

Anti Bullying Policy

At Baldivis Secondary College, students are encouraged to be considerate, courteous, responsible and respectful. In accepting that each person is unique, staff and students do not tolerate bullying in any form.

This policy seeks to further enhance the college tone by addressing the problems of teasing and bullying, ensuring that all members of the school community feel safe and happy in the school environment.

There are two components to effective anti bullying practice; preventing bullying incidents and responding to them. The most effective interventions are sustained over the long-term, developed with staff, students, parents/carers as partners, monitored and evaluated as circumstances change, and supported by a college ethos that inhibits bullying and promotes empathy and respect for diversity. Research shows that the most effective anti bullying policy will usually include a range of strategies that can be adapted to suit particular incidents and be built around a whole college approach.

Guidelines

- Baldivis Secondary College is committed to providing a safe environment for its students, staff and parents as defined in the National Safe Schools Framework.
- Bullying in any form will not be tolerated;
- The college will seek to support all parties involved in bullying, including the victim, the perpetrator and the bystanders;
- The college will develop resilience in its students through formal teaching, its pastoral care program and its college structures; and
- Where appropriate, the college will work with the parents of the students involved in bullying to ensure that all parties are safe.

Associated Policies/Documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Respect Policy;
- Behaviour Management Policy;
- Duty of Care Policy;
- Personal Electronic Devices Policy;
- Computer Network & Acceptable Use Policy; and
- National Safe Schools Framework.

Definition;

Bullying is any persistent behaviour which harms other people who do not have the skills or resources to counter this behaviour.

Bullying is:

- Persistent physical aggression – hitting, spitting, throwing stones, use of weapons; and/or;
- Persistent verbal aggression – name calling, rumour spreading, taunting, teasing; and/or
- Persistent gesture aggression – threatening and obscene gestures; and/or

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- Persistent extortion aggression – stand over tactics and threats and may involve demands for money or property; and/or
- Persistent exclusion aggression – isolating others from the group.

Bullying is not one-off incidents of name calling, exclusion, physical harm, etc.

Possible Impacts of Bullying

A person who is a victim of bullying may display any number of the following:

- being frightened of walking to or from college;
- changing their usual route to and from college;
- not wanting to take public transport;
- begging parent/guardian to drive them to college when they would normally walk or ride;
- feeling ill in the mornings;
- wanting to skip college;
- a decline in quality of college work;
- coming home regularly with books or clothes destroyed;
- coming home hungry because the bully has taken their lunch;
- becoming withdrawn, starting stammering, lacking in confidence;
- becoming distressed and anxious;
- stopping eating;
- attempting or threatening suicide;
- crying themselves to sleep; having nightmares;
- keeping "losing" possessions or money;
- asking for money or stealing money (to pay the bully);
- refusing to say what's wrong due to fear of retaliation by the bully;
- having unexplained bruises, scratches or cuts;
- beginning to bully other children;
- becoming unreasonable and aggressive; and/or
- giving implausible excuses to explain any of the above

Rationale:

If we allow teasing and bullying to go unchecked we give the students a clear message that teachers don't care and that bullying is acceptable. potentially, our college would become an unhappy and stressful environment, not just for the students who suffer at the hands of the bully, but also for the peers who witness bullying and feel threatened and helpless.

Teachers too are then burdened by the ensuing pressures. We cannot condone bullying and we are actively involved in tackling this problem, seeking the support of the students and the college community to help create a safer climate.

Outcomes:

- Students receive support from teachers and peers while at college. In addition to this, students are encouraged to recognise and access resources that are external to our college that will support their right to feel safe and happy (eg. Kids' Helpline, Reach Out);
- Students will be self-monitoring, aware, resilient and effective communicators;
- There will be a reduction in the incidence of teasing and bullying; and
- College staff have a clear mandate to act on teasing and bullying with clear consequences for these behaviours.

