NARRE WARREN SOUTH P-12 COLLEGE
Getting the best from and for our students

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BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY

Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Narre Warren South P-12 College on 9704 3333

PURPOSE

Narre Warren South P-12 College is committed to providing a safe and respectful learning environment where bullying will not be tolerated.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- explain the definition of bullying so that there is shared understanding amongst all members of the Narre Warren South P-12 College community
- make clear that no form of bullying at Narre Warren South P-12 College will be tolerated
- outline the strategies and programs in place at Narre Warren South P-12 College to build a positive school culture and prevent bullying behaviour
- ask that everyone in our school community be alert to signs and evidence of bullying behaviour, and understands the importance of reporting bullying behaviour to school staff
- ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are appropriately investigated and addressed
- ensure that support is provided to students who may be affected by bullying behaviour (including targets, bystanders, witnesses, and students engaging in bullying behaviour)
- seek parental and peer group support in addressing and preventing bullying behaviour at Narre Warren South P-12 College.

When responding to bullying behaviour, Narre Warren South P-12 College aims to:

- be proportionate, consistent, and responsive
- find a constructive solution for everyone
- stop the bullying from happening again
- restore the relationships between the students involved.

Narre Warren South P-12 College acknowledges that school staff owe a duty of care to students to take reasonable steps to reduce the risk of reasonably foreseeable harm, which can include harm that may be caused by bullying behaviour.

SCOPE

This policy addresses how Narre Warren South P-12 College aims to prevent, address, and respond to student bullying behaviour. Narre Warren South P-12 College recognises that there are many other types of inappropriate student behaviours that do not meet the definition of bullying which are also unacceptable at our school. These other inappropriate behaviours will be managed in accordance with our **Student Code of Conduct** and **Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy** and **Inclusion and Diversity policy.**

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions. This also applies to bullying and behaviours between students that occurs outside of school hours, here the behaviour impacts pn student wellbeing and the safety of the school

POLICY

Definitions

Bullying

In 2018 the Education Council of the Council of Australian Governments endorsed the following definition of bullying for use by all Australian schools:

> *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.*
>
> *Bullying can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time (for example, through sharing of digital records)*
>
> *Bullying of any form or for any reason can have immediate, medium and long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders. Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.*

Bullying has three main features:

- It involves a misuse of peer in a relationship
- It is ongoing and repeated, and
- It involves behaviours that can cause harm.

There are four main types of bullying behaviour.

- Physical – examples include hitting, tripping, pushing, shoving, or intimidating or otherwise physically hurting another person, damaging or stealing their belongings. It includes threats of violence.
- Verbally / written – examples include name-calling or insulting someone about an attribute quality or a personal characteristic, including homophobic or

racist marks or verbal abuse. Indirect bullying may include spreading rumours, playing practical nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate, mimic

- Social (sometimes called relational or emotional bullying) – examples include deliberately excluding someone, spreading rumours, sharing information that would have a harmful effort on excluding the other person and/or damaging a person's reputation or social acceptance.

- Cyberbullying- any form for bullying behaviour that occurs online or via a mobile device. It can be verbal or written, and can include threats of violence as well as images, videos and or audio.

Bullying can be a form of racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia or other type of social prejudice when the behaviour is targeted at an individual or group because of a personal characteristic, such as race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability.

For further information about bullying, refer to Bully Stoppers (education.vic.gov.au) and the Departments' Bullying prevention and Response police on the Policy and Advisory Library.

Other distressing and inappropriate behaviours

Many distressing and inappropriate behaviours may not constitute bullying even though they are unpleasant. Students who are involved in or who witness any distressing and inappropriate behaviours should report their concerns to school staff and our school will follow our **Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy** and this Bullying Prevention Policy where the behaviour constitutes bullying.

