



# HARASSMENT POLICY

## Rationale:

Kyabram P-12 College regards all harassment as behaviour which is totally unacceptable. All members of the college community have the right to feel safe and comfortable while at school and while travelling to and from school, or on school-based outings or events.

## Aims:

- All members of the college community will be responsible for ensuring that their own behaviour does not result in someone else feeling embarrassed, frightened, anxious, hurt or uncomfortable.
- Discrimination will not be tolerated. Differing beliefs will be accepted provided they do not intrude on the rights of others. This includes comments about, or actions regarding, gender, sexual preference, race, marital status, religious beliefs, family background, political beliefs, physical or mental disability or impairment and the status of being a parent or childless.
- No-one will interfere with the educational opportunities of any other person. Harassment infringes on individual rights and adversely affects the learning of others.
- All members of the college community have the responsibility to prevent and/or report harassment if it occurs.

## Explanations:

Harassment is defined as verbal, physical or sexual conduct which is unwelcome, uninvited, unreciprocated and/or offensive. Harassment may be written and occur in the use of electronic communications through computer, texting, email, internet and social media. Harassment may be a single incident or of a repetitive nature, which then becomes bullying. **No harassment is acceptable and no incident is too trivial to warrant complaint.**

## Verbal harassment may include:-

- name calling
- put downs
- negative comments on a student's level of achievement (low or high)
- spreading rumours or telling lies about a person
- negative references to a person's appearance or personality
- unwanted verbal comments
- threatening remarks or noises
- negative comments about a person's private life
- negative comments about a person's family structure or situation
- negative comments about a person's hobbies and/or interests

Physical Harassment may include:-

- threatening behaviour
- unfair exclusion
- fighting and wrestling
- using dangerous weapons
- spitting
- pulling and damaging clothing
- throwing objects, including water
- unwanted touching
- damaging or interfering with others' property
- deliberately blocking access to or exit from an area
- intimidation by deliberately invading the personal space of another
- unwanted invasion of personal space

Racial harassment may include:-

- racist comments or jokes
- negative references to, or judgements regarding, a person's appearance, cultural values, beliefs, language or country of origin.

*Sexual harassment can be divided into three categories.*

Subtle sexual harassment is the most common. It may include:-

- offensive jokes, questions, name calling or suggestive comments about a person's private life, mannerisms, sexual morality, sexual preferences or appearance
- unwanted, persistent invitations
- unwanted physical contact (such as purposely brushing against another's body)
- unwanted attention (such as looking up girls' dresses, giving "wedgies", pulling pants down or lifting girls' dresses)
- ogling, whistling, offensive staring or leering
- belittling comments based on sex-role stereotyping

**Note – sexual harassment does not refer to occasional compliments or courtesies**

Explicit sexual harassment may include:-

- sexual gestures which cause embarrassment, discomfort or offence
- verbal, written or illustrative material which causes embarrassment, discomfort or offence
- deliberate, unwelcome physical contact (such as pinching, patting, fondling, embracing or touching)
- demanding or offering sexual favours or rewards
- repeated requests to go out with someone, especially after genuine prior refusal

Criminal sexual harassment may include:-

- indecent exposure

- sexual assault, attempted or actual rape
- sending obscene letters or making obscene phone calls
- sending pornographic images via the internet

**Note - criminal sexual harassment will be reported immediately to the police**

Electronic harassment may include:-

- unwelcome text messages, phone calls or recorded messages
- unwanted email messages, and chatroom and social networking website dialogue

### **Implementation:**

Parents, teachers, students, bus drivers, school employees and the local community will be made aware of the school's position on harassment. A copy of this policy is to be included in the staff handbook and student diaries.

### **Primary Prevention:**

- Professional development will be made available for staff relating to harassment and bullying.
- Provision of programs for students that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving.
- Each classroom teacher will explain to students the school policy on harassment at the start of each school year.

### **Early Intervention:**

- Encourage students and staff to report incidents of harassment involving themselves or others.
- Parents encouraged to contact school if they become aware of a problem.
- Provide safe and quiet places for children to access at recess and lunch times.
- Public recognition and reward for positive behaviour and resolution of problems.

### **Intervention:**

- Once harassment is reported the victim, perpetrator and witnesses will be spoken with, and all incidents or allegations fully investigated and documented.
- Consequences will be applied in line with the Consistent Behaviour Management Plan.
- Harassment by staff will be dealt with in a formal process initiated by the Principal in line with DE&T policy.

**Evaluation:**

School Council will review this policy in collaboration with the Student Representative Council and the Student Wellbeing group as part of the school's three-year cyclic review process.

RATIFIED BY COLLEGE COUNCIL

Date: August, 2016.

College Council President

Review Date: August, 2019