviours.
- Use cooperative learning strategies to promote cooperation rather than competition between students and to encourage students to be more accepting and positive towards each other.
- Involvement in whole school strategies to address bullying.

3. Individual Level

The focus at the individual level is changing the behaviour or situation of individual students identified as bullies or victims. Strategies may include:

- Discussing violence, harassment and bullying.
- Improving the self-esteem of victims through social skills and assertion programs.
- Addressing the underlying issues through discussion, and where necessary, referral to other agencies.
- Taking violence, harassment and bullying seriously, with detailed investigations.

This will involve:-

- Meeting those concerned individually - both bully and victim must write down an explanation of the event(s).
- Using parental and peer group support to actively discourage violence, harassment and bullying.
- Breaking up bully groups and gangs where necessary and providing alternative constructive activities.
- Immediate ongoing parental contact.
- Helping victims develop assertive skills and positive strategies to combat violence, harassment and bullying.
- Maintaining separate year areas.

Pastoral Advice

It is everyone's responsibility to prevent violence, harassment and bullying. Here are some suggestions to facilitate a safe positive school environment.

Teachers:

- Be **on time** for duty and **actively supervise** while on duty (this includes entering the toilets in your area).
- Be punctual to class.
- Do not tolerate any form of violence, harassment and bullying.
- Develop mediation skills to deal with violence, harassment and bullying.
- Model positive behaviour and use positive discipline strategies which are fair, firm and non-violent.
- When concerned about bullying, identify bullies / victims and refer them to Student Services or the Deputy Principal.
- Deal with violence, harassment and bullying and associated safety issues as part of the curriculum. Include communication and problem solving skills such as negotiation, mediation, conflict resolution and assertiveness.
- Ensure positive behaviour is acknowledged and rewarded.
- Encourage students to understand, respect and care for others.

Parents:

- Set an example. Be firm but not aggressive in setting consistent behaviour limits and be positive in the things you say and do.
- It is always a good idea to listen and take an active interest in your child's social life and chat about friends and their activities in and out of school. As well as keeping up to date with your child's friendships, you may well learn of disagreements or difficulties.
- Actively monitor their social media.
- Encourage your child to accept and tolerate differences in others.
- Watch for signs of distress in your children. There could be an unwillingness to attend school, onset of headaches, and stomach aches. Bicycles or equipment may go missing, or there may be requests for extra pocket money, damaged clothing or books, or bruising. There are many reasons why your child may be unsettled at school, therefore contact the school if you are concerned.
- If you suspect your child is being harassed or bullied, inform the school immediately and request an interview with your relevant Year Coordinator or member of staff who can deal with your concern.
- If you suspect that your child is a bully, contact the school immediately and arrange a discussion with your relevant Year Coordinator or member of staff who can deal with your concern.
- Keep a written record of all violence, harassment and bullying incidents including details such as who, what, when, where etc.
- In the cases of physical violence do not encourage your child to hit back. It could make matters worse. Encourage your child to tell a staff member straight away.
- Build your child's self-confidence by recognising and affirming his/her positive qualities. Value them for who they are.

Students With A History of Violence

The school recognises its duty of care to protect its students from violence. It will seek to meet this responsibility by the following means:-

- Obtaining information about students with a history of aggression or violence by contacting previous schools.
- Learning about behaviours which activate violent behaviour and informing teachers.
- Suggesting to teachers strategies for avoiding confrontation such as removal from peers, obtaining help, wait time, or time out in order to avoid triggering violent confrontations.
- Making staff aware of relevant cultural or other background information.
- Making students aware of behavioural expectations and ways in which they must modify their behaviours to meet school's standards. Clarify and stress the logical consequences for misbehaviour.

Students....

If you are being bullied:-

- Try not to show that you are upset as this increases violence, harassment and bullying behaviour. However, this is difficult.
- Walk away quickly and confidently from a group of bullies - even if you don't feel that way inside.
- Try being assertive - speak firmly.
- If you are different in any way, be proud of it - it's good to be an individual.
- Avoid being alone in places where violence, harassment and bullying happens.
- Discuss the problem with a member of staff as soon as possible.

Ways you can help stop violence, harassment and bullying:-

- Don't stand by and watch - get help.
- Show that you and your friends disapprove.
- Give sympathy and support to students who may be threatened, harassed or bullied.
- Be careful about teasing or personal remarks - imagine how you might feel.
- If you know of serious violence, harassment and bullying, tell a trusted member of staff. The victim may be too scared or lonely to tell.

We all can:

- Respect ourselves and others.
- Respect the rights of others.
- Work to create a pleasant school environment for everyone.
- Learn to tolerate and accept individual differences.
- Support the school's policy on violence, harassment and bullying.

Referrals and Information Services

- www.bullyingnoway.gov.au
- www.cybersmartkids.com.au
- www.kidshelp.com.au
- www.lifeline.org.au

Parenting WA Line: 1800 654 432

Kids Help Line: 1800 551 800

Lifeline: 131 114