UPPER YARRA
SECONDARY COLLEGE
www.uysc.vic.edu.au

# Bullying Prevention Policy
(Including Cyberbullying)

## Rationale

Upper Yarra Secondary College is committed to providing a safe and respectful learning environment where bullying will not be tolerated. Our school will model our school values of Respect, Responsibility, Resilience and Excellence so as to provide a positive culture where bullying is not accepted. 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 the school environment.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- explain the definition of bullying so that there is shared understanding amongst all members of the Upper Yarra Secondary College community
- make clear that no form of bullying at Upper Yarra Secondary College will be tolerated
- outline the strategies and programs in place at Upper Yarra Secondary College to build a positive school culture and prevent bullying behaviour
- ask that everyone in our school community be alert to signs and evidence of bullying behaviour, and understands the importance of reporting.
- ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are appropriately investigated and addressed
- ensure that support is provided to students who may be affected by bullying behaviour (including targets, bystanders, witnesses and students engaging in bullying behaviour)
- seek parental and peer group support in addressing and preventing bullying behaviour at Upper Yarra Secondary College

When responding to bullying behaviour, Upper Yarra Secondary College aims to:

- be proportionate, consistent and responsive
- find a constructive solution for everyone
- stop the bullying from happening again
- restore the relationships between the students involved.

Upper Yarra Secondary College acknowledges that school staff owe a duty of care to students to take reasonable steps to reduce the risk of reasonably foreseeable harm, which can include harm that may be caused by bullying behaviour.

A clear policy on bullying prevention (including cyberbullying) and harassment will inform the community that *bullying and harassment in any of its forms will not be tolerated.*

This Bullying Prevention Policy should be read in conjunction with the Upper Yarra Secondary College Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy, Inclusion and Diversity Policy and Code of Conduct.

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions. It also applies to bullying behaviour between students that occurs outside of school hours, where the behaviour impacts on student wellbeing and safety at school.

# Scope

This policy addresses how Upper Yarra Secondary College aims to prevent, address and respond to student bullying behaviour. Upper Yarra Secondary College recognises that there are many other types of inappropriate student behaviours that do not meet the definition of bullying which are also unacceptable at our school. These other inappropriate behaviours will be managed in accordance with our *Student Code of Conduct*, *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy* and *Inclusion and Diversity policy*.

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions. It also applies to bullying behaviour between students that occurs outside of school hours, where the behaviour impacts on student wellbeing and safety at school.

# Aims

- To actively create and maintain a caring environment in which the experience of teaching and learning is enhanced for students and staff, in an atmosphere which is secure, caring and positive to all.
- All members of the school community have rights and responsibilities. It is expected that students, staff and parents will behave in a careful and safe way and will treat people and property with respect and consideration.
- To develop self-discipline and responsibility for students' own behaviour through a focus on positive relationships and expectations and through the shared responsibility of home, school and community.

# Definitions

## Bullying

In 2018 the Education Council of the Council of Australian Governments endorsed the following definition of bullying for use by all Australian schools:

- *Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening.*
- *Bullying can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time (for example, through sharing of digital records)*
- *Bullying of any form or for any reason can have immediate, medium and long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders. Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.*

Bullying has three main features:

- It involves a misuse of power in a relationship
- It is ongoing and repeated, and
- It involves behaviours that can cause harm.

**There are four main types of bullying behaviour:**

- Physical – examples include hitting, pushing, shoving or intimidating or otherwise physically hurting another person, damaging or stealing their belongings. It includes threats of violence.
- Verbal/written – examples include name-calling or insulting someone about an attribute, quality or personal characteristic.
- Social (sometimes called relational or emotional bullying) – examples include deliberately excluding someone, spreading rumours, sharing information that will have a harmful effect on the other person and/or damaging a person's social reputation or social acceptance.

- Cyberbullying – any form of bullying behaviour that occurs online or via a mobile device. It can be verbal or written, and can include threats of violence as well as images, videos and/or audio.

Bullying can be a form of racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia or other type of social prejudice when the behaviour is targeted at an individual or group because of a personal characteristic, such as race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability.