Mutual conflict involves an argument or disagreement between people with no imbalance of power. In incidents of mutual conflict, generally, both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution to the issue. Unresolved mutual conflict can develop into bullying if one of the parties targets the other repeatedly in retaliation.

Social rejection or dislike is not bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.

Single episode acts of nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. However, single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression are not acceptable behaviours at our school and may have serious consequences for students engaging in this behaviour. Narre Warren South P-12 College will use its **Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy** and/or **Bullying Prevention Policy** to guide a response to single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression.

Harassment is language or actions that are demeaning, offensive or intimidating to a person. It can take many forms, including sexual harassment and disability harassment.

Discrimination is behaviour that treats someone unfavourable because of a personal characteristic, this could be due to race, religious beliefs or activity, disability, sex or intersex status, gender identity or sexual orientation which is set out in our Inclusion and Diversity Policy.

Discrimination, harassment, and any other inappropriate behaviour is not tolerated at Narre Warren South P-12 College and there may be serious consequences for students for students engaging in this behaviour. Narre Warren South P-12 College

will use its Student and Engagement Policy to guide a response to students demonstrating harassing behaviour unless the behaviour also constitutes bullying, in which case the behaviour will be managed in accordance with this Bullying Prevention Policy. This includes any form of racism, religious or disability discrimination, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, or any other behaviour that targets an individual or group. Further information about discrimination and harassment, including definitions, set out in our Inclusion and Diversity Policy.

Bullying Prevention

Narre Warren South P-12 College has several programs and strategies in place to build positive and inclusive school culture relationships to promote wellbelling. We strive to foster a school culture that prevents bullying behaviour by modelling, encouraging teaching behaviour that demonstrates acceptance, kindness and respect.

Bullying prevention at Narre Warren South P-12 College is proactive and is supported by research that indicates that a whole school, multifaceted approach is the most effective way to prevent and address bullying. At our school:

- We identify and implement evidence-based programs and initiatives from the College's Mental Health Menu that are relevant to preventing and addressing bullying and help us to build a positive and inclusive school climate.
- We strive to build strong partnerships between the school, families and the broader community that means all members work together to ensure the safety of students.
- Narre Warren South P-12 College actively participates in the following activities to meet the needs of students, staff and the wider community -
  - o Respectful Relationships
  - o Positive School Wide Behaviours
  - o External providers
  - o Allied Health team
  - o School-based intervention orders
- We strive to build strong partnerships between the families and the broader community that means all members work together to ensure the safety of students.
- We participate in the Respectful Relationships initative, which aims to embed a culture of respect and equity across our College.
- We celebrate the diverse backgrounds of members of our school community and teach multicultural education, including Aboriginal History, to promote mutual respect and social cohesion.
- We participate in the Safe Schools program to help foster a safe environment that is supportive and inclusion of the LGBTIQ+ students.
- Teachers are encouraged to incorporate classroom management strategies that discourage bullying and promote positive behaviour.
- A range of year level incursions and programs are planned for each year to raise awareness about bullying and its impacts.
- In the classroom, our social and emotional learning curriculum teaches students what constitutes bullying and how to respond to bullying behaviour assertively. This promotes resilience, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving.

- We promote upstander behaviour to empower our students to positively and safely take appropriate action when they see or hear of peers being bullied.
- The Peer Support Program and the Peer Mediation program encourage positive relationships between students in different year levels. We seek to empower students to be confident communicators and to resolve conflict in a non-aggressive and constructive way.
- Students are encouraged to look out for each other and to talk to teachers and older peers about any bullying they have experienced or witnessed.
- We participate in the National Day of Action against Bullying and Violence.

For further information about our Student Engagement Policy and wellbeing initiatives, please see our Student Wellbeing and Engagement policy.

Incident Response

Reporting concerns to Narre Warren South P-12 College

Bullying is not tolerated at our school. We ensure bullying behaviour is identified and addressed with appropriate and proportionate consequences. All bullying complaints will be taken seriously and responded to sensitively..

