

 Plenty Valley <small>CHRISTIAN COLLEGE</small> <small>In Christ: Wisdom & Knowledge</small>		<h2>Anti-Bullying/Harassment, Violence and Unlawful Discrimination Policy</h2>	
Document Classification:		Board Policy	
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RATIONALE

As a Christian community, we strive for harmony and good relationships. However, being humans who are prone to sin, at times, disagreements and miscommunications are bound to lead to difficulties in relationships. We are called to prefer others before ourselves and to serve others rather than use our position or power to elevate ourselves or to diminish others.

- Christians should prefer others to themselves (Phil 2:3, 1John 4:7-8, 1Cor 13:1-13)
- Christians should be motivated to serve others (Mat 20:26-27, 1Peter 4:11, Gal5:13)
- Christians should use their positional or personal power to serve rather than demand service (Luke 22:26, Micah 6:8, Mat 20:26-27)

AIMS

This policy seeks to:

- ensure that members of the Plenty Valley Christian College Community are aware of the definition of bullying and harassment
- equip members of the Plenty Valley Christian College Community to recognise incidents of bullying and harassment and their responsibilities
- establish fair and consistent procedures to respond quickly and appropriately to incidents of bullying and harassment;
- establish a process that leads to restoration of relationships
- confirm that our processes comply with the relevant agreements and other requirements placed on the College by authorities.

DEFINITIONS

Bullying is when someone, or a group of people, who are more powerful than the victim, repeatedly and deliberately upset or hurt that person or damage their property, reputation or social acceptance. The bullies' Power may be derived from numbers, age, size, status, position or other reasons.

Harassment is bullying that is perpetuated by someone who is not more powerful than the victim.

Ways of bullying may include but is not limited to:

Physical bullying may be persistent pushing, hitting, bumping, kicking, obstructing, confining, practical jokes, stealing, damaging or interfering with personal property.

Verbal bullying may include persistent threats of violence, name-calling, teasing, picking on, mocking, taunting, making put-down comments, belittling, insulting, constant criticism, sexual comments of a demeaning nature, cultural and religious slurs, shouting at and swearing at.

Indirect bullying is often harder to recognise and can be carried out behind the bullied person's back. It is designed to harm someone's social reputation and/or cause humiliation. It includes: lying and spreading rumours; playing jokes to embarrass and humiliate; mimicking; encouraging others to socially exclude someone; damaging someone's social reputation or social acceptance.

Cyber bullying is direct verbal or indirect bullying behaviours using digital technologies. This includes harassment via a mobile phone, setting up a defamatory personal website or deliberately excluding someone from social networking spaces.

What bullying is not

Many distressing behaviours are not examples of bullying even though they are unpleasant and may require intervention and management. They should not be ignored.

Mutual conflict: involves an argument or disagreement between people but not an imbalance of power. This conflict should be managed in concert with the PVCC Conflict Resolution Policy.

Social rejection or dislike: is not bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to *cause* distress, exclude or create dislike by others. ^{SEP}

Single acts of nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. If someone is verbally abused or pushed on one occasion they are not being bullied.

Nastiness or physical aggression that is directed towards many different people is not the same as bullying.

Holding a subordinate accountable for fulfilling their duties.

Violence is any incident where someone is physically attacked or threatened. A threat occurs when a statement of behaviour causes a person to believe they are in danger of being physically attacked.

Unlawful discrimination is any discriminatory action applied to a person on the basis of a characteristic that contravenes legislation. This may include race, religion, gender identification, sexual orientation, gender preference or disability.

Direct Discrimination occurs when people are openly treated differently based on characteristics.

Indirect Discrimination occurs when practices and procedures, that appear to be impartial, have an unequal or adverse effect on someone because of certain characteristics.

POLICY

This policy applies to all members of the Plenty Valley Christian College community including parents/caregivers, students, staff and leaders and governors.

