ANTI-BULLYING AND HARASSMENT (STUDENTS)

INTRODUCTION

Walford Anglican School for Girls is dedicated to creating a safe, inclusive and nurturing environment that prioritises the safety and wellbeing of all individuals, and is free from bullying and harassment. We aim to create an atmosphere in which each member feels valued, secure, acknowledged and supported; in which individual differences are respected; and in which relationships are healthy and respectful.

Bullying, harassment, discrimination and violence for any reason is not acceptable and Walford will ensure all instances are addressed.

The way instances of bullying, harassment, discrimination and violence are addressed will consider the behaviours, needs of the individuals, and rights of all people to be safely included.

Each member of the Walford community has a role to play to prevent bullying and harassment, respond when it happens, and support those involved and affected by bullying.

The Australian Student Wellbeing Framework's elements that guide our practices are leadership, inclusion, student voice, partnerships and support.

DEFINITIONS

Bullying, harassment, discrimination and violence all create or add to a negative environment. This can make students feel unsafe and unable to reach their full potential. Bullying, harassment, discrimination and violence may be based on gender, race, sexuality, culture, religion, disability and care status.

Bullying
Bullying is an ongoing and *deliberate misuse of power* in relationships through *ongoing and 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.

Examples of types of bullying include repeated:
- **Physical bullying**: causing physical harm: e.g. punching, kicking, fighting, tripping, pinching, damaging property, invading someone's personal space, stealing belongings.
- **Verbal bullying**: e.g. name-calling, insults, teasing or taunting, threats, intimidation, spreading rumours, demeaning someone, swearing, using offensive language.
- **Exclusion or social bullying**: e.g. leaving a person or group out of social or group activities, lying, spreading rumours, unkind facial expressions or body language, mean and condescending looks, playing jokes to embarrass and humiliate, mimicking and damaging someone's reputation or social relationships.
- **Cyber bullying**: online bullying which uses e-technology as a means of victimising others. It uses technology, including social media platforms, and includes: abusive texts and emails, hurtful messages, videos and images, including images that have been changed; sharing personal images and videos without consent; and pretending to be someone else online to be hurtful.

- **Sexting**: when sending sexually explicit messages or photographs via electronic devices may lead to public humiliation.
- **Victimisation**: e.g. standover tactics, extortion, picking on others and repeated exclusion.
- **Racial bullying**: e.g. bullying which targets a person's race or religion.
- **Sexual bullying**: e.g. touching or brushing up against another person in a sexual manner, using rude names, or commenting inappropriately about someone's sexuality or morals.
- **Identity bullying:** e.g. bullying which targets aspects of a person's identity, such as gender, sexuality, cultural background, disability, or any other personal characteristic that is important to who they are.

Harassment

Harassment is a behaviour that targets an individual or group. This can be due to their: identity, race, culture or ethnic origin; religion; physical characteristics; gender; sexual orientation; age; or ability.

It offends, humiliates, intimidates or creates an unsafe environment. It might be a pattern of behaviour or a single act. It might be directed randomly or at the same person. It might be on purpose or unintended.

Examples of harassment include:
- making offensive comments, or jokes, about a person's religion, physical appearance, dress or private life.
- asking intrusive questions of a racial, religious or physical nature, or in relation to a disability.
- using technology to post inappropriate comments about a person's religion, physical appearance, dress or private life.

Discrimination

Discrimination happens when people are treated differently from others. This can be because of their identity, race, culture or ethnic origin; religion; physical characteristics; gender; sexual orientation; age; or ability. Discrimination interferes with people's right to fair treatment and equal opportunities.

Violence

Violence is the intentional use of physical force or power. It can be threatened or actual, against another person. It might result in psychological harm, injury or in some cases death. It might involve provoked or unprovoked acts. It can be one incident, a random act or can happen over time.

School staff will:
- Model and promote positive behaviour, value diversity, and demonstrate respect
- Include and support all students and their families.
- Understand and consistently apply and follow School policies, guidelines and procedures.
- Explicitly teach students about respectful relationships, bullying and cyberbullying including teaching them how to recognise bullying, what to do if they are bullied and how to get help;
- Work with students to develop solutions to bullying including them in decisions that affect their safety and wellbeing.
- Take action when bullying and cyberbullying have been reported. This includes incidents that happen out of school hours or off school grounds when they relate to school relationships.
- Report criminal matters to the South Australian Police.
- Work with families, service providers and the community to support students affected by bullying;
- Support students to repair and restore relationships that have been harmed by bullying.