For further information about bullying, refer to: Bully Stoppers and the Department's Bullying Prevention and Response policy on the Policy and Advisory Library.

## Other distressing and inappropriate behaviours

Many distressing and inappropriate behaviours may not constitute bullying even though they are unpleasant. Students who are involved in or who witness any distressing and inappropriate behaviours should report their concerns to school staff and our school will follow the Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy and this Bullying Prevention Policy where the behaviour constitutes bullying.

***Mutual conflict*** involves an argument or disagreement between people with no imbalance of power. In incidents of mutual conflict, generally, both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution to the issue. 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*** of nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. However, single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression are not acceptable behaviours at our school and may have serious consequences for students engaging in this behaviour. Upper Yarra Secondary College will use its Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy to guide a response to single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression.

***Harassment*** is language or actions that are demeaning, offensive or intimidating to a person. It can take many forms, including sexual harassment and disability harassment.

***Discrimination*** is behaviour that treats someone unfavourably because of a personal characteristic (for example, race, religious belief or activity, disability, sex or intersex status, gender identity or sexual orientation).

Discrimination, harassment, and any other inappropriate behaviour is not tolerated at our school and there may be serious consequences for students engaging in this behaviour. This includes any form of racism, religious or disability discrimination, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, or any other behaviour that targets an individual or group. Further information about discrimination and harassment, including definitions, is set out in our Inclusion and Diversity Policy.

# Bullying Prevention

Upper Yarra Secondary College has a number of programs and strategies in place to build a positive and inclusive school culture and relationships to promote wellbeing. We strive to foster a school culture that prevents bullying behaviour by modelling, encouraging and teaching behaviour that demonstrates acceptance, kindness and respect. These behaviours are modelled in our school values of Respect, Responsibility, Resilience and Excellence.

Bullying prevention at Upper Yarra secondary College is proactive and is supported by research that indicates that a whole school, multifaceted approach is the most effect way to prevent and address bullying.

At our school:

- We identify and implement evidence-based programs and initiatives from the Schools Mental Health Menu that are relevant to preventing and addressing bullying and help us to build a positive and inclusive school climate. We have a positive school environment that provides safety, security and support for students and promotes positive relationships and wellbeing. Education in coping strategies; assertiveness

training; problem solving and social skills; counselling and behaviour modification. These strategies will be employed in preference to punitive and negative consequences when appropriate.

- We strive to build strong partnerships between the school, families and the broader community that means all members work together to ensure the safety of students.
- We participate in the Respectful Relationships initiative, which aims to embed a culture of respect and equality across our school.
- We celebrate the diverse backgrounds of members of our school community and teach multicultural education, including Aboriginal History, to promote mutual respect and social cohesion.
- We participate in the Safe Schools program to help us foster a safe environment that is supportive and inclusive of LGBTIQA+ students.
- Teachers are encouraged to incorporate classroom management strategies that discourage bullying and promote positive behaviour.
- A range of year level incursions and programs are planned for each year to raise awareness about bullying and its impacts.
- In the classroom, our social and emotional learning curriculum teaches students what constitutes bullying and how to respond to bullying behaviour assertively. This promotes resilience, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving.
- We promote upstander behaviour as a way of empowering our students to positively and safely take appropriate action when they see or hear of a peer being bullied.
- The Peer Support Program and the Peer Mediation program encourage positive relationships between students in different year levels. We seek to empower students to be confident communicators and to resolve conflict in a non-aggressive and constructive way.
- Students are encouraged to look out for each other and to talk to teachers and older peers about any bullying they have experienced or witnessed.
- We participate in the National Day of Action against Bullying and Violence.
- We have implemented a Corridor of Kindness where we post examples of kind behaviours and words.

For further information about our engagement and wellbeing initiatives, please see our Student Wellbeing and Engagement policy.

# Incident Response

## Reporting concerns to Upper Yarra Secondary College

Bullying is not tolerated at our school. We ensure bullying behaviour is identified and addressed with appropriate and proportionate consequences. All bullying complaints will be taken seriously and responded to sensitively.

