



Bullying Prevention and Response Policy

PURPOSE

Glen Eira College is committed to providing all staff and students with a working and learning environment that values diversity and respects difference in our community where bullying will not be tolerated.

Glen Eira College is enriched by people of many backgrounds, age, race, ethnic and national heritage, physical and intellectual abilities and lifestyle choices. Glen Eira College aims to treat all members of the community with dignity, courtesy and respect and to create a harmonious and productive working and learning environment.

Glen Eira College promotes a supportive, co-operative atmosphere in which students can learn to the best of their ability. We acknowledge that bullying has a negative impact on a student's learning and therefore needs to be actively discouraged and eliminated from our college environment and as such all members of the college community have the following rights and responsibilities:

- be treated equally regardless of race, gender, age, religion, sexuality, health or economic circumstances
- be treated with respect and politeness by other students and staff
- be treated with understanding
- obtain maximum benefit from all lessons and classes

All persons have a legal right to protection from harassment under the Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act and the Victorian Equal Opportunity Act.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- explain the definition of bullying
- make clear that all forms of bullying at Glen Eira College will not be tolerated
- ask that everyone in our college community be alert to signs and evidence of bullying behaviour, and accept responsibility to report bullying behaviour to college staff
- 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 victims, bystanders and perpetrators)
- seek parental and peer group support in addressing and preventing bullying behaviour at Glen Eira College

When responding to bullying behaviour, Glen Eira College aims to:

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

Glen Eira College acknowledges that college 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.

Procedures for Staff

If staff witness an incident of bullying, they will:

- approach the students, try to establish the nature of the incident
- document on XUNO
- remind students of our Bullying Prevention Policy – making it clear to all parties that bullying is unacceptable



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- refer any complaint made by a student to Year Level Co-ordinator and document any notification on XUNO

SCOPE

This policy addresses how Glen Eira College aims to prevent and respond to student bullying behaviour. Glen Eira 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 college. These other inappropriate behaviours will be managed in accordance with our Student Code of Conduct and Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy and Equal Opportunity policy.

This policy applies to all college activities, including camps and excursions.

POLICY

Definitions

Bullying occurs when someone, or a group of people, deliberately and repeatedly upset, harass, intimidate, threaten or hurt another person or damage their property, reputation or social acceptance. There is an imbalance of power in incidents of bullying, where the bully or bullies have more power than the victim due to their age, size, status or other reasons.

Bullying may be direct or indirect, physical or verbal, and includes cyberbullying. Bullying is not a one-off disagreement between two or more people or a situation of mutual dislike. In this policy, any reference to 'bullying' includes all forms of bullying including cyberbullying.

Bullying can be:

1. *Direct physical bullying* – e.g. hitting, tripping, pushing, unwanted touching or brushing up against someone or damaging property.
2. *Direct verbal bullying* – e.g. offensive name calling, insults, homophobic, racist or sexually provocative remarks, requests for sexual favours, verbal abuse including comments based on gender, disability, religion, race, sexuality or other personal characteristic.
3. *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
 - teasing or playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate
 - mimicking
 - offensive staring and leering
 - encouraging others to socially exclude someone
 - damaging someone's social reputation and social acceptance
 - displays of sexually graphic material or pornography

N.B. Extreme forms of sexual harassment will lead to criminal prosecution.

Harassment can also constitute bullying if it amounts to a pattern of behaviour or course of conduct towards another person that is demeaning, offensive or intimidating to a person.

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

- posting or sending gossip or rumour about a person to damage reputation or friendships
- mean and insulting messages
- sending unwanted messages / images / spam
- cyber-stalking



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Other distressing behaviours

Many distressing behaviours may not constitute bullying even though they are unpleasant. Students who are involved in or who witness any distressing behaviours should report their concerns to college staff and our college would follow the Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy and Student Code of Conduct]. *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 harassment, nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. If someone is verbally abused or pushed on one occasion, they are not being bullied. Harassment, nastiness or physical aggression that is directed towards many different people is not the same as bullying. However, single episodes of harassment, nastiness or physical aggression are not acceptable behaviours at our college.

Bullying is not:

- the making of genuine compliments
- behaving with common courtesy or showing friendship
- being reminded of responsibilities such as homework, behaving properly in class, or being disciplined as stated in the Rights and Responsibilities policy
- when two young people of about the same strength have the odd quarrel

BULLYING PREVENTION

Glen Eira College has a number of programs and strategies in place to build a positive and inclusive school culture. We strive to foster a school culture that prevents bullying behaviour by modelling and encouraging behaviour that demonstrates acceptance, kindness and respect.

