



Burnie High School Bullying and Harassment Policy



How does Burnie High School approach bullying and harassment?

Burnie High School aims to provide learning environments where all people feel included, safe and respected and supported. Our school is committed to eliminating all forms of harassment, bullying and discrimination. It is the responsibility of all members of our school community to work together to ensure that this occurs. This includes both preventative and educational measures and also corrective procedures to be followed wherever these behaviours occur.

What is bullying and harassment?

Being bullied is when someone is subjected to ongoing behaviour which is hurtful, threatening or frightening by an individual or a group. Harassment is any unwelcome and uninvited comment, attention, contact or behaviour that an individual or witness finds humiliating or offensive.

What can bullying and harassment look like, sound like, feel like?

- Physical violence such as hitting, pushing, invasion of personal space.
- Interfering with another's property by stealing, hiding, damaging or destroying.
- Name calling, teasing, spreading rumours.
- Writing offensive notes or graffiti.
- Belittling others' achievements or abilities.
- Excluding others from a group or social situation.
- Forcing others to act against their will.
- Sending offensive messages or making offensive remarks using email, SMS, personal websites (Myspace, Facebook etc), blogs (weblogs), instant messaging, chat lines (eg MSN) etc.
- Using mobile phones or other electronic devices to take photos or video or to record speech or conversations without consent.

What is sexual harassment?

Sexual harassment is defined as any unwanted behaviour, material or contact of a sexual nature which may demean, offend or intimidate an individual or individuals. Sexual harassment is unlawful under the Federal Discrimination Act 1984.

Examples of sexual harassment include:

- Distribution or display of offensive pictures or written material.
- Repeated unwelcome requests for social outings or dates.
- Offensive comments about a person's appearance, dress or private life.
- Jokes, intrusive questioning, messages or telephone calls of a sexual nature.
- Leering, patting, pinching, touching or unnecessary familiarity.
- Propositioning or pressure for sexual favours.
- Indecent exposure, sexual assault or rape.

What will the school do?

To assist with the prevention of bullying and harassment, the school will:

- Provide a safe environment for all members of the school community underpinned by our three expectations: **Best effort, honest and fair, safe and secure.**
- Include learning sequences which focus on developing social skills, values and behaviours in our curriculum.
- Model and teach problem solving approaches to harassment and bullying.
- Pursue peaceful and sustainable resolutions wherever possible.
- Monitor levels of bullying and modify practice where necessary.
- Employ proactive strategies to identify bullies and factors which may contribute to bullying.
- Acknowledge and respond with sensitivity to all reported instances of bullying. All members of our community are encouraged to report all instances of bullying so that they can be investigated.
- Provide adequate supervision for all students at all times.
- Use research based strategies to manage bullying when it occurs.
- Providing appropriate support for both victims and bullies.
- Provide counselling support where required from a school guidance officer, a social worker or a community police unit.

What is the process for dealing with cases of bullying once reported to a staff member?

Where bullying is reported, the following sequence will be followed.

The teacher to whom the incident is reported:

- Investigates and negotiates with the student whether further support is required.
- Records the incident.
- Calls upon colleague teachers, grade coordinator and/or Principal/Assistant Principal to assist where support is required.
- Uses appropriate strategies to resolve the issue.

Grade coordinators, Principal and Assistant Principals will:

- Provide support for teacher and students where required.
- Use appropriate strategies to resolve the issue.
- Impose disciplinary sanctions in serious cases where appropriate or where collaborative approaches have not been successful.
- Seek parent support in pursuing positive outcomes as appropriate.

What should students do about bullying and harassment?

What should students do if they are bullied or harassed?

- Walk away from the bully/harasser towards friends and/or an adult.
- Stay calm and maintain positive body language.
- Ignore bullying/harassment and try to show that it doesn't bother you. Do not retaliate.
- Where bullying/harassment is serious or persistent, talk to friends, parent(s)/guardian(s) and report it to a trusted adult in the school.
- Seek support from a trusted adult.
- Work with the school to help resolve the situation.

How can peers help?

Students who witness harassment/bullying should:

- Support and comfort the person being bullied.
- Include the person in a social activity and attempt to remove the opportunity for further bullying to occur.

- Encourage the person being bullied to seek assistance from a staff member or other trusted adult.
- Where appropriate, indicate to the bully that the behaviour is unacceptable.
- If the person being bullied/harassed is unwilling to report the incident, be prepared to report it themselves where necessary.

How can parents help?

Parents can help by:

- Role modelling positive, assertive and calm behaviour as well as a problem solving approach to issues.
- Encouraging positive conversation at home e.g. “What good things happened at school today?”
- Being alert for signs of distress in their child.
- Encouraging their child to report instances of bullying where necessary.
- Contacting the School if the student is unwilling to report bullying/harassment.