Students who may be experiencing bullying behaviour, or students who have witnessed bullying behaviour, are encouraged to report their concerns to school staff or another trusted adult as soon as possible.

Our ability to effectively reduce and eliminate bullying behaviour is greatly affected by students and/or parents and carers reporting concerning behaviour as soon as possible, so that the responses implemented by Upper Yarra Secondary College are timely and appropriate in the circumstances.

We encourage students to speak to their Support Group teacher, Team Leader or Wellbeing Team member. However, students are welcome to discuss their concerns with any trusted member of staff that they feel comfortable with.

Parents or carers who develop concerns that their child is involved in or has witnessed bullying behaviour at Upper Yarra secondary College should contact their relevant Team Leader on 59 671 877.

## Investigations

When notified of alleged bullying behaviour, school staff are required to:

1. record the details of the allegations in the Student Chronicle entry under “General Bullying Observation” for the relevant student/s.
2. inform the relevant Team Leader, Support Group Teacher, Student Wellbeing Team, Assistant Principal or Principal.

The Team Leader is responsible for investigating allegations of bullying in a timely and sensitive manner. To appropriately investigate an allegation of bullying, the Team Leader may:

- speak to the those involved in the allegations, including the target/s, the students allegedly engaging in bullying behaviour/s and any witnesses to the incidents
- speak to the parents/carers of the students involved
- speak to the teachers of the students involved
- take detailed notes of all discussions for future reference
- obtain written statements from all or any of the above.

All communications with the Team Leader in the course of investigating an allegation of bullying will be managed sensitively. Investigations will be completed as quickly as possible to allow for the behaviours to be addressed in a timely manner.

The objective of completing a thorough investigation into the circumstances of alleged bullying behaviour is to determine the nature of the conduct and the students involved. A thorough understanding of the alleged bullying will inform staff about how to most effectively implement an appropriate response to that behaviour.

Serious bullying, including serious cyberbullying, is a criminal offence and may be referred to Victoria Police. For more information, see: Brodie’s Law.

## Responses to bullying behaviours

When the Team Leader has sufficient information to understand the circumstances of the alleged bullying and the students involved, a number of strategies may be implemented to address the behaviour and support affected students in consultation with the Student Wellbeing Team, teachers, SSS, Assistant Principal, Principal, Department of Education and Training specialist staff.

There are a number of factors that will be considered when determining the most appropriate response to the behaviour. When making a decision about how to respond to bullying behaviour, Upper Yarra Secondary College will consider:

- the age, maturity and individual circumstances of the students involved
- the severity and frequency of the bullying, and the impact it has had on the target student
- whether the student/s engaging in bullying behaviour have displayed similar behaviour before
- whether the bullying took place in a group or one-to-one context
- whether the students engaging in bullying behaviour demonstrates insight or remorse for their behaviour
- the alleged motive of the behaviour

The Team Leader may implement all, or some of the following responses to bullying behaviours:

- Offer wellbeing support, including referral to Student Wellbeing Team, SSS, or external providers to:
    - the target student or students
    - the students engaging in the bullying behaviour
    - affected students, including witnesses and/or friends of the target student.
- Facilitate a restorative practice meeting with all or some of the students involved. The objective of restorative practice is to repair relationships that have been damaged by bringing about a sense of

remorse and restorative action on the part of the person who has bullied someone and forgiveness by the person who has been bullied.

- Facilitate a mediation between some or all of the students involved to help to encourage students to take responsibility for their behaviour and explore underlying reasons for conflict or grievance. Mediation is only suitable if all students are involved voluntarily and demonstrate a willingness to engage in the mediation process.
- Facilitate a process using the Support Group Method, involving the target student(s), the students engaging in bullying behaviour and a group of students who are likely to be supportive of the target(s).
- Facilitate a Student Support Group meeting and/or Behaviour Support Plan for affected students.
- Prepare a Safety Plan or Individual Management Plan restricting contact between target and students engaging in bullying behaviour.
- Provide discussion and/or mentoring for different social and emotional learning competencies of the students involved, including curriculum through Respectful Relationships, Resilience Project or Student Mentor Program.
- Monitor the behaviour of the students involved for an appropriate time and take follow up action if necessary.
- Implement cohort, year group or whole school targeted strategies to reinforce positive behaviours, for example Man Cave, Flourish Girls, Community Police Cybersafe Program.
- Implement proportionate disciplinary consequences for the students engaging in bullying behaviour, which may include removal of privileges, detention, suspension and/or expulsion consistent with our Student Wellbeing and Engagement policy, the Ministerial Order on Suspensions and Expulsions and any other relevant Department policy.

