



BURWOOD GIRLS HIGH SCHOOL

SCHOOL POLICY FOR MANAGEMENT OF BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

All members of the school community are committed to ensuring a safe and caring environment in which the rights of others and individual differences are respected.

At Burwood Girls High School bullying and harassment will not be tolerated in any form.

What is bullying?

Bullying is an act of aggression causing embarrassment, hurt, pain or discomfort to another person.

- It is an abuse of power
- It can be verbal, psychological, social or physical abuse
- It can be planned or unintentional
- It can involve individuals or groups
- It can be blatant or it can be subtle
- It most often occurs within or between groups of friends

Harassment is an aspect of bullying that involves stereotyping and prejudice. No-one has the right to harass

or discriminate against another person on the basis of race, gender, culture, sexual preference, religion, disability or physical appearance.

Examples of bullying and harassment are:

- Verbal abuse (name calling, teasing, swearing)
- Intimidation and threats (standing over another person)
- Physical abuse (punching, pushing, spitting, fighting)
- Rumours, malicious gossip, offensive comments (verbal or written)
- Removing, hiding, damaging or destroying the property of others
- Making degrading comments about another's culture, religious or social background
- Making suggestive comments or other forms of sex-based harassment
- Hurtfully and deliberately excluding peers from a group
- Sending nuisance phone calls or unwanted text messages by mobile phone or by email

Bullying and harassment may occur during or outside school hours.

What do we do to prevent bullying at BGHS?

If students who are being bullied (or witness bullying) have the courage to speak out, they may help reduce the pain for themselves and other potential victims.

Students:

If you are being bullied or see bullying occurring:

- Refuse to be involved in any bullying behaviour
- Take some form of preventative action (if appropriate)
- Report the incident to any teacher, your Year Adviser, any Head Teacher or HT Welfare
- Talk to your parents about the incident

All reports will be treated with discretion and supported by the school community.

Staff:

- Be role models in words and actions at all times.
- Be observant of signs of distress or suspected incidents of bullying and harassment
- Be vigilant in the classroom and playground
- Take appropriate action or refer situations to Year Adviser, Head Teachers or HT Welfare

Parents/Guardians:

- Take an active interest in your child's school life
- If you suspect your child is being bullied or involved in or aware of a bullying situation, discuss ways to deal with the bullying
- Advise your daughter to tell a staff member about the bullying behaviour
- Inform the Year Adviser of any cases of bullying even if your daughter is not directly affected

Participate in anti-bullying awareness programs and work together against bullying at BGHS.

How to deal with bullying and harassment?

If you are harassed or bullied, or know someone who is being harassed or bullied; you can take a number of steps:

- to begin with, you can ignore the bully to show it doesn't upset you; or if you know someone else is being bullied ask the person being bullied how they feel and offer your support;
- you can confront the bully, let them know they are bullying and their behaviour is unwanted and not acceptable;
- you can talk it over with others – friends, or parents – who can help plan how to deal with the bullying;
- you can report the bullying to your teacher, Year Adviser or HT Welfare who may deal with it effectively.

This may include:

- discussing strategies with parents
- taking part in the school's peer mediation program
- reporting to the Year Adviser or Head Teacher Welfare
- accessing confidential counselling from the School Counsellor

It does **not** include 'paying back' the bully, instead of reporting the bullying behaviour. Paying back is also a form of bullying.

What can we do to prevent bullying?

If the bullying behaviour persists see your Year Adviser who can refer the situation to the Deputy Principal for a resolution to the problem.

In cases where there is no resolution of the problem or if the situation continues or escalates, the Deputy Principal will issue a warning to the bully and parents will be informed.

The bully will be issued a warning letter which is to be taken home, signed by a parent/guardian, and returned to the Deputy Principal.

If the bully continues, then this may lead to suspension.