

## Anti-Harassment Policy

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**Policy Number: S 403**

**Policy Manager:** Principal

**Approval:**

**Issue Date:** July 2012

**Revision Date:** March 2015

**Next review date:** March 2018

### **PURPOSE and CONTEXT:**

The Pedare community does not tolerate bullying in any form. The College's policies and practices are based on the following key principles.

The College fosters: respect for oneself and for others; self-discipline; self-control; cooperation with, and encouragement of others; and promoting a safe environment that is conducive to learning, personal growth and positive self worth.

The aim of this policy is to ensure that all members of our College community are committed to providing a safe and caring environment for all.

This policy is consistent with the College Core Values and with the National Safe Schools Framework. It recognises that bullying involves a breakdown in relationships between people and aims to identify people's obligations and to promote reconciliation and healing.

The objectives of this policy are to:

- reduce the incidence of bullying
- counter the view that bullying is an acceptable part of school life
- create a supportive climate and to break down the secrecy surrounding bullying and the reluctance to report incidents
- provide staff, students and parents/caregivers with strategies to respond to bullying
- provide opportunities for the restoration of relationships

### **DEFINITION:**

Bullying is when someone repeatedly misuses their power to try to hurt, scare, or exclude another person. It can be done by one person or a group. It can be physical, verbal, social, psychological or electronic.

#### **Bullying**

- involves one or more persons exerting power or dominance over another, or others
- behaviour is deliberate, unwelcome, usually uninvited and usually repeated
- involves behaviour that is physical, verbal, psychological, social/relational
- causes another person to feel embarrassed, offended, hurt, humiliated, insulted, ridiculed, unhappy, frightened, lonely, unsafe and angry
- can have a serious long-term effect on the health and wellbeing of people, including:
  - confusion and an inability to know what to do about the problem
  - an inability to concentrate, work or sleep
  - a loss of self-confidence and self-worth
  - a deterioration in relationships with staff, family and friends
  - an unwillingness to come to school

## SCOPE of BULLYING BEHAVIOURS

These may include:

- cyber bullying – making malicious comments or playing nasty practical jokes on someone via social media including but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, E-mail, web sites, and text messages. See Social Media Section of this policy below
- any form of physical violence such as hitting, tripping, pushing, throwing things toward others, spitting on others etc.
- name calling, mocking, teasing, setting up, belittling and insulting someone
- threatening someone
- using abusive or obscene language or gestures towards others
- writing offensive notes or graffiti about someone
- making insulting racist or sexual comments or comments about someone's (perceived) sexual orientation
- trying to damage someone's reputation by spreading rumours, exposing private information or telling lies etc.
- using verbal and non-verbal put-downs
- interfering with other people's personal property by stealing, hiding or damaging it
- playing nasty practical jokes on others
- encouraging others to socially exclude someone
- using covert forms of physical intimidation such as blocking the way and making the other person walk around them; or bumping them and then claiming it was an accident
- accusing someone of things they haven't done

### ***What Bullying is not:***

There are distressing behaviours that are **NOT** examples of bullying even though they may require staff intervention, management and consequences for the people concerned.

- *Mutual conflict* – where there is an initial disagreement, which results in an exchange of negative feelings and behaviour. These situations are not characterised by an imbalance of power. Both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution to the problem. NB. Some resolutions may not necessarily be to the satisfaction of all parties concerned. The College does not tolerate this behaviour and students should expect that sanctions will follow transgressions in the area.
- *Single episode or random acts of meanness, intimidation or violence*– where the aggressive behaviour occurs only once or is random in nature and directed towards several different people, and is not repetitive. These matters will be dealt with by the pastoral care team and students should expect that sanctions will follow poor behaviour in this matter.

## POLICY STATEMENT:

**It is important that staff, students and parents work together to ensure that Pedare is a safe, caring environment for all members of our College community.**

### **Staff :**

- endeavour to be role models in word and in action at all times
- endeavour to uphold the rights of students and staff to a safe and caring learning environment
- be observant for signs of bullying, both within the classroom, staff areas and in the school grounds
- listen to those who report a bullying incident and acknowledge the nature and seriousness of the bullying behaviour.

