



PRINCE ALFRED COLLEGE

## 2.7 ANTI-BULLYING AND HARRASSMENT POLICY

Prepared by:	Heads of School
Approved by:	The Executive Team
Approval Date:	This policy was ratified by the College Executive Team in January 2025
Revision Date	January 2027

### 1 Purpose

1.1 Prince Alfred College (PAC) has developed the following Anti-bullying and Harassment Policy that outlines the College's approach to protecting students from bullying and harassment. This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Student Code of Conduct and Student Behaviour Management and Sanctions Policy.

### 2 Value Statement

2.1 PAC's student life is underpinned by the following core values

Respect - We respect ourselves, those around us and our environments.

Excellence - We achieve our personal best in everything we do.

Belonging - We ensure every member of our school community feels welcome and connected.

Endeavour - We are curious, courageous and will rise to a challenge.

2.2 In embodying these core values, the College is committed to taking reasonable steps to:

2.1.1 Provide a safe, secure and caring environment

2.1.2 Foster awareness and understanding of bullying and harassment

2.1.3 Challenge any culture of secrecy and reject the notion that that bullying and harassment are acceptable behaviour

2.1.4 Establish clear, consistent and equitable procedures for dealing with bullying and harassment Behaviours.

### 3 Definitions

**Bullying** is an ongoing 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 (source: <https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/understanding-bullying>)

Bullying can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious direct or hidden (indirect or covert).

Bullying behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time (for example, through sharing of digital records).

**Direct Physical Bullying** (when it aligns with the definition of bullying) includes but is not limited to:

- Hitting, tripping, pushing, kicking
- Inappropriate gestures
- Invasion of personal space
- Stand-over tactics or threats and/or
- Interfering with another's property by stealing, hiding or damaging.

**Direct verbal bullying** (when it aligns with the definition of bullying) includes but is not limited to:

- Name calling, insults or verbal abuse
- Teasing and put-downs e.g. belittling others' abilities, achievements or efforts
- Negative remarks about a person's race, gender, religion, appearance and/or sexual orientation
- Threats.

**Indirect or Covert Bullying** (when it aligns with the definition of bullying) is often carried out behind the victim's back and designed to harm reputation and/or cause humiliation. It includes but is not limited to:

- Lying or spreading rumours
- Playing jokes to embarrass and/or humiliate
- Mimicking
- Staring at someone deliberately in such a way that they feel uncomfortable or threatened
- Excluding or encouraging others to exclude and/or
- Making comments about a person's morals.

**Cyber-bullying** (when it aligns with the definition of bullying above) includes but is not limited to:

- Sending unpleasant emails or text messages
- Posting items or photos on social media to threaten, humiliate and distress with or without consent.

**Bullying is not:**

- Mutual conflict where there is an argument or disagreement between persons but not an imbalance of power
- Social rejection or dislike as it is not feasible to think that all individuals will like every other person. Refusing to play with a particular child or not inviting them to a party, for instance, is not bullying provided that social rejection is not directed to a specific person or involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others
- Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, while not acceptable, are not defined as bullying.

However, these conflicts still need to be addressed and resolved under the College's Student Code of Conduct and Behaviour Management and Sanctions Policy.

**Harassment** is behaviour that targets an individual or group due to their:

- identity, race, culture or ethnic origin
- religion
- physical characteristics
- gender
- sexual orientation
- marital, parenting or economic status
- age
- ability or disability.

It offends, humiliates, intimidates or creates a hostile environment. It may be:

- an ongoing pattern of behaviour or a single act
- directed randomly or towards the same person(s)
- intentional or unintentional

**Sexual Harassment** – is an unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favours, or unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature, which a reasonable person would find offensive, humiliating or intimidating.

Sexual harassment can take many forms but not limited to:

- Direct propositioning or subtle pressure for sexual favours
- Leering, patting, pinching, touching or unnecessary familiarity
- Making comments, jokes or gestures of a sexual nature
- Spreading rumours of a sexual nature about a person
- Indecent exposure or sexual assault.