Students who may be experiencing bullying behaviour, or students who have witnessed bullying behaviour, are encouraged to report their concerns to school staff or another trusted adult as soon as possible.

Our ability to effectively reduce and eliminate bullying behaviour is greatly affected by students and/or parents and carers reporting concerning behaviour as soon as possible, so that the responses implemented by Narre Warren South P-12 College are timely and appropriate in the circumstances.

We encourage students to speak to their classroom teacher / Homgroup teacher or a Year Level Co-ordinator (SEL – Student Engagement Leader). However, students are welcome to discuss their concerns with any trusted member of staff including Educational Support Staff, teachers, wellbeing staff, wellbeing team or a Principal Class Member.

Parents or carers who develop concerns that their child is involved in, or has witnessed bullying behaviour at Narre Warren South P-12 College should contact

- Contactable
  - The Student's Classroom teacher
    - Email via Compass email
    - Visit/Talk to the teacher
    - Ring the College on 9704 3333 to see if the teacher is available (before 8:30-8:50) or after school 3:15-4:30) would be preferable.
  - Student Engagement Leader / Assistant (SEL)
    - Email Via Compass
    - Ring the College on 9704 3333 and see if the SEL is available
  - Wellbeing
    - Wellbeing Assistant Principal
    - Annette Wilkinson – Wellbeing Manager
    - Megan Woolgar (Primary Wellbeing Co-ordinator)
    - Jess Henry (Primary Wellbeing and Inclusion Assistant Principal

- Pauleen Churchill (Secondary Wellbeing and Inclusion Assistant Principal)
  - Email Via Compass
  - Ring the College on 9704 3333
- Assistant Principal
  - Laura Sammut (Primary Teaching and Learning Assistant Principal)
  - Christina Adams (Primary Wellbeing and Student Engagement Assistant Principal
  - Tori Mulligan (Head of Secondary Assistant Principal)
  - Ian Bowers (Year 7, 8 and 9 Assistant Principal)
  - Ryan Rooney (Year 10, 11 and 12 Assistant Principal)
    - Email Via Compass
    - Ring the College on 9704 333

Investigations

When notified of alleged bullying behaviour, school staff are required to:

1. record the details of the allegations on Compass as a chronical incident to maintain a record of the behaviour,
2. inform classroom teachers (primary) or Student Engagement Leaders (secondary) who will then investigate and discuss the issues raised with their relevant assistant principal and depending on the severity, which may be then referred onto the wellbeing team.

The classroom teacher, Student Engagement Leaders, Wellbeing team and Assistant Principals are responsible for investigating allegations of bullying in a timely and sensitive manner. To appropriately investigate an allegation of bullying, the SEL may:

- speak to the those involved in the allegations, including the target/s, the students allegedly engaging in bullying behaviour/s and any witnesses to the incidents
- speak to the parent/carer(s) of the students involved
- speak to the teachers of the students involved
- take detailed notes of all discussions for future reference
- obtain written statements from all or any of the above.

All communications with the SEL while investigating an allegation of bullying will be managed sensitively. Investigations will be completed as quickly as possible to allow for the behaviours to be addressed in a timely manner.

The objective of completing a thorough investigation into the circumstances of alleged bullying behaviour is to determine the nature of the conduct and the students involved. A thorough understanding of the alleged bullying will inform staff about how to implement an appropriate response most effectively to that behaviour.

Serious bullying, including serious cyberbullying, is a criminal offence and may be referred to Victoria Police. For more information, see: Brodie's Law.

Responses to bullying behaviours

When the classroom teacher, Student Engagement Leaders, Wellbeing team and /or Assistant Principals investigating has sufficient information to understand the

circumstances of the alleged bullying and the students involved, a number of strategies may be implemented to address the behaviour and support affected students in consultation with the relevant Assistant Principal, Wellbeing Team, teachers, SSS, Assistant Principal, Principal, Department of Education and Training specialist staff etc.].

