

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

RATIONALE:

Schools should be safe places for everyone; students, teachers and other staff, families and members of the local community. The involvement and commitment of the whole school community is required to achieve a culture in which safe and respectful schools are everyone's concern and responsibility.

Wallan Secondary College will provide a positive culture where bullying is not accepted, and in so doing, all will have the right of respect from others, the right to learn or to teach, and a right to feel safe and secure in their school environment.

DEFINITION:

Bullying is when someone, or a group of people, deliberately upset or hurt another person or damage their property, reputation or social acceptance on more than one occasion. There is an imbalance of power in incidents of bullying with the bully or bullies having more power at the time due to age, size, status or other reasons.

Bullying may occur because of perceived differences such as culture, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, ability or disability, religion, body size and physical appearance, age or economic status. Bullying may be motivated by jealousy, distrust, fear, misunderstanding or lack of knowledge. It can continue over time, is often hidden from adults and will probably continue if the correct action is not taken.

Types of bullying

There are four broad types of bullying:

Direct physical bullying: includes hitting, kicking, tripping, pinching and pushing or damaging property.

Direct verbal bullying: includes name calling, insults, teasing, intimidation, homophobic or racist remarks.

Indirect bullying: is often harder to recognise and can be carried out behind the bullied person's back. It is designed to harm someone's social reputation and/or cause humiliation. Indirect bullying includes:

- lying and spreading rumours
- playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate
- mimicking
- encouraging others to socially exclude someone
- damaging someone's social reputation or social acceptance.

Cyber bullying: is direct verbal or indirect bullying behaviours using digital technologies. This includes harassment via a mobile phone (including all digital devices), setting up a defamatory personal website or deliberately excluding someone from social networking spaces.

(Source: Department of Education and Training. Building Respectful and Safe School: A Resource for School Communities. 2010 pp. 6)

Aims:

- Reinforce within the school community what bullying is, and the fact that it is unacceptable.
- Everyone within the school community is encouraged to be alert to signs and evidence of bullying and to have a responsibility to report it to staff whether as observer or victim.
- To ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are followed up appropriately and that support is given to both victims and perpetrators.
- To seek parental and peer-group support and co-operation at all times.
- To further embed Restorative Practices with the intention of developing positive relationships in line with the Values of Wallan Secondary College.

Implementation:

- Parents, teachers, students and the community will be aware of the school's position on bullying by adopting a four-phase approach to bullying.

A. Primary Prevention:

- Professional development for staff relating to bullying, harassment and the strategies that counter-acts them.
- Community awareness and consultation relating to bullying, its characteristics and the school's programs and response.
- To provide Cyber Safety programs for all Year 7 and 9 students
- To provide programs that incorporate Restorative Practices that promote the development resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving skills.
- A bullying survey and yard survey will be administered and acted upon annually.
- Positive, Respectful Relationships program will be implemented across the school in Term 1 each year.
- Each Pastoral Care teacher to clarify at the start of each year the school policy on bullying.
- Student Leaders, staff and students to promote the philosophy of 'Hands Off'.
- Lunchtime activities available to students at lunch breaks to promote inclusion and sense of belonging
- To build and maintain the use of Pastoral Care program to education students on the benefits of a positive learning culture.

B. Early Intervention:

- Promote the reporting of bullying incidents by students which involve themselves or others
- Classroom teachers on a regular basis reminding students to report incidents, and that reporting is not "dobbing".
- Encourage parents to contact school if they become aware of a problem.
- Recognition and reward for positive behaviour and resolution of problems.
- School Council will be informed of all bullying incidents resulting in suspension.
- Restorative conversations offered to students upon first becoming aware of bullying type behaviour.
- Restorative classroom conferencing available for staff to address class wide issues.

C. Intervention:

- Those identified through the Bullying Survey will be counselled.
- Once identified; bully, victim and witnesses spoken with, and all incidents or allegations of bullying will be fully investigated and documented.
- Both bully and victim offered counselling, support and possible referral to relevant services or professionals.
- Parents will be contacted and consequences implemented consistent with the school's Student Engagement and Well Being Policy and School Values.
- The Taking Positive Action form will be filled out by students involved.
- Restorative Community Conferencing will be available to both the bully and the victim in an attempt to restore positive
- Bullying can be reported to the police

D. Post Violation:

- Consequences may involve:-
 - exclusion from class.
 - exclusion from yard.
 - school suspension.
 - withdrawal of privileges; including sports days and excursions.
 - ongoing counselling from appropriate agency for both victim and bully.
 - Expulsion.
- Ongoing monitoring of identified bullies.
- Rewards for positive behaviour.
- Where possible a Restorative Approach will be utilised as this approach offers and opportunity for positive relationships and reintegration to the school community.

Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed with staff, students, parents and community input as part of the school's three year review cycle.

Date of next review: Feb 2022

Wallan Secondary College is committed to the protection and wellbeing of all students whilst participating in school activities both during and outside school hours. Staff have responsibility for building and maintaining a child safe environment. This responsibility extends to the identification and timely response to all concerns with regard the safety of any student of our College.

This policy was ratified by the Wallan Secondary College Council on	18/02/2020
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