A L E X A N D R A   S E C O N D A R Y   C O L L E G E

A TRIBES COMMUNITY

Private Bag 1
ALEXANDRA
Victoria 3714

Ph: 03 5770 2000 Fx:03 5772 2049

email:alexandra.sc@edumail.vic.gov.au

BULLYING & HARRASSMENT POLICY

Contents

1. Statement

Alexandra Secondary College is committed to providing a safe and caring environment and culture which enables positive relationships to be formed amongst all students and staff and which encourages self-esteem, cooperation, personal growth and a positive attitude to learning and teaching. A clear policy on bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment will inform the community that **bullying and harassment in any of its forms will not be tolerated.**

Aims:

- To reinforce within the school community that no form of bullying is acceptable.
- Everyone within the school community is alerted to signs and evidence of bullying and has a responsibility to report it to staff whether as observer or victim.
- To ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are followed up and that support is given to both victim and perpetrator.
- To seek parental and peer-group support and co-operation at all times.

What are bullying, cyber bullying and harassment?

Bullying is repeated oppression, physical or psychological, of a less powerful person by a more powerful person or group.

Cyber-bullying consists of covert, psychological bullying, conveyed through the electronic mediums such as mobile phones, web-logs and web-sites, on-line chat rooms, 'MUD' rooms (multi-user domains where individuals take on different characters) and Xangas (on-line personal profiles where some adolescents create lists of people they do not like). It can be verbal (e.g. over the telephone or mobile phone), or written (e.g. threats, racial, sexual or homophobic harassment) using the various mediums available.

Harassment is any verbal, physical or sexual conduct (including gestures) which is uninvited, unwelcome or offensive to a person.

Our school will actively promote a positive and welcoming personal environment for all members of the school community. When people are bullied or harassed some effects might be anger, embarrassment, fear and humiliation, loss of self-confidence and reduced function and potential. Bullying and harassment will be addressed, individual differences will be respected and students and staff will be enabled and supported in their pursuit of learning and teaching.

2. Guidelines

A school-wide approach will be taken to deal with bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment in a consistent and systematic way.

All new students and staff will be informed of the anti-harassment policy and practices at the commencement of their time at the school.

All complaints of harassment will be heard in confidence by the Principal or his Nominee and taken seriously.

There will be disciplinary consequences, covering a range of strategies, for those in breach of the Anti-Bullying (including cyber bullying) and Anti- Harassment Policy, guidelines and procedures (see Appendix A).

3. Program

Our school will organize preventative curriculum programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving.

Staff programs will occur periodically to keep staff informed of current issues/strategies for dealing with these issues.

Constructive strategies to deal with harassment will include: education in coping strategies; assertiveness training; problem solving and social skills; counselling and behavior modification. These strategies will be employed prior to punitive sanctions and negative consequences.

The Anti-Bullying and Anti-Harassment Policy of the school will be widely promoted to students, staff, parents/carers and the local community.

A summary of the policy will be included in the Student Enrolment Package while new staff will receive extensive documentation as part of the school's induction process.

The school leadership team and the teachers will work together to ensure the safety of all school members in situations of bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment, by thoroughly investigating all complaints while respecting the need for confidentiality, notifying parents/carers and planning interventions.

If a teacher feels a student is at serious and imminent risk from bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment then it is their professional duty to pass on the information to the relevant House Leader or a member of the Leadership team in order to ensure appropriate support for the student. It is important that teachers fully document their interaction with the student and follow up the actions taken.

Student programs will be organized to raise student awareness about bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment, to provide a forum for discussion of matters and to aid development of positive attitudes and relationship skills. Some matters will be dealt with formally in the curriculum (e.g. Lifeskills and English) and in peer support programs, leadership programs, extra-curricular programs and occasional activities run by outside experts and workers. The curriculum will include anti-bullying messages and strategies in line with current DEECD materials e.g. 'Restorative Practices' and 'No Blame Approach to Bullying' programs.

Professional development will be provided for staff relating to bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment and proven strategies to address these issues in classrooms will be shared with all staff.

The school will provide specialist resources such as books, videos, kits and off site in-service activities to assist staff in responding appropriately to bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment issues.

Disciplinary consequences for bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment will comply with the school's Welfare and Discipline Policy. The principal or their nominee will provide disciplinary consequences including suspension in accordance with Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) guidelines.

4. Links and Appendices (including processes related to this policy)

Links which are connected with this policy are:

- DEECD's Effective Schools are Engaging Schools: Student Engagement Policy Guidelines
- DEECD's Safe Schools are Effective School's
- DEECD's Student Engagement Policy Guidelines
- The school's Internet Use Policy (re cyber-bullying)
- DEECD's Respectful Schools

Appendices which are connected with this policy are:

- Appendix A: Anti-Bullying (including cyber-bullying) and Anti-Harassment Procedures
- Appendix B: Reporting on Incident of Bullying / Harassment – Template
- Appendix C: Formal Referral of Student who has bullied / harassed other to Student Welfare Coordinator – Template

EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed and endorsed by Alexandra Secondary College Council every 3 years or more often if necessary due to changes in regulations or circumstances.

Date Implemented	April 2014
Author	Bronwyn Howell
Approved By	ASC School Council
Approval Authority (Signature & Date)	
Review Date	April 2017
Responsible for Review	Student Welfare Coordinator