Upper Yarra Secondary College understands the importance of monitoring and following up on the progress of students who have been involved in or affected by bullying behaviour. Where appropriate, school staff will also endeavour to provide parents and carers with updates on the management of bullying incidents.

Team Leaders are responsible for maintaining up to date records of the investigation of and responses to bullying behaviour.

# Communication

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Made available on our school website
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in our staff handbook/manual
- Discussed at staff briefings/meetings as required
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Included in student diaries so that it is easily accessible to parents, carers and students
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Included as annual reference in school newsletter
- Discussed at student forums/through communication tools
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

# Appendices

- Appendix A: Anti-Bullying (including cyber-bullying) and Anti-Harassment Procedures
- Appendix B: Reporting on Incident of Bullying / Harassment – Template
- Appendix C: Formal Referral of Student who has bullied / harassed other to Student Welfare Coordinator

# Further Information and Resources

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Parent Complaints policy
- Duty of Care Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy

Our school also follows Department of Education and Training policy relating to bullying including:

- Bullying Prevention and Response
- Cybersafety and Responsible Use of Digital Technologies
- Equal Opportunity and Human Rights - Students
- LGBTIQA+ Student Support Policy

The following websites and resources provide useful information on prevention and responding to bullying, as well as supporting students who have been the target of bullying behaviours:

- Bully Stoppers
- Report racism or religious discrimination in schools
- Kids Helpline
- ReachOut Australia
- Lifeline
- Bullying. No way!
- Student Wellbeing Hub
- eSafety Commissioner
- Australian Student Wellbeing Framework

http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/studentmanagement/Pages/studentengagementguidance.aspx

http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/social/physed/pages/repsectdiv.aspx

https://www.education.gov.au/national-safe-schools-framework-0

# Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed on a two yearly cycle, or earlier as required, following analysis of school data on reported incidents of, and responses to bullying to ensure that the policy remains up to date, practical and effective.

Data to inform this review will be collected through:

- discussion and consultation with students and parent/carers
- regular student, staff and parent/carer surveys. (may use the Bullystoppers survey templates to support this)
- assessment of school-based data, including the number of reported incidents of bullying in each year group and the effectiveness of the responses implemented
- Attitudes to School Survey
- Parent Opinion Survey

Proposed amendments to this policy will be discussed with student representative groups (SRC), parents groups, school council and Team Leaders.

| | |
|---|---|
| Policy last reviewed | November 2024 |
| Consultation<br><br>All consultation for this policy occurred in November 2024 and was endorsed by School Council on 28th November 2024. | School Council<br><br>Wellbeing team<br><br>Team Leaders<br><br>Senior Leaders |
| Approved by | Principal: Scott Tully<br><br>School Council President: Lincoln Wilson |
| Next scheduled review date | November 2026 |

# Appendix A

# Anti-Bullying, (including Cyber- Bullying) Anti-Harassment Procedures

## What are Bullying, Cyber-Bullying and Harassment?

## Bullying

### Definition of Bullying

- *Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening.*
- *Bullying can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time (for example, through sharing of digital records)*
- *Bullying of any form or for any reason can have immediate, medium and long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders. Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.*

Bullying has three main features:

- It involves a misuse of power in a relationship
- It is ongoing and repeated, and
- It involves behaviours that can cause harm.

