



PENLEIGH AND ESSENDON GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Policy of Mutual Respect

Our Commitment

Penleigh and Essendon Grammar School encourages all students to participate in society as proud and responsible individuals, to act with integrity and to practice the values of the School. The School is committed to support a culture of mutual respect among its members, to build resilience and to create a safe and positive environment for all students and staff.

Inappropriate behaviours, including **Bullying, Harassment, Victimisation** and **Vilification** are unacceptable as they are harmful to individuals. Penleigh and Essendon Grammar School is committed to working toward the reduction of these behaviours. All staff and students are required to honour and support this commitment.

Definitions:

Bullying, Harassment, Victimisation and Vilification are all forms of inappropriate behaviour.

Bullying is aggressive, unreasonable behaviour that intimidates, humiliates and /or undermines a person or group. Bullying may involve a one-off situation, although it generally involves behaviour that is repeated over time.

Bullying can include the following types of behaviour:

- Verbal abuse (e.g. being sworn at, threats, insults, continual criticism, name calling, practical jokes, unjustified threats of dismissal);
- Direct violence including physical assault and harassment;
- Abusive emails;
- Threatening body language;
- Unreasonable demands, unnecessary pressure, impossible deadlines;
- Unreasonably undermining performance, deliberately withholding information or resources, or supplying incorrect information;
- Constant, intrusive surveillance or monitoring;
- Inappropriate interference with personal belongings or equipment.

Genuine and reasonable disciplinary procedures are not bullying.

Harassment is any unwelcome or uninvited verbal, written or physical behaviour which can make a person feel offended, humiliated or intimidated. It includes Cyber bullying, which is harassing behaviour that is carried out through Electronic Communication Technology.

Discrimination is any practice that makes unfair distinctions between individuals or groups of people, so as to disadvantage some and advantage others. Discrimination on the following grounds is unlawful and will not be tolerated:

- gender;
- marital status;
- parental status;
- family responsibilities;
- physical features;
- pregnancy;
- Breast feeding;
- carer's responsibilities;
- race;
- nationality;
- ethnic origin;
- political activity or belief;
- religious activity or belief;
- intellectual impairment;
- physical impairment;
- gender identity;
- sexual orientation or preference;
- age; and
- personal association with a person having any of the above attributes.

Victimisation is when a person subjects or threatens another to a detriment because that other person proposes to, has or is believed to have:

- made a complaint to any relevant equal opportunity board, commission or tribunal;
- given information or documents to any relevant equal opportunity board, commission or tribunal;

- attended a conference at any relevant equal opportunity board, commission or tribunal;
- appeared as a witness in a hearing;
- asserted the rights of any person under equal opportunity legislation; or
- alleged that someone has breached equal opportunity legislation (which includes complaints under this policy).

Vilification is behaviour that publicly incites hatred, contempt or ridicule of a person or a class of persons because of their race, national or ethnic origin or religion. This includes the use of Electronic Communication Technology to publish or transmit statements or other material.

These behaviours are inappropriate whether demonstrated in words or actions, or in writing. Similarly, inappropriate behaviours via electronic communication technologies, sometimes know as cyber bullying, must be considered within this context.

Intention is not required for the conduct to constitute these inappropriate behaviours.

Aims:

As a School committed to an environment that is free from Bullying, Harassment, Victimisation, Vilification and other inappropriate behaviour, all members of Penleigh and Essendon Grammar School are expected to treat others with respect and dignity at all times.

Accordingly, the School creates a culture of positive social behaviours and supportive relationships, with the intention of preventing incidents of unacceptable behaviour. If a breach of behaviour does occur during the school day or at a school activity, the School restores positive behaviour by involving a transparent restorative process. Where the behaviour occurs outside the school day or a school activity, the school works in a spirit of cooperation and mutual support to restore positive relations.

Creative Positive Social Behaviours:

The School implements programmes, practices and protocols which build supportive relationships.

The School's Rules and Student Welfare Policy, including the Student Code of Conduct, provides clear guidelines regarding the rights, responsibilities and expectations of behaviour in the School.

Students are educated about what constitutes appropriate and inappropriate behaviour and about the harmful effects of inappropriate behaviours.

All members of the school community will not condone or tolerate **Bullying, Harassment, Victimisation** or **Vilification** and will report any incidents without delay.

Communication will take place with parents in relation to the fostering of positive behaviours.

Staff should monitor social conduct and deter inappropriate behaviour.

Restoring Positive Behaviour

Where it is believed that **Bullying, Harassment, Victimisation or Vilification** may have occurred, the following procedure will apply:

The member of staff will seek to restore positive behaviour by adopting appropriate measures that may include all or any of the following:

- Establishing the facts of the incident by speaking to the parties involved or other witnesses
- Mediating a resolution to the conflict to restore positive relations between the parties
- Stating that the behaviour is in breach of School Policy
- Obtaining undertakings that inappropriate behaviour cease immediately and permanently

The matter will be taken seriously and will be addressed promptly.

Students may choose to resolve the matter without mediation or mediation may be requested or required to restore positive relations so that harmonious coexistence can be achieved.

Other strategies may include:

- The relevant Year Level Coordinator and /or Head of Section being notified
- Referring either or both of the parties to counseling with a school psychologist
- Requesting persons involved to report any continuation or recurrence of such behaviour
- Informing Parents/Guardians
- Continuing to monitor the situation
- Taking the appropriate disciplinary action
- Referring the matter to Police where the behaviour is sufficiently serious or believed to be of a criminal nature

Subsequent Responsive Measures

Where the initial Restorative Process has taken place in relation to a student's inappropriate behaviour but the student persists in the behaviour or adopts a new behaviour which is also inappropriate in nature, the following procedures may be adopted:

The student attends a meeting with the Year Level Coordinator, Head of Section or other representative of the Principal. The aim of the meeting is to ensure that the behaviour ceases permanently. A parent or Guardian will be informed and may be in attendance at the meeting.

In this meeting, reference may be made to some or all of the following:

- That the matter is of a serious nature and is in breach of the School's Policies
- That despite the restorative measures, the behaviour has persisted or recurred
- That the behaviour must cease immediately and permanently
- That mediation, including conferencing, will be initiated
- That the student must attend counseling to help support the student to cease such behaviour
- That disciplinary action is appropriate and will be invoked at the discretion of the Principal.
- That Victoria Police will be informed where the behaviour is sufficiently serious or believed to be of a criminal nature.

Appropriate action will be taken.