There are a number of factors that will be considered when determining the most appropriate response to the behaviour. When making a decision about how to respond to bullying behaviour, Narre Warren South P-12 College will consider:

- the age, maturity and individual circumstances of the students involved
- the severity and frequency of the bullying, and the impact it has had on the target student
- whether the student/s engaging in bullying behaviour have displayed similar behaviour before
- whether the bullying took place in a group or one-to-one context
- whether the students engaging in bullying behaviour demonstrates insight or remorse for their behaviour
- the alleged motive of the behaviour.

The classroom teacher / SEL / Assistant Principal /Wellbeing team may implement all, or some of the following responses to bullying behaviours:

- Offer wellbeing support, including referral to [insert i.e. the Student Wellbeing Team, SSS, external provider] to:
  - the target student or students
  - the students engaging in the bullying behaviour
  - affected students, including witnesses and/or friends of the target student.
- Facilitate a restorative practice meeting with all or some of the students involved. The objective of restorative practice is to repair relationships that have been damaged by bringing about a sense of remorse and restorative action on the part of the person who has bullied someone and forgiveness by the person who has been bullied.
- Facilitate a mediation between some or all of the students involved to help to encourage students to take responsibility for their behaviour and explore underlying reasons for conflict or grievance. Mediation is only suitable if all students are involved voluntarily and demonstrate a willingness to engage in the mediation process.
- Facilitate a process using the Support Group Method, involving the target student(s), the students engaging in bullying behaviour and a group of students who are likely to be supportive of the target(s).
- Implement a Method of Shared Concern process with all students involved in the bullying.
- Facilitate a Student Support Group meeting and/or Behaviour Support Plan for affected students.
- Prepare a Individual Management Plan restricting contact between target and students engaging in bullying behaviour.
- Provide discussion and/or mentoring for different social and emotional learning competencies of the students involved, including connecting affected students with an older Student Mentor, resilience programs,

- Monitor the behaviour of the students involved for an appropriate time and take follow up action if necessary.
- Implement cohort, year group, or whole school targeted strategies to reinforce positive behaviours, for example Bullying Stoppers, Bullying, No Way!
- Implement proportionate disciplinary consequences for the students engaging in bullying behaviour, which may include removal of privileges, detention (Secondary school), Withdrawal Room (Primary School) suspension and/or expulsion consistent with our Student Wellbeing and Engagement policy, the Ministerial Order on Suspensions and Expulsions and any other relevant Department policy.

Narre Warren South P-12 College understands the importance of monitoring and following up on the progress of students who have been involved in or affected by bullying behaviour. Where appropriate, school staff will also endeavour to provide parents and carers with updates on the management of bullying incidents.

The classroom teacher / Student Engagement Leader / Assistant Principal / Wellbeing team is responsible for maintaining up to date records of the investigation of and responses to bullying behaviour.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in our staff handbook
- Discussed at staff meetings as required
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Included in student diaries so that it is easily accessible to parents, carers and students
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Included as an annual reference in school newsletter
- Discuss at student forums / through communication tools
- Made available in hard copy from the college's adminstration team upon request.

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Parent Complaints policy
- Duty of Care Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy

Our school also follows Department of Education and Training policy relating to bullying including:

- [Bullying Prevention and Response](#)
- [Cybersafety and Responsible Use of Digital Technologies](#)

- [Equal Opportunity and Human Rights - Students](#)
- [LGBTIQ Student Support Policy](#)

The following websites and resources provide useful information on prevention and responding to bullying, as well as supporting students who have been the target of bullying behaviours:

- [Bully Stoppers](#)
- [Report racism or religious discrimination in schools](#)
- [Kids Helpline](#)
- [ReachOut Australia](#)
- [Lifeline](#)
- [Bullying. No way!](#)
- [Student Wellbeing Hub](#)
- [eSafety Commissioner](#)
- [Australian Student Wellbeing Framework](#)

EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years, or earlier as required following an incident or analysis of new research or school data relating to bullying, to ensure that the policy remains up to date, practical and effective.

