



STUDENT BULLYING POLICY

Purpose

The Knox School (the **School**) is committed to providing all students with a working and learning environment which is inclusive, values diversity and respects differences in our community. Specifically, we will endeavour to ensure that bullying, sexual harassment and discrimination are not accepted at the School.

This document details the School's response to bullying, sexual harassment and discrimination **between students**.

Scope

This policy applies to all students, parents and families, employees, volunteers, contractors and other authorised personnel required to perform functions on the School's premises.

The application of this policy is not limited to the School's site and operating hours. It extends to all activities and events that are School-related or have an ability to impact on health and safety on staff or students, relationships at School or the reputation of the School.

Responsibilities

All members of the School community have a responsibility to respond to incidents of bullying, sexual harassment and discrimination, and take such incidences seriously.

Specifically, the School undertakes to:

- Provide a supportive environment which encourages positive relationships between students, staff and parents.
- Provide age-appropriate information and skills to enable students to recognise behaviour that constitutes bullying, sexual harassment and discrimination.
- Empower students to deal with situations where they see or experience bullying, cyberbullying, sexual harassment and discrimination to reduce severity or stop escalation to enable more respectful relationships.
- Encourage students to seek help if they see or experience bullying, sexual harassment or discrimination.
- Provide curriculum material which will help students develop appropriate social skills, positive relationships and resilience.
- Provide counselling to students in dealing with conflict resolution; to those on both the giving

and receiving ends of bullying, sexual harassment and discrimination.

- Provide education, training, and professional development to staff in bullying prevention and response strategies.
- Provide regular information to parents/guardians, to raise awareness of bullying as a school community issue to equip them to recognise signs of bullying, as well as to provide them with clear paths for raising any concerns they may have related to bullying directly with the School.
- To manage any incidents of bullying, sexual harassment and discrimination that are ongoing or of a serious nature by using restorative practices or where appropriate, taking disciplinary action in accordance with the Student Code of Conduct and Behaviour Management Guidelines.

The Principal undertakes to:

- Ensure a safe, secure and harmonious work environment for students and staff.
- Ensure staff are provided with training and development opportunities to identify and manage incidents of bullying and/or harassment.
- Ensure anti-bullying and harassment content is included in the School curriculum.
- Ensure the School implements this policy in practice.
- Ensure that complaints about bullying are investigated, and that necessary action is taken in a timely manner – with regard to the Student Code of Conduct.
- Employ staff who have specialist skills in helping both targets and perpetrators of bullying.
- Ensure effective pastoral and wellbeing support is available to students.
- Have staff liaise with the School's Police Liasson Officer (as appropriate depending on the nature of the incident).
- Ensure that this policy is available and communicated to staff, students and members of the School community.
- Develop, implement and monitor this policy and ensure it is evaluated and reviewed by the School community.
- Ensure that the School's approach to managing bullying, harassment and other inappropriate behaviour is the subject of continual review and informed by previous experiences and feedback from members of the School community.

All staff (including the Principal and Leadership Team) undertake to:

- Model appropriate behaviours at all times.
- Respond to all reported and observed incidences of bullying, sexual harassment or discrimination as set out in this policy and aligned with our duty of care obligations.
- Staff to adhere to the School's Privacy Policy in any disclosure of information relating to such

matters.

- Ensure appropriate supervision of students at all times.
- Report incidences of bullying, sexual harassment or discrimination to the relevant Heads of Students and/or Head of School and where appropriate, the Executive Leadership Team.
- Actively engage with professional development regarding anti-bullying and harassment strategies, and support any other measures intended to enhance the School's, and individual staff member's management of, and response to inappropriate behaviour.

Students undertake to:

- Inform the School if they are being bullied, sexually harassed, or discriminated against or if they see someone else being bullied, sexually harassed or discriminated against – regardless of whether this occurs at School, outside of School, via the use of digital technologies or otherwise in connection with the School.
- Help others if they are being bullied, sexually harassed or discriminated against. This includes acting as an upstander and reporting the incident to staff, parents or a trusted member of the School community.
- Not bully, sexually harass or discriminate against other members of the School community and related stakeholders – regardless of whether this occurs at School, outside of School, via the use of digital technologies or otherwise in connection with the School - and refuse to be involved in a circumstance where bullying, sexual harassment or discriminatory behaviours occur.
- To adhere to the Student Code of Conduct and Behaviour Management Guidelines.

Parents undertake to:

- Watch for behaviours and indicators that their child may be being bullied, sexually harassed or discriminated against (whether in person, or via the use of digital technologies).
- Watch for behaviours and indicators that their child may be the perpetrator of the behaviours described above, and assist their child(ren) in understanding such behaviour is unacceptable and must cease.
- If parents form such concerns about their child or another student, they are expected to contact their child's relevant member of staff at first instance and work collaboratively with the School to resolve these concerns.
- Model positive social behaviour and relationships in interactions with the School community, including in interactions with teachers, other parent(s) and students.
- Support the School in implementing and enforcing this policy.

Bullying Prevention Strategies

The School/College recognises that the implementation of school-wide prevention strategies is the most effective way of eliminating, or at least minimising incidents of bullying within our community. The following initiatives form part of our overall bullying prevention strategy and our strategy to create a 'no bullying' culture within the School:

- Detailing responsibilities relating to bullying prevention (as outlined above), that apply to our staff, students and members of our School community
- Ensuring the School, Principal and Staff act in accordance with their responsibilities (as outlined above).
- Ensuring students and parents in accordance with their responsibilities (as outlined above).
- Ensuring regular risk assessments of bullying within the School are undertaken by surveying students to identify bullying issues that may ordinarily go unnoticed by staff.
- Promoting the responsible bystander behaviour amongst students, staff, and parents/guardian.
- Creating an easy and established way for students, bystanders, parents/guardians, and staff to report their concerns to the School.
- Ensuring that records of reported bullying incidents are maintained and analysed, in order to identify persistent bullies and/or victims and to implement targeted prevention strategies where appropriate
- Displaying anti-bullying posters and material strategically within the School.
- Promoting student awareness and a 'no-bullying' environment by participating in events such as the National Day of Action Against Bullying and Violence.

