

Safe Schools: Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedures

Revised: June 2017

Introduction

The School's policies which are made from time to time are made pursuant to the requirements set out in section 47 of the *Education Act* and of the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) for registration of the school.

Vision Statement:

The purpose of Pacific Hope School Ltd. is to provide a Christian educational community as a centre of teaching, learning and serving excellence, founded on Biblically-based beliefs, values and behaviour.

Rationale:

We recognise that there will be incidences of bullying in our school community at various times and in varying degrees. The depravity of the human condition resulting from the Fall means that all individuals are capable of sinful actions that harm or exclude others or that manipulate relationships for selfish ends.

The Pacific Hope School Ltd. community of students, parents and staff should work together to both prevent bullying and deal effectively with those incidents of bullying that may occur.

Policy:

Pacific Hope School Ltd. will implement intervention strategies and programs of instruction to minimise bullying at all levels of our community, with the aim of having no bullying behaviour.

Related Policies:

This policy should be interpreted in relation to the full complement of Pacific Hope School Ltd. policies. Particular attention should be given to the following:

- Safe Schools

Principles:

- Bullying is a conscious and willful repetitive act of aggression and/or manipulation by one or more people against another person or people. It is an abuse of power by those carrying out the bullying and is designed to cause hurt or intimidation.
- Bullying can be either physical or non-physical:
 - **Physical bullying can include:** biting, hair-pulling, hitting, kicking, damaging property etc.
 - **Non-physical bullying can include:** abusive calls, abusive text messages, hurtful emails, cyber bullying, extorting money or material possessions, intimidation, threats, name-calling, teasing, rude gestures, faces, manipulating relationships, excluding, isolating etc.
- The pro-active principles for eliminating bullying are safety, acceptance and care.
- All students will be presented with programs of instruction that make the School's definition, intolerance, and stated consequences of bullying clear and explicit. This will include explanations of the definitions of bullying, including the roles of perpetrator and bystander, and the sequence of intervention events to manage instances of bullying.
- Bullying is not to be tolerated under any circumstance and every incident should be followed up. Intervention procedures will be in accordance with the Safe Schools procedures and any discipline imposed will be in accordance with the Discipline policy (staff and student).

SAFE SCHOOLS FOLLOW-UP - Responses to Unsafe Behaviour

Principles:

1. All behaviour that is contrary to the Safe Schools policy should be reported to the Director.

2. The Director will determine if the incident behaviour is deemed to be Significant or Serious.
3. Safe Schools Follow-up of Significant incidents will be administered by the Director (or delegate).
4. Safe Schools Follow-up for Serious Incidents will be administered by the Director.

Safe Schools Follow-up: A “Shared Responsibility” Approach

STEP 1: Investigation of Incident

- The victim is reassured that the incident is being investigated and their feelings about the incident are discussed.
- The victim is interviewed and an incident report is taken or written by the victim.
- A range of approaches in responding to the incident are discussed with the alleged victim.
- Incident reports are collected from the alleged perpetrator(s) and bystander(s).
- Contact with the Police Youth Liaison officer where appropriate for advice or formal investigation.

STEP 2: Parents Notified of Process

- Parents of the victim, the alleged perpetrator(s) bystander(s) who are thought to be involved are contacted as soon as possible and preferably before the students have contacted them.
- Parents are told of the allegations and of the process of investigation that has commenced.

STEP 3: Discussion of Incident

- The student(s)– the perpetrator(s), bystander(s) – meet with the Director or delegate. The Victim is not included.
- The threatening behaviour is explained and it is emphasised that the behaviour makes the victim feel unsafe.
- Responsibility for this reaction is shared as appropriate between the aggressor’s misbehaviour and the griever’s sensitivities. (The aim is to raise empathy within the group for the victim and a sense of responsibility for their actions).
- The student(s) suggest ways that they could make the threatened student feel safer at school – how they feel they can help and what they can do.
- The student(s) are set the task of implementing these actions.
- Director/Delegate should note any in the group who show a reluctance to accept the seriousness of the issue or their role in correcting it. These students should undergo further targeted counselling which may include the involvement of their Parents.

STEP 4: Discipline

- Director or delegate meets individually with those students responsible for the threatening behaviour.
- Director or delegate outlines appropriate discipline for breaches of the discipline code. These measures are documented and communicated to the students’ parents.

STEP 5: Documentation

- Director or delegate communicate the disciplinary consequences and commitments to appropriate behaviour to the parents of the students responsible for the aggressive behaviour through normal disciplinary letters (Afternoon Detention Letter or Suspension Letters)
- Director or delegate communicate the disciplinary actions and commitment to change behaviour to the parents of the victim.
- Director or delegate complete a Safe Schools Report and place on student file.
- Where the Director has processed a Serious Incident a letter is drafted to the parents of the victim(s) confirming that action has been taken to address the issue and that appropriate discipline has been implemented. Parents are requested to make immediate contact with the school in the event of any recurrence or future incident.

STEP 6: Follow-up

- An interview is conducted with the victim(s) to assure them of the school’s ongoing support and of the importance of reporting any recurrence or future incident.
- After a period of time the Director or delegate checks in with the victim to confirm that the threatening behaviour has stopped.