### Types of Bullying

There are three broad categories of bullying:

- **Direct physical bullying:** e.g. hitting, tripping, and pushing or intimidating others and includes damaging property of others.
- **Direct verbal bullying:** e.g. name calling, insults, homophobic or racist remarks, verbal abuse.
- **Indirect bullying:** this form of bullying is harder to recognise and often carried out behind the bullied student'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 and social acceptance
- cyber-bullying, which involves the use of electronic means to humiliate and distress

### Covert bullying

Covert bullying can be very difficult for someone outside of the interaction to identify. It can include hand gestures and threatening looks, whispering, excluding or turning your back on a person, restricting where a person can sit and who they can talk with. Social bullying (spreading rumours, manipulation of relationships, excluding, isolating) is often covert bullying.

### Social bullying

This is sometimes called relational or emotional bullying, and includes deliberately excluding someone, spreading rumours, sharing information that will have a harmful effect on the other person and/or damaging a person's social reputation or social acceptance.

## Cyber-Bullying

### Definition of Cyber-Bullying

***Cyberbullying*** is direct or indirect bullying behaviours using digital technology. For example via a mobile device, computers, chat rooms, email, social media, etc. It can be verbal, written and include images, video and/or audio.

Consists of covert, psychological bullying, conveyed through the electronic mediums such as cell-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

### Definition of Harassment

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

## What Bullying is not

Many distressing behaviours are not examples of bullying even though they are unpleasant and often require teacher intervention and management. There are three socially unpleasant situations that are often confused with bullying:

### Mutual Conflict

In mutual conflict situations, there is an argument or disagreement between students but not an imbalance of power. Both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution to the problem. However, unresolved mutual conflict sometimes develops into a bullying situation with one person becoming targeted repeatedly for 'retaliation' in a one-sided way.

### Social Rejection or Dislike

Unless the social rejection is directed towards someone specific and involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others, it is not bullying.

### Single-episode acts of nastiness or meanness, or random acts of aggression or intimidation

- Single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. If a student is verbally abused or pushed on one occasion they are not being bullied.
- Nastiness or physical aggression that is directed towards many different students is not the same as bullying.

# Why do we have a Policy on these?

To provide a safe and friendly college environment for students and staff and to encourage care, courtesy and respect for others. All persons have a legal right to protection from harassment under the *Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act* and the *Victorian Equal Opportunity Act*.

# What are the effects of Bullying and Harassment?

- poor health - anxiety, depression
- lower self esteem
- reduced study performance
- missed classes, social withdrawal
- reduced career prospects

## Am I bullying or harassing someone?

If you are not sure about your behaviour you can:

- check it out by asking if it is offensive or inappropriate
- stop it
- apologise
- take it seriously if someone says they are feeling uncomfortable
- talk it over with an adviser or somebody who has an understanding of the issues

## What are some of the feelings victims of bullying or harassment may experience?

- ***"I will ignore it and it will go away."*** If anything it will make things worse - you will give the impression that you agree with the situation.
- ***"I don't want to cause trouble."*** Most causes of harassment are sorted out quite simply. By speaking up, action can be taken to address the problem.
- ***"Am I to blame?"*** Victims of harassment or bullying sometimes feel that it is their fault. Victims are made to feel guilty by the offender and often blame themselves. It is your right to have a safe environment free from harassment or bullying.
- ***"Am I imagining things?"*** Often our hunches are correct. Rather than put up with nagging doubts, talk to someone about your feelings.

## Bullying or harassment can often make people feel:

- embarrassed or ashamed
- offended or humiliated
- intimidated or frightened
- uncomfortable

# What should you do if you see another person being Bullied or Harassed?

Tell the person that you witnessed the incident and advise them to report it to an appropriate person. However, if your friend is harassing another person, let them know that their behaviour is unacceptable.

Bystanders who do nothing to stop bullying may be contributing to the problem by providing an audience for the bully.

