



# Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination Policy

## Definitions

Bullying is the deliberate and persistent misuse of power in relationships, involving repeated verbal, physical, or social actions aimed at causing harm, whether physical, social, or psychological. It may be perpetrated by an individual or a group, exploiting their perceived power over others who feel unable to prevent it. Bullying can occur both in person and online, through various digital platforms, manifesting as overt or covert behaviour. The repetitive nature of bullying, including the potential for ongoing incidents through the sharing of digital records, distinguishes it from isolated conflicts or fights among equals. The immediate, medium, and long-term impacts of bullying extend not only to the victims but also to bystanders.

Harassment is characterized by the exertion of power by one individual over another, leading the targeted person to feel embarrassed, offended, upset, devalued, degraded, afraid, frustrated, or angry. It is unwelcome, unreciprocated, uninvited, and typically occurs repeatedly, constituting a breach of proper and professional conduct.

Discrimination involves the unfair and prejudicial treatment of individuals or groups based on characteristics such as race, gender, age, or sexual orientation.

## Rationale

Hilliard Christian School is committed to fostering a positive culture that ensures every student feels a sense of belonging. In this environment, each student has the right to be respected by others, the right to learn or teach, and the right to feel safe and secure. As Christian educators, we hold the responsibility of creating teaching and learning spaces that are devoid of harassment. Our aim is to encourage students to cultivate attitudes and skills that actively discourage, challenge, and report instances of bullying, harassment, and/or discrimination in any form.

## Aims

1. Reinforcing a clear understanding within the school community about the unacceptable nature of bullying, harassment, and discrimination.
2. Encouraging all members of the School community to be vigilant for signs and evidence of bullying, with a shared responsibility to report incidents to staff, whether as an observer or a victim.
3. Ensuring that all reported bullying incidents are appropriately addressed, with support offered to both victims and perpetrators.
4. Seeking ongoing support and cooperation from parents and peer groups.
5. Creating a fair and supportive environment, free from all forms of harassment, that fosters personal respect and provides both physical and emotional safety for everyone.

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## Implementation

The school will communicate its stance on bullying to parents, teachers, students, and the community. All staff will receive training on legislative requirements related to harassment, ensuring they model appropriate behaviour.

- Professional development on harassment will be offered to staff, who will then exemplify and practice proper conduct. The school community, including staff, students, and members, will be acquainted with the school's harassment approach, receiving information about their rights and responsibilities.
- Students will be rewarded for exhibiting school values.
- The school will develop and widely publicize protocols for addressing issues or complaints at the school level.
- Staff will promptly report any harassment from parents or students to the Principal.
- Unresolved school-level issues may be referred by the Principal or involved parties to the Education Director of Adventist Schools Tasmania.
- Student harassment will result in consequences aligned with the school's Behaviour Management Policy.
- Claims of harassment will be treated confidentially, documented, and addressed promptly and constructively.
- The Privacy Policy will safeguard the rights and sensitivities of all individuals.
- The curriculum will periodically analyse the impact of harassment, assisting students in developing attitudes and skills to discourage, challenge, counteract, and report harassing practices.

The school will address bullying, harassment and discrimination through a three-phase approach:

### A. Initial Prevention

- Staff will undergo professional development on bullying and harassment, along with strategies to counteract them.
- Community awareness and input will be sought regarding bullying, its characteristics, and the school's programs and response.
- Programs promoting resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution, and problem-solving will be implemented.
- Updated information will be referred back to relevant organizations.
- Each classroom teacher will clarify the school's bullying policy, emphasizing the four core values of Hilliard Christian School at the beginning of each year.
- Public acknowledgment will be given to students demonstrating the four core values.

### B. Intervention

- Children will be encouraged to report bullying incidents involving themselves or others.
- Classroom teachers will remind students that reporting is not "dobbing".
- Parents are encouraged to contact the school if they become aware of a problem.
- Bullying incidents will be investigated by a member of the leadership team or their delegate, involving discussions with all parties and witnesses to authenticate incidents and confirm their ongoing nature.
- If the incident is confirmed, appropriate discipline will be allocated based on the school's Behaviour Management policy in consultation with departmental staff.
- Both the bully and victim will be offered counselling and support.

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### C. Follow-Up

- Ongoing monitoring of identified bullies will occur.
- In cases of continued incidents, the school's Behaviour Management Policy will be followed, potentially including ongoing counselling from an appropriate agency, exclusion from the class or the playground, withdrawal of privileges, or school suspension.

#### **Evaluation:**

This policy will be reviewed as part of the Board of Directors' Review process.

### **Document Information**

Document Name	Anti-Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination
Approver	Seventh-day Adventist Schools (Tasmania) Ltd. Board of Directors
Last Approved Date	27 <sup>th</sup> February, 2024
Review Date	February 2027
Audience	All School community members – parents, teachers, staff, volunteers, contractors, students and the community.
Links	<a href="https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/WhatIsBullying/DefinitionOfBullying">https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/WhatIsBullying/DefinitionOfBullying,</a>
Custodian	Principal