- take steps to support the victim without placing them at further risk
- attempt to resolve the situation using an appropriate strategy as outlined in the recommended procedures
- record the details on line if appropriate and
- refer the incident to the Home Group teacher, Community Coordinator or Assistant Head of School that day in person or by email.

### Students :

If a student feels they are being bullied or has witnessed bullying behaviour they should :

- tell the person that they are being a bully and to stop the behaviour
- support the person who is being bullied and seek help from a teacher or a student leader
- report the bullying incident to the class teacher, subject teacher, Yard Duty Teacher, Home Group teacher, Community Coordinator or Assistant Head of School
- refrain from bullying others in return
- refuse to be involved in any bullying of students or staff
- discuss the matter with family and friends
- be assured that the College will listen, take reports seriously and act promptly

### Parents/Caregivers :

- encourage students to report incidents of bullying to the teachers and pastoral support staff including the Assistant Heads of School.
- encourage the students to discuss the effects and consequences of bullying
- contact the College if they are aware that any child is being bullied or suspect that it is happening either at school or where it is impacting on the child outside of school but the people involved are at Pedare.
- watch for signs of distress in their child eg. reluctance to attend school, frequent headaches or illness, missing equipment, damaged clothes, requests for extra money etc.
- should NOT encourage their child to retaliate
- discuss with their child appropriate strategies to help them cope with bullying
- should be willing to attend interviews at the College if their child is involved in an incident of bullying

### Social Media Section

Pedare Christian College promotes the safe, responsible and effective use of social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, and the like, in the College and in the wider community.

The College is a learning community and in keeping with its policies on internet use and cyber bullying, the College will:

1. encourage the safe and responsible use of social media by its students and staff
2. maintain a positive presence in social media, promoting and protecting the College's reputation
3. explore ways in which social media can be used to enhance curriculum delivery and pastoral care.

For students:

- the College will limit access to such media during the course of the school day
- they will be informed of their legal responsibilities regarding comments or images being placed on such networks
- they will be educated about the long-term repercussions of social networking on students' personal lives and employment opportunities
- they will be educated and reminded about the safe use of such networking.

For staff:

- the College will permit staff to use social media as a tool for learning, and therefore allow access during the course of the day for its responsible use
- they will be discouraged from using social media to communicate with current students, except in their use for curriculum support, as approved by College Leadership
- they will be encouraged to use their professional judgement in using social media to communicate with former students
- they will be reminded of their professional and personal responsibility with regard to placing material on such networking sites.

Personal use of the College network to access social media, as well as personal email, should not interfere with a student or a staff member's ability to meet his/her work commitments. All website access on College equipment is monitored and logged for future reference, access tracking and statistics.

The College Management has the duty and responsibility to act in a decisive, constructive and proportionate way when any member of the College community uses social networking sites in an unprofessional or inappropriate manner. The College Leadership is responsible to the Board for protecting the College's reputation and for ensuring the safety and protection of all of its staff and students in relation to the use of social media.

