



Swinburne Senior Secondary College

Bullying and harassment policy

Policy Statement

SSSC is committed to providing a safe and caring environment and culture that enables positive relationships to be formed amongst all students and staff and which encourages self-esteem, cooperation, personal growth and a positive attitude to learning and teaching. **Bullying and harassment in any of its forms will not be tolerated.**

Definitions

Bullying is repeated oppression, physical or psychological, of a less powerful person by a more powerful person or group.

Cyber-bullying consists of covert, psychological bullying, conveyed through the electronic mediums such as mobile phones, web-logs and web-sites, on-line chat rooms, 'MUD' rooms (multi-user domains where individuals take on different characters) and Xangas (on-line personal profiles where some adolescents create lists of people they do not like). It is verbal (over the telephone or mobile phone), or written (flaming, threats, racial, sexual or homophobic harassment) using the various mediums available.

Harassment is any verbal, physical or sexual conduct (including gestures) that is uninvited, unwelcome or offensive to a person.

Guidelines

No form of bullying is acceptable. A school wide approach will be taken to deal with bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment in a consistent and systematic way. Bullying and harassment will be addressed, individual differences will be respected and students and staff will be enabled and supported in their pursuit of learning and teaching.

Clear definitions of bullying, cyber-bullying and harassment will be published to facilitate a shared understanding.

Everyone in the school community needs to be alert to signs and evidence of bullying and has a responsibility to report to staff whether as an observer or victim.

All reported incidents of bullying will be followed up and support given to both victim and perpetrator. Parental and peer-group support and co-operation will be sought all times.

Implementation

All new students and staff will be informed of policy and practices at the commencement of their time at the school. A summary of the policy will be included in the Student Enrolment Package while new staff will receive extensive documentation as part of the school's induction process. The College

will organise preventative curriculum programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving.

Professional development will be provided for staff relating to bullying, cyber bullying and harassment and proven strategies to address these issues in classrooms will be shared with all staff. The school leadership team and the teachers will work together to ensure the safety of all school members in situations of bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment, by thoroughly investigating all complaints while respecting the need for confidentiality, notifying parents/carers and planning interventions. Staff programs will occur periodically to keep staff informed of current issues/strategies for dealing with these issues.

If a teacher feels a student is at serious and imminent risk from bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment then it is their professional duty to pass on the information to an appropriate person and document their action in order to ensure appropriate support for the student.

All complaints of harassment will be heard in confidence and taken seriously. Constructive strategies to deal with harassment will include: education in coping strategies; assertiveness training; problem solving and social skills; counselling and behaviour modification. These strategies will be employed in preference to punitive sanctions and negative consequences.

There will be disciplinary consequences, covering a range of strategies, for those in breach of the Bullying and Harassment Policy. The College's Restorative Practices are outlined in the Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy. The Principal or their nominee will provide disciplinary consequences including suspension in accordance with Department of Education and Training (DET) guidelines.

Links

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy.

Evaluation and Review

This policy is for annual review.

Certification

This policy was adopted at the School Council meeting held at

_____ on the _____ day of _____

Principal

School Council President

Endorsed by School Council and effective as of: (insert date)