Definitions

Bullying is an ongoing, unwanted 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.

The behaviour is a pattern repeated over time.

In this policy, bullying may occur in relation, but not limited, to culture; gender; race; ability or disability; physical appearance; beliefs; age; religion; or economic status.

Types of bullying can include direct physical bullying, direct verbal bullying, indirect bullying and cyberbullying.

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, but can be addressed through the Behaviour Management Guidelines and outlined in the Student Code of Conduct.

For conduct to constitute bullying, there does not have to be any intention to cause harm or discomfort. All staff, students and parents should therefore consider how their conduct could be perceived by others, even in circumstances where they perceive their behaviour to be acceptable.

Direct physical bullying involves the use of physical actions against or towards another individual, but is not limited to punching, kicking, pushing and interfering with or damaging property.

Direct verbal bullying involves, but is not limited to, threatening, name calling, insulting, verbal abuse, aggressive or humiliating comments, belittling or humiliating comments, shouting, and teasing.

Indirect bullying isn't always seen by others and is often conducted covertly or out of sight, it is therefore less obvious and often difficult to identify. It includes, but is not limited to, spreading rude, inaccurate or malicious rumours, deliberately excluding someone from activities or functions and practical jokes or mimicking.

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.

Cyberbullying includes behaviour that constitutes direct and indirect bullying, using digital technologies such as a mobile phone, via the internet, gaming platforms, messaging services and on social networking sites. It shares many similarities with offline bullying, but it can also be anonymous, reach a wide audience and be difficult to remove.

Discrimination means treating a person with an identified attribute (eg age, race, religious beliefs, gender, physical features, gender identity, sexual orientation, political opinion) or a personal characteristic less favourably than a person who does not have the attribute or characteristic, who is otherwise in the same or similar circumstances.

Sexual Harassment includes sexually oriented jokes, sexual innuendo, teasing about sexual orientation, and unwelcome sexual approaches – direct or indirect.

Signs of Bullying

To assist staff, students, parents and members of the School community to understand their responsibilities (as outlined in this policy), it is important to understand the signs of bullying.

Signs that a student may be the subject of bullying include:

- becoming aggressive and unreasonable;
- startling physical or verbal altercations;
- refusing to talk about what is wrong;
- crying and night and having nightmares;
- feeling ill in the mornings;

- refusing to go to school;
- unexplained bruises, cuts or scratches;
- a drop in academic performance.

Less obvious signs could include a student that:

- is often alone or excluded from friendship groups at School;
- is a frequent target for teasing, mimicking or ridicule at School;
- changes their willingness to speak up in class;
- withdraws from friends and activities they previously enjoyed; or
- appears insecure or frightened in the classroom.

What is not Bullying?

Many distressing behaviours are not examples of bullying, even though they may fall short of the standards set out in the Student Code of Conduct and often require staff intervention and management.

Behaviours that do not constitute bullying include:

Single incidents - Single episodes of nastiness, intimidation, violence or acts of 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.

Mutual conflict - Bullying behaviour is not disagreements between equals, situations of mutual conflict or children not getting along well. 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 - Not liking a person or a one-off act of social rejection, meanness or spite is not bullying. 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.

Reporting

Students, staff, parents / guardians or other community members who have concerns that bullying is occurring are asked in the first instance to contact the most relevant member of staff. The School can only take action and respond to issues which it is aware of. This is why it is important to report any concerns which may arise.

Most often concerns can be dealt with internally at the School. However, in some instances, it

may be appropriate to report bullying to other authorities, in the case of behaviours which may constitute a crime, or serious online bullying.

Responding

The School is committed to investigating student behavioural concerns in accordance with the principles of procedural fairness. This will ordinarily involve:

- A discussion with the alleged victim to provide an opportunity for their concerns to be heard and responded to accordingly. This includes:
 - Finding a suitable place to talk to the concern privately.
 - Staff listening without interrupting, and using encouraging questions or sounds to show they are listening.
 - Staff asking specific or clarifying questions to better understand the concerns after the student has shared their own version of events.
 - Praising the student for speaking out, and acknowledging the courage and bravery they have shown in doing so.
 - A discussion with the student who is the subject of the concern, so that they have an opportunity to respond to the allegations.
- The School is committed to responding to all reported incidents of bullying in a timely manner and according to the principles of procedural fairness, as outlined in the Student Code of Conduct and Behaviour Management Guidelines.
 - Offering support and assistance to those affected.
 - Providing an assurance that bullying is not tolerated by the School.
 - Considering and actioning any interim preventative safety measures that may need to be implemented.

Consequences for a breach of the School's policies and procedures

The School is committed to confirming the consequences of a breach of the School's policies and procedures aligned with the Student Code of Conduct and as outlined in the Behaviour Management Guidelines.

Communication of this Policy

This policy is available on the School website, student enrolment packs and/or student diaries. Updates of the policy will be made available to the School community as part of the School's internal policies and procedures.

Related documents:

- Student Code of Conduct
- Behaviour Management Guidelines
- Privacy policy
- Duty of Care Policy

Resources

[Bullying No Way](#)

[Kids Helpline | Phone Counselling Service | 1800 55 1800](#)

Policy Name	Student Bullying policy			Constructed/Reviewed by:	Russell Kennedy Lawyers/Executive
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Principal	Executive	December 2021 v.6	December 2021	December 2023	
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