Policy Statement

Anti-Bullying and Harassment

Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy

Plympton International College Statement
Plympton International College will provide a safe, inclusive, supportive and ordered learning environment free from bullying, harassment and violence. Bullying, including cyber bullying, harassment and violence, is not acceptable at Plympton International College and will be dealt with seriously and expediently.
The school will work with our school community and other services and agencies to support our students in being responsible and productive members of our community.

DEFINITIONS
Bullying is repeated verbal, physical or social behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons. Cyber-bullying refers to bullying through information and communications technologies. Conflict or fights between equals and single incidents are not regarded as bullying. Bullying of any form or for reason can have long-term effects on those involved including bystanders.
Examples of bullying behaviour include:
- Deliberate and repeated name calling
- Physical contact – hitting, kicking, unwanted touching
- Spreading rumours
- Texting abusive messages, sending images online or comments on social networking sites
- Excluding someone from groups, social activities or games
- Threatening someone
- Making sexist or racist remarks

Harassment is behaviour that targets an individual or group due to their identity, race, culture or ethnic origin; religion; physical characteristics; gender; sexual orientation; martial, parenting or economic status; age; ability or disability and that offends, humiliates, intimidates or creates a hostile environment.
Harassment may be an ongoing pattern of behaviour, or it may be a single act. It may be directed randomly or towards the same person(s). It may be intentional or unintentional, i.e. words or actions that offend and distress one person may be genuinely regarded by the person doing them as minor or harmless.

Violence is the intentional use of power (threatened or actual) against another person that results in psychological harm, injury or in some cases death.
Violence may be a single incident, a random act, or it can occur over time. This may constitute an assault which is a police matter.

Cyber Bullying uses e-technology as a means of victimising others. It is the use of an internet service or mobile technologies such as email, chat rooms, and discussion groups, instant messaging, web pages or SMS – with the intent of harming another person.
Activities can include repeated negative messages, sexual and racist harassment, denigration, impersonation, trickery, exclusion and cyber stalking. Cyber bullying

may involve varying levels of severity, ranging from occasional messages to frequently repeated and highly disturbing threats to a person's life.

Cyber bullying can occur from a single act when the message is sent to more than one person. For example, a person may only press 'send' once, but the choice to send the message to multiple addresses, makes the action more than a single incident.

Sexual Harassment is treatment or physical acts which refer to a person's sexuality or gender in an offensive or degrading manner. Note: Under recent amendments to the South Australian Equal Opportunity Act 1984 it is unlawful for a student 16 years of age and over to sexually harass another student or staff member.

HOW TO RECOGNISE IF A STUDENT IS BEING BULLIED

Students who are being bullied or harassed may not talk about it with their teachers, friends or families. They may be afraid that it will make things worse or that they are 'dobbing'. A change in behaviour in students may be a signal that they are being bullied or have some other concern.

Some signs that a student is being bullied may be:
  o Refusal to attend school or finding reasons not to go to school
  o Unexplained cuts, bruises or scratches
  o Stolen or damaged possessions or clothing
  o Vague headaches or stomach aches
  o Asking for extra pocket money or food
  o Tearfulness, anxiety or difficulty sleeping
  o 'Hiding' information on mobile phones, emails or in comments on their social networking pages

REPORTING BULLYING

What to do about bullying:
  o Tell the other person(s) involved to stop
  o If you are being bullied, report it
  o Ask other people to stop, if you observe them bullying someone. If you are a bystander to bullying, you have a responsibility to report it.
  o Report bullying to: a friend, caregiver, teacher, Home Group teacher, Year Level Manager, Counsellor, CPSW, Deputy Principal or Principal.

When to report bullying:
Report bullying to a trusted adult, as soon as it occurs. Do not ignore it. When bullying is ignored, it may get worse.
Complete *a bullying and harassment form* – obtained from the School Office staff.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsibilities of Students:
  o Be respectful towards other students, staff and members of the school community
  o Participate in educational sessions regarding anti-bullying and harassment
  o Communicate with an appropriate adult if being bullied or harassed or if they are aware of someone else being bullied or harassed

- o   Learn to be an effective bystander, so that bullying and harassment are discouraged through peer influence

Responsibilities of Parents:

- o   Communicate in a respectful manner with the school if issues of bullying occur

Responsibilities of Staff:
- o   Develop and foster positive relationships with students and families
- o   Communicate and interact effectively with students and engage in cooperative problem solving relationships to address issues of bullying
- o   Participate in developing, implementing and reviewing the school's anti-bullying policy, curriculum and PD opportunities and the procedures for managing incidents of bullying successfully
- o   Critically reflect on practices and develop the knowledge and skills needed to manage incidents of bullying successfully
- o   Establish, maintain, make explicit and model the school's expectations relating to bullying
- o   Support students to be effective bystanders