## 4 Should Bullying or Harassment be reported?

- 4.1 All incidents of bullying and harassment should be reported. It is understandable that there can be a reluctance to report bullying or harassment, but this must not prevent an individual from reporting bullying or harassment behaviour.
- 4.2 It is also understandable that some students may not want to report bullying because they have concerns that it may make matters worse. To address this many staff at PAC are trained to help and support victims of bullying or harassment in a manner that protects the victim. They will be dealt with quickly, sensitively and firmly.
- 4.3 Bullying or harassment at Prince Alfred College is not tolerated and dealing with allegations of bullying or harassment is a priority. Students, parents, guardians and teachers all have responsibilities for preventing and responding to bullying and harassment behaviour.
- 4.4 Students – It is important for students to remember that it is not their fault. Bullies seek to hurt or belittle their targets because of the need to feel powerful and not because the victim has done anything or said something.
- 4.5 If the bullying and harassment continues, the student should inform a member of staff of the situation. If they do not feel they can tell someone on their own, they are encouraged to find a friend to go with. By telling someone, the victim is immediately helping to make the bully less powerful. This person may be someone that the student feels they can trust (i.e. parents/caregivers/teacher/counsellor/sports coach/student leader).

- 4.6 Students can complete the online form for reporting incidents of bullying and harassment. The online form is anonymous and is sent to the Head of Middle Years and Head of Senior Years for further investigation.
- 4.7 Students can also talk to:
- College Prefects
  - School nurse
  - Boarding house staff.
- 4.8 Teachers – All employees of Prince Alfred College have a duty of care to ensure that any bullying or harassment brought to their attention or personally witnessed is addressed as soon as possible. The College treats any report of bullying or harassment confidentially, seriously and sympathetically.
- 4.9 All employees are required to follow up any complaint impartially, promptly and confidentially. In the first instance and if appropriate, the matter should be dealt with promptly. The victim should be supported and notes taken about the matter. If appropriate, the perpetrator should be spoken to and the matter reported to the relevant Head of House who will either deal with the issue or elevate it to the Head of Middle Years or Head of Senior Years who would view the matter seriously and take appropriate action. Actions that College will take will depend on the nature and severity of the bullying or harassment, and may include:
- Dealing with the situation informally through a ‘no blame’ or ‘shared concern’ approach
  - Mediation
  - Counselling
  - Dealing with the situation through restorative practices
  - Taking disciplinary action in accordance with the College’s behaviour policy, i.e. detention, suspension or expulsion against the bully or harasser.

## **5 Anti-Bullying and Harassment strategies**

- 5.1 PAC recognises the importance of implementing effective strategies and programs to prevent bullying and harassment. These approaches may be adapted as necessary to address specific circumstances and needs. The following outlines key strategies employed by the College:
- 5.2 The PAC Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy is actively promoted among students, staff, parents/guardians, and the wider College community.
- 5.3 Copies of the Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy are provided in student enrolment package and available through the student and parent portal on SEQTA for ease of reference.
- 5.4 Staff at PAC utilise a range of constructive strategies to address bullying and harassment, including:
- Coping skills education
  - Assertiveness training
  - Problem-solving and social skills development
  - Counselling and behaviour modification
- 5.5 The College is dedicated to equipping staff with effective professional development on managing bullying and harassment, focusing on evidence-based strategies suited to the school environment.

- 5.6 The Prince's Man Program educates students about bullying and harassment, fostering discussions that promote positive attitudes and respectful relationships.
- 5.7 The Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy is integrated into the student enrolment agreement and behaviour management policies.
- 5.8 PAC employs specialist staff, including College Counsellors, Chaplain to provide welfare support for all students, addressing the needs of both victims and perpetrators of bullying.
- 5.9 The College Prefect Leadership Team supports the Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy and is available to assist students in reporting and addressing bullying concerns.
- 5.10 PAC staff are expected to model tolerance, empathy, and acceptance of individual differences, fostering an inclusive and supportive school environment.
- 5.11 Staff are required to approach their supervision duties diligently to maintain a strong presence and uphold a safe and respectful atmosphere.
- 5.12 The College regularly reviews its Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy to ensure its ongoing relevance and effectiveness.