Staff Responsibilities:

It is the responsibility of college staff to be vigilant and respond appropriately to any incidences or perceived incidences of bullying behaviour. Staff must:

- Acknowledge that teasing and bullying exists at our college;
- Believe that teasing and bullying is a serious problem that needs to be tackled by the whole college;
- Have a clear understanding of what comprises teasing and bullying;
- Be aware of the effects of teasing and bullying on ALL those involved;
- Remember that all children have a right not to be bullied;
- Implement the college's policy and procedures CONSISTENTLY and DILIGENTLY;
- Report or share information regarding incidents to the appropriate staff member;
- Be aware of high-risk students;
- Be aware of high-risk places and times, mapping risk areas in the college to assist in improved supervision;
- Be punctual to classes, assemblies and duties;
- Be mobile, visible and involved with students when on duty;
- Be observant and watchful both in and out of the classroom;
- Encourage staff, students and parents to act as observers and report incidents;
- Acknowledge students 'doing the right thing';
- Be PROACTIVE rather than REACTIVE;
- Remember 'Duty of Care';
- Have high expectations;
- Be seen to be fair;
- Record incidents in the monitoring folders;
- Let students know that all staff are available to discuss any problems;
- Be INSISTENT, PERSISTENT and CONSISTENT;
- Don't accept teasing and bullying as a natural part of growing up;
- Never underestimate the effects of teasing and bullying on the whole college community;
- Don't think in stereotypes - you will miss incidents if you do; bullies and victims do not come in standard shapes and sizes;
- Constantly give additional chances and warnings to offenders; and

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- Be aware of vulnerable students who:
 - are new to the class or college;
 - are different in appearance, speech or background;
 - suffer low self-esteem;
 - demonstrates 'entertaining' reactions when bullied; and
 - are nervous or anxious.

Procedures:

Do

- Be accessible to all students;
- Listen to students, giving them a chance to explain;
- Treat each report or incident seriously, utilising the College Behaviour Management Policy;
- Remain calm, positive and confident - reacting emotionally may add to the bully's fun and control of the situation;
- Congratulate students for reporting incidents;
- Acknowledge their feelings of hurt, anger, fear, sadness;
- Reassure them that something can and will be done to help;
- Encourage children to show initiative and to take an active role in seeking a solution for themselves;
- Ask questions to get details of an incident, e.g. "What were you doing/saying to others? How did this help you/others?";
- Let bullies know that their behaviour is not to be tolerated;
- Attack the problem not the person;
- Encourage the bully to see the other student's point of view and to acknowledge his/her feelings;
- Be supportive of students at all times;
- Respect the rights of students, staff and parents;
- Follow-up all reported incidents; and
- Keep records of all incidents and what action was taken.

Don't

- Ignore students' complaints or problems;
- Dismiss students as attention seekers or whingers;
- Expect students to 'sort it out', 'get tough' or 'cope alone';
- Overreact to incidents - treat them in context;
- Ask "Why" type questions or attempt to assign blame or guilt to the bully;
- Play favourites;
- Label the student/parents;
- Make references to other members of the family, "just like your brother"; and
- Give bullies mixed messages by using inappropriate punitive measures.

Intervention and Consequences

Students are encouraged to report incidences of bullying using a Pink Incident Form and handing it in at the Student Services Centre or to one of their classroom teachers.

Record-keeping is critical in the management of student behaviour and databases will be used to keep people in touch with children who tease and bully. Teachers have access to the database and will be provided with feedback about children in their classes.

College staff will use a variety of strategies in the management of bullying incidences including but not limited to:

- Mediation using the Shared Concerns Method;
- Restorative Justice;
- Parent Meetings;
- Isolation;
- Detention;
- Suspension; and/or
- Case Conferences

Cyber Bullying

The incidence of electronic bullying is ever increasing as our students have greater access to mobile phones and the internet. This subtle form of bullying can be more damaging due to its insidious nature.

Students are not allowed to use social networking sites such as MSN or Facebook at the college. Should an incident of bullying involving an electronic medium occur at school then the school will deal with the issue by following the same processes as would be used to address face to face bullying.

It is important to note that the college cannot be responsible for acts of bullying that occur outside the school. This includes physical as well as electronic forms of bullying. However, the college does recognise that any bullying can affect the academic progress and the emotional well being of a student.

If a student is subject to bullying outside the college then they are encouraged to inform the college or request that their parents inform the college. The college can not take responsibility for those acts of bullying in terms of discipline but will note them, and if warranted, pass the information on to the applicable parents or relevant authorities.

If the college becomes aware of bullying incidents that are occurring outside the college and they are having a negative impact on the well-being of the student, the college will work with students and their parents to address the issue.