Bullying prevention at Glen Eira 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 college:

- we have a respectful college environment that provides safety, security and support for students and promotes positive relationships and wellbeing
- we strive to build strong partnerships between the college, families and the broader community that means all members work together to ensure the safety of students
- teachers are incorporate classroom management strategies that discourage bullying and promote positive behaviour in line with our behaviour for learning process
- we promote the college's bullying prevention policy in the community, through the newsletter, staff handbook and student planner
- a range of year level incursions and programs are planned for each year to raise awareness about bullying and its impacts
- we promote resilience, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving. we seek to empower students to be confident communicators and to resolve conflict in a non-aggressive and constructive way
- the peer support program and buddy system support year 7 students and new students in years 8 – 12 settle in quickly
- 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
- identify / monitor college areas where bullying is most likely to occur and ensure active supervision of college grounds
- we participate in the National Day of Action Against Bullying and Violence



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

INCIDENT RESPONSE

Reporting concerns to Glen Eira College

Bullying complaints will be taken seriously and responded to sensitively at our college. Students who may be experiencing bullying behaviour, or students who have witnessed bullying behaviour, are encouraged to report their concerns to college staff as soon as possible.

If a student is being bullied or sees another person being bullied, they should:

STEP 1

Take direct personal action.

Make it clear to the person who is bullying you that you don't want him/her to continue doing it. Speak up. Say how you feel.

Sometimes it is not possible to speak to the person who is bullying because it may make the situation worse or because it makes you feel at risk. In this case, go straight to STEP 2.

STEP 2

Talk to someone you trust - parent, a teacher, YLC, the Student Wellbeing Leader, school nurse.

STEP 3

Make a formal complaint of bullying. Reporting can be verbal or written and made to your YLC or any member of staff with whom the student feels comfortable.

Parents or carers who may develop concerns that their child is involved in, or has witnessed bullying behaviour at Glen Eira College should contact the Student Wellbeing Coordinator, Jenny Sanchez on 9571 7838.

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 Glen Eira College are timely and appropriate in the circumstances.

Investigations

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

1. record the details of the allegations on XUNO and
2. inform a teacher (usually the Year Level Coordinator)

The Year Level Coordinator will be responsible for investigating allegations of bullying in a timely and sensitive manner. To appropriately investigate an allegation of bullying, the teacher may:

- speak to the students involved in the allegations, including the victim/s, the alleged perpetrator/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 teacher in the course of investigating an allegation of bullying will be managed sensitively. Investigations will be completed as quickly as possible to allow 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.



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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 teacher 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 relevant staff such as Student Wellbeing Team, teachers, Assistant Principal, Principal, Department of Education and Training specialist staff etc.

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, Glen Eira College will consider:

- the age and maturity of the students involved
- the severity and frequency of the bullying, and the impact it has had on the victim student
- whether the perpetrator student or students have displayed similar behaviour before
- whether the bullying took place in a group or one-to-one context
- whether the perpetrator demonstrates insight or remorse for their behaviour
- the alleged motive of the behaviour, including any element of provocation

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

- offer counselling support to the victim student or students, including referral to the student wellbeing team
- offer counselling support to the perpetrator student or students, including referral to [insert the student wellbeing team]
- offer counselling support to affected students, including witnesses and/or friends of the victim student, including referral to the student wellbeing team
- 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
- implement disciplinary consequences for the perpetrator students, 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
- 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 victim and perpetrator students
- provide discussion and/or mentoring for different social and emotional learning competencies of the students involved, including connecting affected students with an older student mentor or resilience programs
- monitor the behaviour of the students involved for an appropriate time and take follow up action if necessary
- implement year group targeted strategies to reinforce positive behaviours, for example a program created by our School Health Nurse



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The teacher is responsible for maintaining up to date records of the investigation of and responses to bullying behaviour on XUNO.

Glen Eira 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, college staff will also endeavour to provide parents and carers with updates on the management of bullying incidents.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

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

- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Parent Complaints policy (DET)
- Duty of Care Policy
- Equal Opportunity Policy
- Child Safety 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](#)
- [Kids Helpline](#)
- [Lifeline](#)
- [Bullying. No way!](#)

EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed on a bi-annually or earlier as required, following analysis of college data on reported incidents of, and responses to bullying to ensure that the policy remains up to date, practical and effective.

Data will be collected through:

- discussion with students and student focus groups
- regular student bullying surveys
- regular staff surveys
- assessment of college based data, including the number of reported incidents of bullying in each year group and the effectiveness of the responses implemented

Proposed amendments to this policy will be discussed with the SRC, staff and School Council.