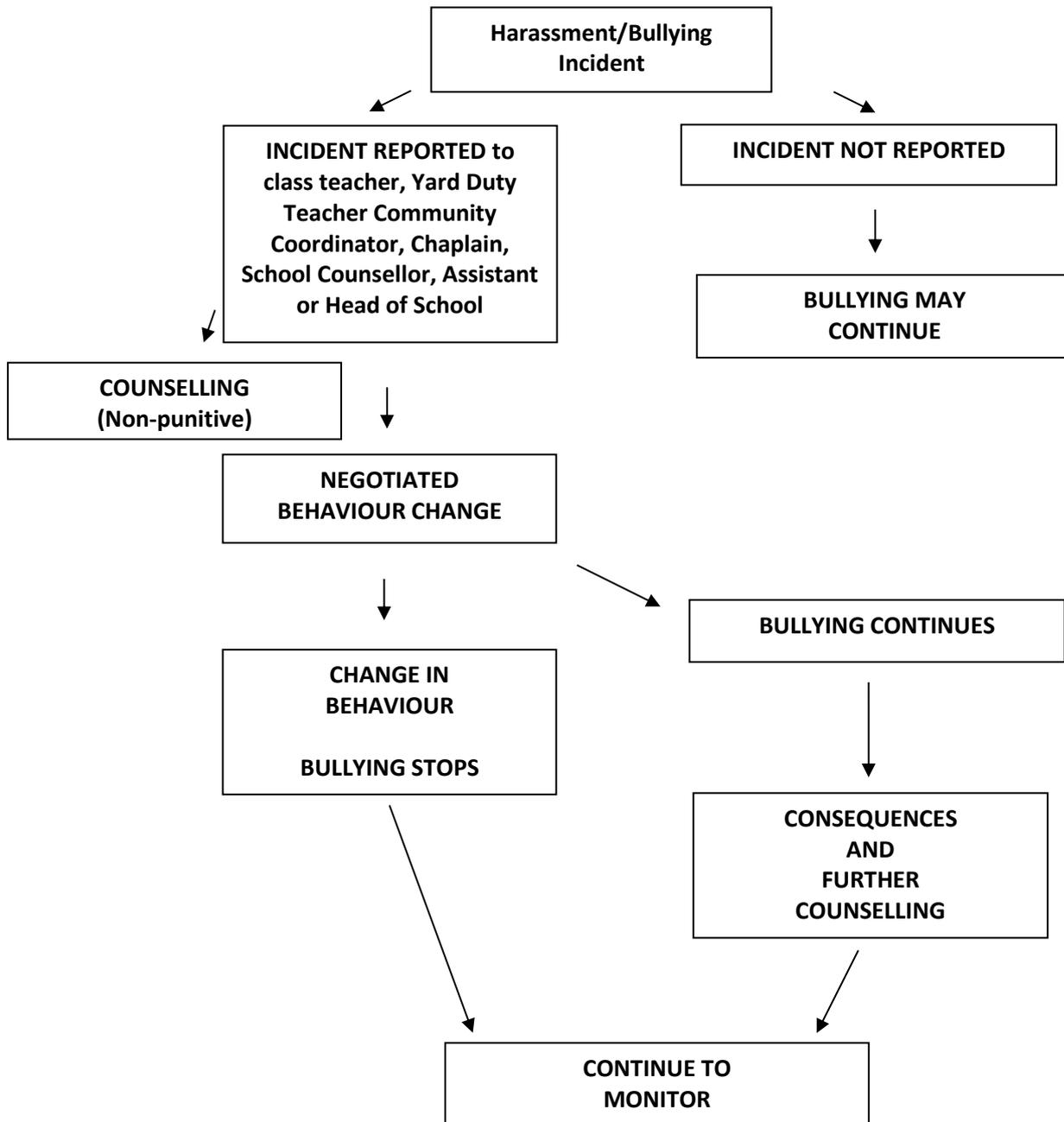
### PROCEDURES

Procedures used to deal with bullying incidents will depend on the severity or the on-going nature of the particular case and may include:

- **Counselling:** discussion with all those involved in an incidence of bullying; reflection tasks; empathy building; No Blame or Shared Concern approaches; developing agreements/ contracts etc.
- **Consequences:** these will be used in conjunction with the Student and Staff Expectations and Behaviour Management Policies at the Junior, Middle and Senior Schools. They may include: withdrawal from the classroom or the yard; alternative recesses and lunchtimes; isolation from peers; withdrawal of privileges; detention; suspension; expulsion.

The College may provide referral to specialist support services where it is deemed necessary for the personal development of the people concerned.

**FLOW CHART FOR DEALING WITH BULLYING INCIDENTS**



Restorative practice is a way of responding to bullying/conflict which:

- supports those affected
- allows for understanding of the wrongdoing
- gives ownership of the problems created
- promotes a sense of responsibility for our actions
- gives people the chance to make amends or change their behaviour, with support
- respects people and leaves their dignity intact