



STAFF ANTI-BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY

BASIC BELIEFS

Bullying occurs 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.

RATIONALE

Wangaratta High School will provide a positive culture where bullying is not accepted, and in doing so, the School Community 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 at all times. "Staff" refers to all Education Support workers and teachers.

TYPES OF BULLYING

Physical Bullying

Any intentional and unwelcome use of physical contact or deliberate property damage.

Verbal Bullying

Use of language to threaten or hurt i.e. Put downs.

Exclusion Bullying

Deliberately leaving someone out of a friendship group or activity to cause feelings of non-acceptance.

Racial/Religious Bullying

Antagonism or prejudice directed towards someone on the basis of their race and/or religion.

Sexual Bullying

Any unwelcome comments, attention, contact or behaviour of a sexual nature that is humiliating, offensive or intimidating.

Gesture Bullying

Use of non-verbal signs to intimidate or threaten someone.

Cyber Bullying

Use of technological devices to spread rumours, intimidate, sexually harass or spread fear; for example, the inappropriate use of social media, such as Facebook.

Bullying is not:

Mutual conflict: involves an argument or disagreement between people but not an imbalance of power. Both parties may be upset and usually both want a resolution. Unresolved mutual conflict can develop into bullying if one of the parties targets the other repeatedly in retaliation.

Social rejection or dislike: is not bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.

Single-episode acts: Single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression will not be ignored or condoned as these are unacceptable behaviours. However, single episode acts of nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. For example, if someone is verbally abused they are not being bullied. Nastiness that is directed towards many different people is not the same as bullying.

Human resource procedures: Performance review or disciplinary procedures conducted as per DET requirements. E.g., Informal performance conversations or formal disciplinary conduct conversations.

Harassment is:

Any verbal, physical or sexual conduct (including gestures) which is uninvited, unwelcome or offensive to a person.

AIMS

- To reinforce within the School workforce what bullying is, and the fact that it is unacceptable.
- To alert everyone within the School workforce of the signs and evidence of bullying and to ensure bullying is reported to the Principal Team whether a person is an observer or a victim.
- To ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are followed up accordingly.

IMPLEMENTATION

- Our School has adopted a zero-tolerance position on bullying.
- Our School will adopt a three-phase approach to bullying.

1. Primary Prevention

- Our School aims to combat bullying to provide a safe and secure workplace.
- Professional development for staff relating to bullying, harassment and proven counter measures.
- The School will have a clear program and response, complemented by clear processes for reporting suspected bullying.

2. Intervention

- All incidents of bullying or unacceptable behaviour must be reported to the Principal Team. Alternatively, a report may be made to the HSR representative.
- All incidents or allegations will be consistently investigated and documented. Normal practice is that the allegations will be investigated by a member of the Principal Team. However, if there is a possible perception of a conflict of interest then advice will be sought from Regional Office. Depending upon the nature of each incident, they may be also be reported to WorkSafe Victoria and/or reported to the Conduct and Ethics Unit.
- The School may contact support professionals such as DET Employee and Engagement Division or Employee Assistance Program (EAP).
- Both victims and those alleged to have bullying behaviour will be offered counselling and support.
- Regional Office will provide support as appropriate, and the Principal will monitor the investigation and review the situation until matters are appropriately resolved.
- Consequences of repetitive or serious incidents may include disciplinary actions and/or criminal charges,

3. Post Incident

- It is important that appropriate strategies are put in place after the incident has been resolved for all parties involved. Appropriate strategies may include:
 - conciliation meetings between all parties
 - ongoing monitoring of those involved

RELATED POLICIES

Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy

https://www.whs.vic.edu.au/uploaded_files/media/whsantibullyingharassmentpolicy.pdf

Equal Opportunity and Discrimination Policy-Employees

<https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/equal-opportunity/policy-and-guidelines>

Complaints Policy

https://www.whs.vic.edu.au/uploaded_files/media/complaints_policy_2019.pdf

REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was updated on June 2021, scheduled for review in 2024.

This policy was ratified by School Council on 17th June, 2021