Data to inform this review will be collected through:
- discussion and consultation with students and parent/carers
- regular student bullying surveys
- regular staff surveys
- Bully Stoppers Data Collection tool
- assessment of other school-based data, including the number of reported incidents of bullying in each year group and the effectiveness of the responses implemented
- Attitudes to School Survey
- Parent Opinion Survey

Proposed amendments to this policy will be discussed with the consultative committee, student representative groups (Student Voice) class meetings, parent groups, school council

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	Febuary 2023
Consultative Committee	Feburary 2023
Student Voice	October 2022
School Council	22 Feburary 2023

Community	3 March 2023
Approved by	Principal – February 2023
Next scheduled review date 2 years	Febuary 2025

Appendixes

Definitions of Cyber Bullying

Cyberbullying is bullying using digital technologies including mobile phones, email and social media tools. Cyberbullying includes:

- **Pranking**
  Repeated hang-ups, anonymous, mocking or threatening phone calls.

- **Image sharing**
  Forwarding or sharing unflattering or private images without permission.

- **Sexually explicit images**
  People of any age, who forward or share images of a sexual nature of a person under 18 need to be aware that this is a criminal offence (child pornography) that may result in prosecution.

- **Text and email**
  Sending insulting or threatening text messages or emails.

- **Personal online information**
  Publishing online someone's private, personal or embarrassing information without permission, or spreading rumours online.

- **Identity theft**
  Assuming someone's identity online and negatively representing them in a way that damages their reputation or relationships.

- **Hate sites**
  Creating hate sites or implementing social exclusion campaigns on social networking sites.

It is also cyberbullying when a student, or students, uses technology to run a multi-step campaign to bully another student. For example, setting another student up to be assaulted, video-recording their humiliation, posting the video-recording online and then sending the website address to others.

Cyberbullying vs bullying

While cyberbullying is similar to bullying in some ways, there are also differences.

Differences:

- **Cyberbullying is invasive**
  It can be difficult to escape and is incredibly invasive. It is more likely to occur outside of school, including while at home, and can happen at any time.

- **Cyberbullying can involve a large audience**
  It can involve harmful material being widely and rapidly shared to a large audience, for example, rumours and images can be posted on public forums or sent to many people at once. This material can also continue to be available and harmful long after cyberbullying has ceased.

- **Cyberbullies have a sense of anonymity**
  It can provide the bully with a sense of relative anonymity and distance from the target, so there is a lack of immediate feedback or consequences.

Similarities:

- **Power imbalance**
  The power imbalance between the 'bully' and 'target', the repetitive nature of the bullying behaviour and the intent to harm, humiliate, embarrass, ostracise, or isolate can occur in bullying and cyberbullying.

- **Types of behaviour**
  Types of behaviour including spreading rumours and making threats or insults can occur in bullying and cyberbullying.

- **Reasons for behaving in a bullying way**
  People often engage in cyberbullying for the same reasons they engage in bullying.

Advice and safety

The Department's website has resources to help students and parents to deal with cyberbullying.

- a range of cyberbullying advice sheets explain how to deal with cyberbullying and to learn about cyber safety, refer to cyberbullying advice sheets

- they also have a great range of promotional materials that schools can use to teach their community about cyberbullying prevention

- to report cyberbullying or illegal material, or to investigate online safety information available through the Office of the Children's eSafety Commissioner, visit the website of [Office of the Children's eSafety Commissioner](#)

Bullying Stoppers Homepage - https://www.vic.gov.au/bully-stoppers

Bulllying Stoppers for students website - https://www.vic.gov.au/students-bully-stoppers

Bullying Stoppers for parents website - https://www.vic.gov.au/bullying-information-parents