## Bullying can involve

- grabbing, aggressive staring, hitting, pinching kicking, pushing and shoving
- publicly excluding a person from your group
- knocking a person's books or belongings out of their hands or off their desk
- teasing a person because of their looks

## Cyber-bullying can involve

- ***Flaming:*** online fights using electronic messages with angry or vulgar messages
- ***Harassment:*** repeatedly sending nasty, mean and insulting messages
- ***Denigration:*** posting or sending gossip or rumours about a person to damage his/her reputation or friendships
- ***Outing:*** sharing someone's secrets or embarrassing information or images online
- ***Exclusion:*** intentionally and cruelly excluding someone from an online group
- ***Cyber-stalking:*** repeated, intense harassment and denigration that includes threats or creates significant fear

## Harassment is usually directed at a person because of their gender, race, creed or abilities: it can be subtle or explicit

**Subtle** *(the most common)* they include:

- offensive staring and leering
- unwanted comments about physical appearance and sexual preference
- racist or smutty comments or jokes
- questions about another's sexual activity
- persistent comments about a person's private life or family
- physical contact e.g. purposely brushing up against another's body
- offensive name calling

**Explicit** *(obvious)* they include:

- grabbing, aggressive hitting, pinching and shoving, etc.
- unwelcome patting, touching, embracing
- repeated requests for dates, especially after refusal
- offensive gestures, jokes, comments, letters, phone calls or e-mail
- sexually and/or racially provocative remarks

- displays of sexually graphic material – pornography
- requests for sexual favours
- extreme forms of sexual harassment will lead to criminal prosecution

# What do you do if you are being bullied or harassed?

- tell the person you don't like what they are doing and you want them to stop
- Bullying complaints will be taken seriously and responded to sensitively and confidently at our school.
- Students who may be experiencing bullying behaviour, or students who have witnessed bullying behaviour, are encouraged to report their concerns to school staff as soon as possible.
- Our ability to effectively reduce and eliminate bullying behaviour is greatly affected by students and/or parents and carers reporting concerning behaviour as soon as possible, so that the responses implemented by Upper Yarra Secondary College are timely and appropriate in the circumstances.
- We encourage students to speak to their Team Leader, Wellbeing Team member, Support Group Teacher or any trusted member of staff.
- Parents or carers who develop concerns that their child is involved in, or has witnessed bullying behaviour at Upper Yarra Secondary College should contact their child's relevant Team Leader at the College on 59 671877 or via their email.

## How will your complaint be dealt with?

- Your concerns will be taken seriously. All complaints will be treated confidentially.
- School procedures for responding to a student who bullies or harasses others are set out below.

When notified of alleged bullying behaviour, school staff are required to:

1. Record the details of the allegations in Compass and on the Appendix B: Reporting Bullying Incident form and on Compass.
2. Inform the relevant Team Leader, Student Wellbeing Team, Assistant Principal or Principal.

The Team Leader is responsible for investigating allegations of bullying in a timely and sensitive manner. To appropriately investigate an allegation of bullying, the Team Leader may:

- speak to the those involved in the allegations, including the target/s, the students allegedly engaging in bullying behaviour/s and any witnesses to the incidents
- speak to the parents of the students involved
- speak to the teachers of the students involved
- take detailed notes of all discussions for future reference
- obtain written statements from all or any of the above.

All communications with the Team Leader in the course of investigating an allegation of bullying will be managed sensitively. Investigations will be completed as quickly as possible to allow for the behaviours to be addressed in a timely manner.

- The objective of completing a thorough investigation into the circumstances of alleged bullying behaviour is to determine the nature of the conduct and the students involved. A thorough understanding of the alleged bullying will inform staff about how to most effectively implement an appropriate response to that behaviour.
- Serious bullying, including serious cyberbullying, is a criminal offence and may be referred to Victoria Police. For more information, see: Brodie's Law.

# Responses to bullying behaviours

When the Team Leader has sufficient information to understand the circumstances of the alleged bullying and the students involved, a number of strategies may be implemented to address the behaviour and support affected students in consultation with the Student Wellbeing Team, teachers, SSS, Assistant Principal, Principal, Department of Education and Training specialist staff etc.

## Level 1

If the bullying or harassment incident is minor or first time occurrence, teachers may elect to use one or more anti-bullying practices:

- stopping the bullying/re-statement of rules and consequences
- restorative questioning
- think time detention
- private conference
- shared control discussion

If the student does not take control over his/her behaviour, an Incident Report Form should be completed and submitted to the Sub School Leader or Assistant Principal.

