1. POLICY INFORMATION

Policy No.: 14.38

Name of Policy: Anti-Bullying & Harassment

Reason:

Safe and supportive environment

Policy:

The School seeks to provide a safe, inclusive, supportive and respectful learning community that is free from bullying, harassment and violence. Bullying, including cyber-bullying, harassment and violence is not acceptable at Newcastle Grammar School and will be dealt with seriously and in a realistic, timely manner.

BULLYING:
Is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons.

HARASSMENT:
Is behaviour that targets an individual or group due to their identity, race, culture or ethnic origin; religion; physical characteristics; gender; sexual orientation; marital, parenting or economic status; age; ability or disability and that offends, humiliates, intimidates or creates a hostile environment. This may be an ongoing pattern of behavior, or it may be a single act. It may be intentional or unintentional.

Harassment is not considered to be bullying if any one or more of the following three features were present:

a) it occurred only once and was not part of a repeated pattern
b) it (genuinely) was not intended to offend, demean, annoy, alarm or abuse
c) it was not directed towards the same person(s) each time.

VIOLENCE:
Is the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against another person(s) that results in psychological harm, injury or in some cases death. Violence may involve provoked or unprovoked acts and can be a single incident, a random act or can occur over time.
2. **RATIONALE**

Newcastle Grammar School seeks to provide a safe, inclusive, supportive and respectful teaching and learning community that:

- promotes student wellbeing through effective student welfare policies and programmes;
- minimizes the risk of harm to, and ensures feelings of security for, all members of the School community;
- supports the physical, social, academic, spiritual and emotional development of students.

This intention is clearly embedded in the Goals of the School:

"To build students' self-esteem and confidence, to enable students to develop a sense of personal responsibility and self-discipline. To foster a respect and concern for others and the world in which we live so that students show consideration for those around them."

In addition, the School community believes in the value of Christian living. The following excerpt from 'A Prayer Book for Australia' expresses actions and values that support a culture of caring and respect:

"My duty is to love my neighbour as myself, and to do to others what I would wish them to do to me; to honour my parents and others in positions of responsibility; to show respect and courtesy to all; to hurt no one by word or deed; to bear no ill will nor hatred in my heart; to keep my body pure, and be true and fair in all I say and do; not to desire things that belong to others, but to work honestly, and do my duty as God guides me."
3. **AIMS**

1. To provide a safe, secure and supportive environment for all members of the School community by fostering student wellbeing and promoting positive peer relations.

2. To educate the school community so that everyone is aware of:
   - the characteristics of bullying behaviour and harassment
   - the procedures for reporting this sort of behaviour and
   - the strategies which may be effectively used for both preventing bullying behaviours and supporting those impacted by these behaviours

3. To establish and maintain suitable protocols for intervention and record keeping.

4. To ensure that the appropriate interventions and sanctions are selected when responding to an incident involving bullying, harassment or violence.

5. To provide support for individuals who are affected by bullying, harassment or violence.

6. To provide support for other parties involved in unacceptable behaviours by including interventions that will allow for reflection and personal growth.

7. To regularly review and evaluate the effectiveness of the programmes and procedures created to provide a safe and supportive learning environment.
4. DEFINITIONS AND EXAMPLES

(N.B. all definitions are taken from the National Safe Schools Framework (revised 2011))

BULLYING: is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons.

Bullying takes many forms. It can be:

- **Overt:**
  - **Physical:** such as fighting, pushing, hitting and spitting on others
  - **Verbal:** insulting, teasing, taunting, embarrassing and intimidating others; spreading, rumours; threatening to take someone’s money or possessions
  - **Non-Verbal:** using offensive gestures or facial expressions, invading someone’s personal space or stealing or damaging their property.

- **Covert:**
  a subtle type of non-physical bullying which usually isn’t easily seen by others and is conducted out of sight and often unacknowledged by adults. Covert bullying behaviours mostly inflict harm by damaging another’s social reputation, peer relationships and self-esteem. This includes such things as spreading rumours, conducting a malicious social exclusion campaign and/or through the use of Internet or mobile phone technologies.

- **Cyberbullying:**
  carried out through the Internet or mobile phone technologies and often combined with off-line bullying. It may include behaviours such as ‘pranking’; sending insulting text messages or emails or posting on social networking sites; taking photographic/video images without permission and/or posting inappropriate photographic/video material or animations; publishing someone’s private information; creating hate sites or implementing social exclusion campaigns in social networking sites; using technology to set another person up to be assaulted; recording a person’s humiliation and posting this recording online and sending the website address to others.

HARASSMENT: is behaviour that targets an individual or group due to their identity, race, culture or ethnic origin; religion; physical characteristics; gender; sexual orientation; marital, parenting or economic status; age; ability or disability and that offends, humiliates, intimidates or creates a hostile environment. This may be an ongoing pattern of behaviour, or it may be a single act. It may be intentional or unintentional.

