



Policy and Procedure: **WAYS Secondary Safe and Supportive Environment**

Section: **Anti-Bullying / Harassment**

Policy

At WAYS Secondary, we believe that all students and members of the community have the right to a learning and work environment that promotes safety and security and that it is free from bullying/harassment, harassment, intimidation, humiliation and hurt. We all share a responsibility to foster, promote and restore right relationships. We believe that bullying/harassment in any form is unacceptable and that students, staff and parents / caregivers all share a responsibility for preventing it.

This policy and procedure provide clear procedures and strategies to prevent, reduce and respond to bullying / harassment.

Other policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with the WAYS Secondary Child Protection policy and procedures, WAYS Secondary Discipline policy and procedures, WAYS Secondary Student Welfare Policy and procedures, WAYS Secondary Attendance policy and procedures and the WAYS Secondary Serious Incidents policy and procedures.

POLICY FRAMEWORK

Schools are called to establish relationships which are grounded in love, compassion, reconciliation and justice. In witnessing these values, we reject ideas, beliefs and behaviours which marginalise or victimise people.

WAYS Secondary Strategies to deal with Bullying / harassment:

Bullying / harassment and harassment is totally against the mission and purpose of WAYS Secondary and will not be tolerated. Bullying / harassment can be an isolated incident as well as repeated incidences in relation to a range of unwanted and harmful behaviours that can be verbal, physical, sexual, social or psychological in nature. These behaviours are not only harmful, but they often involve the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons. Harassment is defined as conduct which annoys, threatens, intimidates, or causes fear in another person. It is unwanted behaviour that offends, demeans, or threatens another person. The behaviour causes a hostile and or an uncomfortable environment. It can include sexual harassment, derogatory comments, slurs, improper propositions, assault, physically impeding or blocking behaviour, as well as visual insults. Please see Appendix A for more details on Bullying / harassment and management strategies for students.

The school will seek to create a school-wide culture that:

- Allows students to flourish free from discrimination, harassment or any form of bullying / harassment.
- Does not tolerate, condone or trivialize bullying / harassment behaviors.
- Is aware of what constitutes bullying / harassment behavior.
- Provides support to the victims of bullying / harassment.
- Deals firmly with bullies so that they either stop their bullying / harassment or leave the School

The methods used by the school to discourage bullying / harassment/ harassment will vary from time-to-time, with new initiatives being introduced when thought appropriate. These initiatives will be communicated by teaching staff to parents / caregivers/ caregivers via letters, emails or parent / caregiver teacher evenings. The measures that have been used to discourage bullying / harassment at WAYS Secondary include, but are not limited to:

- Employing a suitable range of sanctions to deal with and discourage bullies. These sanctions include, but are not limited to in house suspension, suspension, withdrawal and expulsion. Please refer to the WAYS Secondary Discipline policy and procedures.
- WAYS Secondary conducts anti bullying / harassment workshops to all year groups on an annual basis. These are facilitated by the WAYS Wellness team. These workshops are designed in consultation with teaching staff to ensure all relevant issues are addressed. The school's policies and procedures in relation to bullying / harassment are reiterated at these workshops.
- Putting up signage about the school to promote a bully-free environment and giving student anti bullying / harassment handouts to raise awareness – refer to Appendix A
- Printing anti-bullying / harassment policies and making them widely available to parents / caregivers and students via information flyer or the school website and/ or information evenings.
- Promoting a bully-free environment in assemblies, student meetings.
- Promoting a bully-free environment in School policy documents and in occasional articles in publications such as the WAYS newsletter.
- Undertaking anonymous Year-level surveys of student well-being and bullying / harassment behavior to obtain confidential information from students.
- Conducting exit interviews to obtain information about the effectiveness of anti-bullying / harassment strategies employed by the school.
- Ensuring effective and easy to access pastoral support for students to psychologist, G.P and case managers at the Wellness center at WAYS.
- Incorporating anti-bullying / harassment guidelines in the school's code of behavior for students and in their statement of students' rights and responsibilities. All students receive the students' rights and responsibilities at interview. Please refer to the students' rights and responsibilities handout.
- During the orientation process all enrolled students sign a contract, which clearly explains the consequences for bullying / harassment behavior. Please refer to the WAYS Secondary Student Contract.

The effectiveness of these strategies rests with ALL members of the school's community.

WAYS Secondary reserves the right to alter the means and ways by which it discourages bullying / harassment. If any should like to suggest an improvement in the way bullying / harassment might be discouraged at WAYS Secondary, they are invited to send their suggestions to the Principal in writing.