## Level 2

If the bullying or harassment continues, or in instances of severe bullying or harassing, a referral should be made to the Student Welfare person and Team Leader/Sub School Leader.

Here, the Student Welfare person (or another who has responsibility for student welfare) may:

- meet with the student to develop a behaviour contract
- provide discussion/mentoring of different social and emotional learning competencies including structured learning activities
- conduct a restorative conference separately with the perpetrator and “target”
- meet with or contact parents/carers with the student

## Level 3

For ‘at risk’ students (many risk factors, few protective factors) whose bullying or harassing behaviour is severe and for other non-at risk students whose bullying or harassing and other aggressive behaviour is resistant to change, an individual ‘strength building’ plan should be developed by the student welfare person or team leader in consultation with student, parents/carers and teachers. Individual strength-building plans and associated interventions help connect the student to positive people, programs and actions in the community, school and home as well as develop the student’s inner social and emotional strengths (skills, values).

## Level 4

Students whose severe bullying or harassing behaviour resists school efforts and represents a significant threat to the safety and wellbeing should be referred to outside agencies for evaluation. Student Welfare Coordinators will need to be familiar with those community agencies and organisations that can offer more intensive services to the student and student’s family, through a “No Wrong Door” referred or CAMHS (if appropriate) in consultation with the family.

# Note:

- The school may choose, if bullying or harassment persists or the initial incident is of such magnitude, that parents/carers will be contacted and consequences implemented consistent with the school's Student Code of Conduct. Furthermore, the principal may commence formal disciplinary action in line with '***Effective Schools are Engaging Schools - Student Engagement Policy Guidelines'*** *(DET)* at any stage in the process depending on contextual information relating to the severity of the bullying (including-cyber bullying) and harassment.
- The Principal/Assistant Principal may also log this incident on the DET Emergency Management System
- All incidents and responses will be recorded on the school Student Management Tool – Compass Online

# Appendix B

## Reporting on an Incident of Bullying/Harassment

(to be recorded on Compass School Manager)

**Staff member recording incident:** _____

**Date:** ___/_____/_____/

**Name of student(s)** who appears to have instigated bullying:

_____
_____
_____
_____

**Year/Class:** _____

**Name(s) of target(s):**_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

**Name(s) of witnesses:**_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

**Did you observe the incident?** YES ☐ NO ☐

**If 'NO' who reported the incident to you?**

_____

**Brief description of incident (what was allegedly said or done to the student who appears to have been bullied?**

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

**What form(s) of bullying took place?**

Verbal☐ Physical☐ Indirect☐ Cyber☐

Other☐

Please
detail:_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

**Was the incident of bullying:** Mild☐ Severe ☐

**Describe how you responded (Did you use a school anti-bullying practice?)**

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

**Describe how student responded to your intervention:**

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

**Where / when / time incident took place:**

**Location:**_____

**When**: before school ☐ recess ☐ lunch ☐ in class ☐ after school ☐

**Time**: : am/pm

**Date incident took place**: / /_____

**Additional comments:**

# Appendix C

## Formal Referral of Student who has bullied / harassed other to Student Welfare for Appropriate Support/Response

This form may be completed by a Classroom Teacher, Year Level Coordinator, School Administrator or Student Welfare/Wellbeing Coordinator.

Staff member recording incident:

Date: /_____/_____ Position:

Name of student being referred:

Year/Class:

History of incident(s) of bullying (dates, description)

Have parents/guardians been notified? YES ☐ NO ☐

If 'NO' why not?

Have they attended a conference? YES ☐ NO ☐

If 'NO' why not?

Are they willing to participate? YES ☐ NO ☐

If 'NO' why not?

What appears to be the reason for the student's bullying behaviour (family, peer, school, personal, other)?

What practices have been tried?

Impact

What has been the student's attitude towards student(s) who have been targets? (e.g., any concern or remorse expressed)?

A brief description of academic performance of student over past year or more.

Distinguishing 'at risk' factors of student (e.g. limited English: economic disadvantage of family; ADHD). History of being a bully.