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- c) it was not directed towards the same person(s) each time.
• **RACISM AND RACIAL HARASSMENT:**
  Racism is the assumption that members of one race are intrinsically superior to members of another race or races.

  Racial Harassment involves unwanted and one-sided words or actions towards a person (or persons) of a specific race that offend, demean, annoy, alarm or abuse. If this is repeatedly directed towards the same person it is called racial bullying.

• **SEXUAL HARASSMENT:**
  is any unwanted, unwelcome or uninvited behaviour of a sexual nature that makes a person feel humiliated, intimidated or offended. Sexual harassment may take many forms and may include physical contact, verbal comments, jokes, propositions, and the display of offensive material or other behavior that creates a hostile environment.

**DISCRIMINATION:**
occurs when people are treated less favourably than others because of their race, culture or ethnic origin; religion; physical characteristics; gender; sexual orientation; marital, parenting or economic status; age; ability or disability. Discrimination is often ongoing and commonly involves exclusion or rejection.

• **HOMOPHOBIA:**
  An irrational fear of, aversion to, or discrimination against homosexuality or homosexuals or students who are perceived to be homosexual. Homophobic attitudes underpin many bullying situations.

**VIOLENCE:**
is the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against another person(s) that results in psychological harm, injury or in some cases death. Violence may involve provoked or unprovoked acts and can be a single incident, a random act or can occur over time.

**Bystander Behaviour:**
A bystander is someone who sees or knows about maltreatment, harassment, aggression, violence or bullying that is happening to someone else. Supportive or ethical bystander behaviours are actions and/or words that are intended to support someone who is being attacked, abused or bullied.

**Positive Behaviour Management Approaches:**
are those that stress prevention, support and the avoidance of confrontation and which focus more on the development of positive student behaviour then on punishment for student misbehaviour.
Some signs that a student may be being bullied or harassed include:

- unexplained cuts, bruises or scratches
- damaged or ripped clothing
- vague headaches or stomach aches
- tearfulness, anxiety or difficulty sleeping
- depression
- bedwetting
- anger
- withdrawal
- refusal to go to school
- truancy
- inability to concentrate
- decline in academic performance
- damaged or missing equipment
- requests extra pocket money or food
- attempts to 'hide' information received on mobile phones, emails or in comments on their social networking pages
5. REPORTING

- The reporting of an incident should occur as soon after the incident as possible.

- An incident may be reported to any member of staff, after which it will be referred to the relevant House Coordinator or the Head of Student Wellbeing at the Hill Campus. It will be referred to the class teacher and the Assistant Head of the Park School at the Park Campus. At this point, a case manager will be assigned, depending on the nature of the incident.

- As per the Alleged Bullying and Harassment Initial Action Plan, parents may be informed based on the investigation of the incident and the determination of the severity of the incident.

- All reports will be documented and placed in the central Anti-Bullying and Harassment Register, in the files of both the complainant and other parties.
6. BULLYING AND HARASSMENT INTERVENTIONS

Flexibility is required when determining the most appropriate intervention(s) in response to incidents of bullying, harassment or violence.

STAGE I
This includes the initial report, investigation and action plan (including postvention strategies and follow-up reporting schedule).

1. Once a report is made to a member of staff at Hill Campus it should be referred to the House Coordinator or the Head of Student Wellbeing. At Park Campus the incident should referred to the class teacher and Assistant Head of the Junior School. At this point in the investigation a case manager will be appointed.

2. The case manager will complete an Alleged Bullying and Harassment Initial Action Tool to investigate the issue and complete a record of the event. This tool covers such details as:
   • influences such as race, disability
   • the existence of an imbalance of power
   • the context of the incident
   • repetition of action
   • witness statements
   • the effect of the incident on the complainant’s wellbeing

3. If the incident is not considered to involve bullying nor harassment, then Step 4 of the Stage 1 protocol will not occur and Steps 8 and 9 will be implemented. However, appropriate measures to ensure the wellbeing of all students will be taken.

4. If the incident is determined to involve bullying or harassment then one or a combination of the 6 recommended intervention methods will be selected to resolve the incident, now and in the future.
   • The Traditional Disciplinary Approach
   • Mediation
   • Restorative Practices
   • The Support Group Method
   • The Method of Shared Concern
   • Strengthening the Complainant.

5. When sanctions are applied, they should be appropriate to the nature, severity and extent of the offence.

6. Depending on the severity of the incident, the parents or caregivers of both the complainant and the other involved parties may be notified of the actions taken by the School.
7. Procedures to be put in place for both the complainant and other parties will be documented. This will include postvention strategies and dates set for follow-up reports.