Parents and caregivers will:
- Model and promote safe, respectful and inclusive behaviours.
- Adhere to the Walford Parent Code of Behaviour and work with the School.
- Help their children to be safe online at home such as by talking to their children about safety issues, checking their children's use of technology and social media, and seeking appropriate supports for their child.
- Report concerns about bullying to School staff.
- Support their children to go to school while a bullying issue is being investigated and addressed.

Students will:
- Model behaviours that are safe, respectful and inclusive, both face-to-face and online.
- Adhere to the Walford Student Code of Behaviour and other School policies, guidelines and expectations.

- Seek help from adults such as their classroom or Mentor teacher, Head of House, Assistant Head of House, or Head of School.
- Take a stand when bullying is observed. Step in, if it is safe to do so.
- Support friends and peers to get help from trusted adults if they experience bullying.
- Support friends to behave in safe, respectful and inclusive ways if their friends engage in bullying.

GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS

Students – dealing with and reporting bullying and harassment

In order to help stop bullying, the affected person should be supported to take steps that feel safe and appropriate. This may include, if they feel able, letting the other person know that the behaviour or comments are unwelcome. Alternatively, or in addition, they may seek support or intervention from a trusted colleague, supervisor, or designated staff member.

All employees of a school have a duty of care to ensure that any bullying or harassment brought to their attention or personally witnessed is addressed as soon as possible.

They should follow up any complaint impartially and promptly.

If the report is verified, the school will view the matter seriously and take appropriate action.

Consequences will depend on the nature and severity of the bullying or harassment, and may include:

- Dealing with the situation informally through a 'no blame' or 'shared concern' approach.
- Mediation.
- Counselling.
- Dealing with the situation through restorative practices.
- Taking disciplinary action in accordance with the Behaviour Support Policy, i.e. community service, detention, suspension or expulsion against the bully or harasser.

Bullying and harassment, and in particular cyber bullying and sexting, may mount to criminal behaviour.

Procedure: handling bullying and harassment complaints

Level 1 Bullying and Harassment (Low Level)

Period verbal exchanges, actions or behaviours intended to cause harm or exclude another student.

A staff member (e.g. Head of House, Assistant Head of School or Head of School) will:
- Fairly investigate all reported incidents, through discussion and other means, with all involved parties.
- After investigation;
  - Inform person bullying about the effects of bullying. The actions are not acceptable to the School.
  - Inform person bullied about support and actions they can take.
  - Follow restorative justice protocols, if appropriate.
  - Follow the Behaviour Support Policy.
  - Formally document what has happened and what action has been taken.
  - Monitor and review as needed.

Level 2 Bullying and Harassment (ongoing, medium level)

Bullying at this level may include an escalation of bullying behaviours identified as Level 1. It may also include, but is not limited to: cruel verbal exchanges, continual exclusion, minor threats or relatively minor physical abuse such as pushing, tripping or theft of property.

A staff member (e.g. Head of House, Assistant Head of School or Head of School) follows the above steps and:
- Contact Parents and Caregivers.
- Provide support for skills acquisition and behaviour improvement.
- Follow the Behaviour Support Policy.
- Formally document what has happened and what action has been taken.
- Monitor and review as needed.

Level 3 Bullying and Harassment (ongoing, serious behaviour)

Bullying at this level is considered to be cruel, malicious and intense. It occurs over an extended period of time and is distressing. It includes serious physical assaults and child protection issues, but is still considered severe if non-physical methods such as name-calling and exclusions are used.

A member of the leadership team is involved in responding. They will follow the above steps and:
- Undertake a formal investigation and document the process and outcomes.
- Meet with parents/caregivers of those involved.
- Follow the Behaviour Support Policy.
- Involve relevant agencies: e.g. police, and report to Child Abuse Report Line if required.
- Monitor and review as needed.

Level 4 Bullying and Harassment (complex and/or unsafe behaviour that is severe and significant, requiring critical action)

Bullying and harassment at this level puts others at risk of ongoing injury or harm, and is a significant breach of the Student Code of Behaviour, the Acceptable Use of ICT Policy and/or the Student Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy.

The Principal is involved in responding and may result in suspension with negotiated re-entry process, or permanent expulsion from the School.

RELEVANT LEGISLATION AND STANDARDS
Legislative Context
Education and Early Childhood Services (Registration and Standards) Act 2011
Children and Young People (Safety) Act 2017
Protective Practices for Staff in their Interactions with Children and Young People

Relevant Framework
National Safe Schools Framework, Safe Schools (Australian Government) website
The Australian Student Wellbeing Framework

RELEVANT POLICIES

9.3 Student Code of Behaviour
9.7 Behaviour Support Policy
9.4 Acceptable Use of ICT Policy
9.8 Student Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy

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