Procedures for reporting bullying / harassment

Procedures for students:

- Students are encouraged by the Principal at their enrolment interview and during the orientation process to report incidents of bullying / harassment or harassment as soon as possible. They are also advised of the ways that they can report incidents of bullying / harassment. They also encouraged to report the incident to any responsible adult including a parent / caregiver, teacher or the Principal or they may use the anonymous box. Students are also reminded of ways to report bullying / harassment in the anti-bullying / harassment workshops.
- Students can report that they are being bullied or have observed bullying / harassment to a responsible adult or through a letter left in the anonymous box, located in the main waiting area.
- Students must save/compile any evidence of bullying / harassment i.e. screen shots to assist the school in investigating claims of bullying / harassment
- Students who are victims of bullying / harassment have access to WAYS Psychologists

Procedures for parents / caregivers:

- Parents / caregivers report to teaching staff or the Principal that they believe their child is being bullied or other students report to teaching staff or the Principal knowledge of bullying / harassment towards any student.
- Parents / caregivers are informed at the enrolment interview by the Principal that if they suspect their child is a victim of bullying / harassment they can contact the WAYS Secondary School Principal and Teachers. The school will liaise via phone, email or meetings with the parents / caregivers on a regular basis until the young person feels safe.
- If the alleged bullying / harassment occurs **out of school hours or in any arena not associated with school** i.e. not on a school bus to/ from school, on the school grounds or on a school excursion the parents/caregivers are encouraged to inform the school. The school will not investigate bullying / harassment in these circumstances. Parents/caregivers are encouraged to report bullying / harassment/ intimidation in this circumstance to the police as the school can't keep students safe out of school hours.

Procedures for responding to allegations of Bullying / harassment:

1. Teacher or any staff member receives notification of bullying / harassment and as soon as possible notifies the Principal and contacts the parents / caregivers to inform them that they will be following up the issue.
2. Staff must gather all evidence in relation to the allegation of bullying / harassment.
3. An incident form that is saved in the WAYS Secondary folder on the SharePoint will be filled out by the teacher or staff member who received notification of the bullying / harassment as soon as possible after the incident. They will forward this form to the Principal as soon as it completed.
4. Students are given an opportunity to respond to allegations and any evidence against them in a meeting with the Principal or WAYS Secondary staff after the incident.
5. Where necessary meetings involving relevant teaching staff, the students and their parents / caregivers will be organised by the Principal. A counselling referral must be acted upon within one week of the report and parents / caregivers informed of the action.
6. Bullying / harassment and or harassing behaviours by students that are considered particularly serious by the Principal will be reported as soon as practicable after the incident(s) via phone call or email by the Principal to the local Youth Liaison Officer – Constable Dani Saric, Bondi Beach Police, 153 Bronte Road Waverley 2024, NSW. Ph 93699899.
7. The Principal or authorized delegate works to resolve the bullying / harassment issue by interviewing all students involved and responding appropriately according to the school Discipline Policy. Please refer to the WAYS Secondary Discipline policy and procedures. For example:
 - The Principal will direct student(s) who are found to be responsible for the offending behaviour to attend counselling sessions with a WAYS psychologist to assist them to meaningfully reflect on the incident(s) and develop better strategies to reduce the likelihood of reoffending.
 - The student who is victimised will be offered support by teaching and WAYS psychology staff immediately after the incident and on an ongoing basis if they require. The Student Support and Administration Coordinator will facilitate this process.
4. WAYS Secondary staff will ensure that students who are victims of bullying / harassment also have access to counselling to debrief the incident if they wish and that they are able to contact their parent / caregiver/caregiver if needed. All measures will be taken to ensure their experience of safety at the school.
5. The Principal will contact the parents / caregivers by phone one week, one month and one term after the issue has been resolved to review the success of the response and ascertain whether any further action needs to be taken.
6. The Principal will give the completed incident report or any other records of the incident to the Student Support and Administration Coordinator to be filed in the secure serious incidents file.

7. Any issues relating to bullying / harassment incidents are raised and discussed at weekly staff meetings with teaching, WAYS Secondary non-teaching staff and the Principal.

Handout given to parents / caregivers: Strategies for parents / caregivers to manage bullying / harassment issues if they arise with their children.

POLICY REVIEW

The policy will be reviewed not less frequently than once every three years.

Date Created	August 2015
Date Reviewed	August 2024
Expiry Date	August 2027
Approved by	Dr Terri Said, CEO