8. Relevant Staff will be notified by the case manager as required (e.g. the Mentor, class teachers, co-curricular teachers, House Coordinator, Head of Student Wellbeing, Head of Student Administration, Head of Junior School, Head of School).

9. The completed **Stage 1 Documentation**, including the **Alleged Bullying and Harassment Initial Action Tool, Intervention Action Plans and Postvention Summary** will be stored in the central Anti-Bullying and Harassment Register, in the files of the students involved.

**STAGE 2**
*This will be implemented if the inappropriate behaviour continues.*

1. The student who is being targeted will be offered assistance in order to develop strategies to overcome the situation.

2. At the Hill Campus either the Head of Student Administration or Head of Student Wellbeing will interview the offending student(s) in the presence of his/her parents or caregivers. The House Coordinator will be present as an advocate for the student. At the Park Campus, the Head of the Junior School will interview the perpetrator and the class teacher will be present as an advocate. Direct consequences may include:
   - isolation from peers (in-school suspension)
   - chat chair (Junior School)
   - Saturday detention
   - special duties (community service)
   - professional assistance (re: conflict resolution, anger management)
   - suspension from School
   - use of Progress Card

3. **The Stage 2 Report and Action Plan and Postvention Summary** will be completed and stored in the central Anti-Bullying and Harassment Register, in the files of both the complainant and other parties.

**STAGE 3**
*This will be implemented if the inappropriate behaviour is repeated after Stage 2.*

1. The Head of School will be informed.

2. Consequences may be:
   - Suspension from School
   - Notice of Dismissal
   - Expulsion
At the Hill Campus the parents, offending student and House Coordinator will attend an interview with the Head of School at which the House Coordinator will be an advocate for the student. At the Park Campus the class teacher will attend the interview in the same capacity as the Hill Campus House Coordinator. If the consequence is suspension from School, when the student returns he/she will be placed on a Notice of Dismissal, which will cover a minimum period of six months and a maximum of twelve months. Therefore, a repeated offence in that time will result in the student leaving the School.

3. **The Stage 3 Report and Action Plan and Postvention Summary** will be completed and stored in the central Anti-Bullying and Harassment Register, in the files of both the target and perpetrator.
BULLYING INTERVENTION FLOW DIAGRAMS

Figure 8.1 Overall Process
BULLYING INTERVENTION FLOW DIAGRAMS

Figure 8.2  Movement through Stage 1
7. STRATEGIES TO PREVENT BULLYING

Ultimately, strategies to prevent bullying, harassment and violence will only be truly effective when embedded in a culture where respect and care for others are the norm and where these values are consistently taught and demonstrated in all areas of School life.

Thus, a whole School approach is required, which focuses on positive relationships. This incorporates the use of positive behavior management approaches and assumes that all members of the School community have a significant role to play in addressing aggression, harassment and bullying and promoting a supportive school culture.

In order to achieve this, the following structures, programmes and practices will be utilised:

• **‘Celebrating Strengths’**
  This whole School programme utilises the concepts of Positive Education to focus on and promote attitudes and behaviours that are seen as desirable. The language of strengths and virtues is incorporated in the everyday life of the School, including weekly Assemblies, Chapel services, community service projects and fundraising activities. The Celebrating Strengths programme also contributes to a sense of connectedness and wellbeing that supports positive relationships and builds respect, tolerance and care for others.

• **The House and Mentor System (Hill Campus)**
  On the Hill Campus, the House system, incorporating Mentor groups, is utilised to ensure that each student is known and valued as an individual. In addition, this structure allows each student’s wellbeing and progress to be monitored. Mentor groups are arranged vertically, which allows younger students the opportunity to access the support of older students. In addition, older students have a significant role in modelling appropriate and respectful behaviours and attitudes required for the development of positive relationships. House Terms and Days, which are student driven, promote selected character strengths and virtues as part of the ‘Celebrating Strengths’ programme. This ensures greater student ownership of and engagement in the celebration of qualities that foster a culture of care.

• **Year Group Wellbeing Programmes**
  Students are explicitly provided with age-appropriate strategies that target the development of social and emotional intelligence.

  From Kindergarten to Year 6, the students participate in the ‘You Can Do It!’ Programme, with the key foundations contributing to the reduction in bullying behaviours.

  In Years 7 to 12 the principles of positive psychology are included in many of the activities utilized to develop positive peer-relationships, resilience, self-awareness and optimism. Ethical behaviour, including the role of the ethical bystander, is explored in Years 11 and 12. These seminar programmes, which are presented by key members of the Student Wellbeing Team and guest speakers who are experts in their field, support the development of behaviours and attitudes, which lead to a safe and supportive School environment.
Year group camps, for all year groups from Year 3 to Year 12, play an important role in enhancing cohort cohesion, which is a significant factor in enhancing respect, tolerance and care for others.