## **6 Handling bullying and harassment incident**

- 6.1 Prince Alfred College recognises the importance of consistently responding to all incidents of bullying that have been reported to the College and ensure that planned interventions are used to respond to these incidents. The College recognises it has a duty to ensure that support is provided to any student who has been affected by, engaged in or is witness to bullying behaviour. It is the College's obligation to provide regular updates, within the bounds of privacy legislation, to parents or caregivers about the management of incidents.
- 6.2 At Prince Alfred College, the following process is followed when handling and investigating bullying and harassment complaints.

## **7 Responsibilities:**

- 7.1 Every student has the right to feel safe at the College and to learn in a supportive, caring environment. It is equally the responsibility of all students to uphold this right by:
  - Refraining from any form of bullying.
  - Reporting any incidents of bullying they witness and, where safe, intervening to stop it.
  - Speaking to a teacher, staff member, parent or trusted adult as soon as possible about their concerns.
  - Telling someone engaging in bullying to stop and offering support to the individual being targeted.

## **8 IMPLEMENTATION**

- 8.1 Staff will be briefed on the policy rationale, its implications and immediate issues of implementation, professional development and accountability.

## INFORMATION FOR PARENTS TO BE INCLUDED IN STUDENT HANDBOOK

**Parents** – All parents want their children to be safe and happy and to do well at school. Any report of bullying by a son should always be taken seriously and parents are invited to contact the College should they become aware that their son is being bullied or harassed.

- **How can I, as a parent, tell if my child is being bullied or harassed?**

Children affected by bullying and harassment may not talk about it with their teachers or school counsellor. They may be afraid that it will only make things worse, or that it is wrong to tell tales or 'dob in' other students.

When people are bullied or harassed they may feel angry, embarrassed, frightened, humiliated or uncomfortable, scared or unsafe. That is why parents or care-givers have an important part to play in helping the school, and their child, deal with bullying and harassment.

Some signs a child or young person is being bullied or harassed may be:

- Reduced ability to concentrate and learn
- Refusal to attend school, excuses not to go
- Unexplained cuts, bruises, or scratches
- Stolen or damaged possessions/clothing
- Headaches or stomach aches
- Asking for extra pocket money or food
- Acting out, tearfulness, sadness, lack of interest in usual activities
- Unwillingness to discuss or secrecy about their online communications (e.g. mobilephone texts, Facebook comments)

- **What should I do, as a parent, if I think my child is being bullied or harassed?**

If parents or care-givers think their child is being bullied or harassed it is natural to feel anxious or sad. However, it is important to try to stay calm and take the following steps:

- Listen calmly to your child
- Let your child know that telling them about the bullying or harassment is the right thing to do.

- Find out:
  - What happened
  - Who was involved
  - Where it happened
  - If anyone else saw, read, or heard it.
- Talk with your child about what should be done.
- Make a note of what your child tells you to help you when you talk to the school.

Note: These steps are also useful if you think that your child:

- Has been involved in bullying or harassment of others
- As a bystander, may be affected by bullying or harassment of others
- As a bystander, has information and is concerned about other students being bullied.

- **Talk to the school**

A child may not want you to talk about the bullying or harassment. However, it is important you let the school know so the problem can be worked out together:

- Make a time to speak to your child's teacher; relevant pastoral care staff; the counsellor, deputy headmaster or headmaster.
- Be as clear as possible about what happened.
- Ask the school what else you can do to help your child and the College to stop the bullying or harassment from happening.
- Keep in touch with the school, and let the staff know if problems continue.

It is important to raise this matter with the College and not to contact the student you believe has been the perpetrator or the parent of the student. The College would continue to review the resolutions and the wellbeing of the complainant and the alleged bully or harasser for a period, to ensure the actions taken have been effective in stopping the bullying or harassment.

○