- Plenty Valley Christian College does not tolerate bullying or harassment
- Students, Staff and Parents will be informed of their general responsibilities for their behaviour and helping to moderate the behaviour of others as part of the community.
- Students, Staff and Parents will be informed of how to identify instances of Bullying/Harassment, Violence and Discrimination and the procedure to report instances.
- Community members will be informed of their responsibilities should they be involved in an instance as victim, bystanders, observer, administrator, or receiver of a report.
- All reports will be dealt with promptly and confidentially according to procedure.
- Students will be exposed to workshops, productions, programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving.

- Students, Staff and Parents will be made aware of support people available to assist with bullying issues.

PROCESS

Policy and procedure will be communicated at least annually.

- Staff Members – covered in staff induction, summary in Staff Handbook, Staff Meeting
- Parents – will be informed in the Newsletter
- Students - workshops, productions, programs for students included in curriculum - resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving. Support people.

All reports will be taken seriously and investigated.

- A cooling off period of 24 hours will be used to allow the complainant to reconsider an informal resolution of the issues.
- Preliminary investigation (complete within 2 days following cooling off period)
 - Does report potentially meet criteria?
 - Written report to Head of School even if does not meet criteria
 - Communicate with parents
- Intervention (as soon as possible and begun within 2 days following cooling off period)
 - Involvement of support people
 - Counselling of victim, bully, by-standers regarding responsibilities
 - Restoration of relationship see PVCC Conflict Resolution Policy
 - Report to parents
- Formal Investigation for serious or ongoing bullying (begun within a week of report)
- Report to Principal
 - Determination of remediation and/or consequence
- Appeal
 - Students/Parents – may appeal to the Principal to review a decision by the Head of
 - Staff – refer to the PVCC Conflict Resolution Policy
- Vexatious Complaints

Inaccurate, misleading, malicious or false accusations have negative consequences for all persons concerned and affect the morale of the College community. it is found that a complaint has not been made in good faith, disciplinary consequences will usually be taken.

Resources for Parents and Students

- The Office of Children's eSafety Commissioner (online bullying education resources)
<https://www.esafety.gov.au>
- Bully Free World (Special needs anti-bullying toolkit)
<http://specialneeds.thebullyproject.com>
- Racism. No Way! (Anti- racism education for Australian schools) Kids Helpline – 1800 55 1800

- Bully Stoppers (general information and resources)
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers/Pages/default.aspx>

Resources for Staff

- FairWork Ombudsman <http://www.fairwork.gov.au/employee-entitlements/bullying-and-harassment>

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All persons involved are responsible for

- applying Biblical principles in their dealings with each other and those in authority over them.

Staff Members are responsible for

- following the processes outlined in this policy, and/or allowing them to be followed.

Senior Staff are responsible for

- implementing this policy with their staff as directed by the Principal.

The Principal is responsible for

- implementing this policy.
- tempering the implementation of this policy with Christian love, forgiveness and speaking the truth in love.
- keeping appropriate records of actions taken under this policy.
- the review and maintenance of this policy statement and associated documentation.

The Board is responsible for

- seeking independent advice in serious situations
- ensuring that Senior Staff are qualified or trained to carry out their roles under this policy.

Appendix 1

**CONFIDENTIAL
Plenty Valley Christian College
Incidents for Reference and / or Action**

Person making the report: _____ **Status:** _____

Date of report: _____ **Time of report:** _____

Date of Incident: _____ **Time of incident:** _____

Report made to: _____ **(Received: _____)**

Incident Report:

Attach documents and names of witnesses as necessary.

Action already taken:

I do / do not wish to discuss this further.

I do / do not want further action on this incident.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Principal's Recommendations and actions:

DOCUMENT HISTORY & VERSION CONTROL RECORD

Name of Document: Anti-Bullying/Harassment, Violence and Unlawful
Discrimination Policy
Responsible Officer: Principal
Approved by: Principal
Assigned review period: Biennial
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1.0	17/07/06	Principal	Initial issue as a controlled document
1.1	28/03/08	Principal	Updated minor changes as per Document History and Version Control Policy
2.0	20/03/17	Principal	Major Revision Name changed from Harassment, Bullying, Violence and Unlawful Discrimination Policy

Approved By:

Date:



John Metcalfe
Principal