Responsibilities of the Principal:
- o   Develop, implement and regularly review the school's anti-bullying policy (including surveying students, parents and teachers)
- o   Ensure that all new students to the school, and their families, are aware of the anti-bullying policy and other relevant school policies (eg: Mobile Phone, Music Player and USB Policy and School Discipline Policy) and the decision making procedures open to them if they wish to influence school practice
- o   Provide access to relevant Professional Development to all staff, in particular the Year Level Managers, Counsellors and other key staff to effectively manage bullying and implement intervention strategies
- o   Manages incidents of bullying in a way that is consistent with the DECD School Discipline Policy
- o   Ensure that families have access to the school's anti-bullying policy and related documents, Governing Council reports and the school's grievance procedures

Under regulations 40 and 41 of the Education Regulations 1997, Principals can suspend or exclude a student who acts in a manner that threatens the safety or wellbeing of a student or member of staff, or another person associated with the school. These regulations do not preclude an event that occurs outside of school hours or off site. Principals can therefore use these procedures with a student enrolled at their school if the Principal believes, on reasonable grounds, that the student has acted in such a manner, even if this behaviour occurred outside of school hours or off site. Police officers also have the power to confiscate a mobile phone where any image held on the phone is possible evidence of a crime. The phone may be kept by SAPOL until the action comes before a court. Where DECD staff reasonably suspects that a student has used a mobile phone to record a crime, the phone should be confiscated and handed to SAPOL *without the staff member opening the video message to view it*. Opening the video may compromise evidence.

ACTIONS

What we do about incidents of bullying and harassment at Plympton International College

- o We will listen and talk to the person who has been bullied. We will discuss possible strategies for helping to deal with the bullying. We will negotiate what further follow up is required. This may include:

  - o Supporting the person being bullied to deal with the bullying themselves. This may include some longer term counselling to determine appropriate strategies.

  - o Having a conversation with the person who has done the bullying. This will focus on helping that person to develop a sense of empathy for the person they have bullied. This may include some longer term counselling to help them improve their relationships with other people. An informal warning also occurs at this stage. This means they have been given an opportunity to change their behaviour without further consequences being enacted.

  - o Issuing a formal warning to the person doing the bullying. This means that their parents/caregivers will be informed and invited to be part of the process to help their son/daughter to change their behaviour.

If the person doing the bullying does not change their behaviour, possible consequences include:
- o Removal from the yard during recess and lunchtime and/or exclusion from social activities
- o Time out in the Focus Room
- o Suspension from school
- o Referral to other DECD Support Services
- o Exclusion from school

It is important to note that these steps may change. At Plympton International College we use a case management approach, according to the frequency and severity of incidents and personal circumstances.

Under the Regulations pursuant to the Education Act, Principals can suspend or exclude students from school if they:

> *…act in a manner that threatens the safety or wellbeing of a student or member of staff or other person associated with the school (including by sexually harassing, racially vilifying, verbally abusing or bullying that person).*

Principals can use these Regulations for incidents that occur off-site and/or out of school hours, if another student's safety or wellbeing has been threatened, this is particularly relevant in cases of cyber bullying and violence.

Prevention strategies include:

- Using our Health program to teach students in Years 6, 7, 8 & 9 about bullying and being an effective bystander
- Using Program Achieve, our Health and Virtues programs to teach students in R-Year 5 about bullying and promote student safety
- Inviting guests such as Marion Youth and SAPOL to present to our students and support their learning
- Using the curriculum to teach students about respectful relationships, civics and citizenship
- Developing Student Voice opportunities to help students participate and have a say in their learning
- Teaching students about violence prevention, conflict resolution, anger management and problem solving and developing policies which promote student safety
- Providing professional learning for staff

Intervention strategies include:
- Counselling students who have been bullied
- Talking with parents or caregivers about the situation
- Facilitating restorative meetings between students
- Putting consequences in place for those who bully others
- Teaching students to be responsible bystanders
- Ensuring all staff know how to address bullying effectively and respectfully

Post-intervention strategies include:
- Monitoring the situation between the students to ensure their safety and wellbeing are maintained
- Follow up counselling for students who are **victims or perpetrators** of bullying to ensure they feel safe at school and remain connected to the school following an incident
- Talking with parents or caregivers about strategies
- Reviewing and evaluating behaviour codes, procedures and policies to make sure that they are effective

Distribution List
- Students, families and community members – via school newsletter and website
- Staff members – via Staff Handbook
- Regional Director

Further Information
DECD website details
PLYMPTON INTERNATIONAL COLLEGE website details

Ratified by:

Governing Council Chairperson: **Date:**

Principal: **Date:**

Review Date: