

HARTFORD COLLEGE INSTANCES OF BULLYING

Definitions

Bullying or victimisation: any sustained or repeated nastiness, by one boy or group of boys to another, especially when there is a power imbalance between the two parties.

Bullying may include physical violence, threats or intimidation, and verbal harassment. It may be electronic, and could involve the use of Social Media. Bullying also includes sustained harassment based on a student's point of difference.

Bullying includes:

Physical bullying

Fighting, kicking, punching, hitting, shoving, pinching, biting, spitting or abusive gestures.

Verbal bullying

Teasing, swearing, using put-downs, aggressive body language, eye rolling, spreading rumours, name calling, making inappropriate comments about appearances or lifestyle, making repeated or abusive phone calls.

Extortion

Threats used to take food, money or other property.

Visual bullying

Insulting notes, emails, SMS, posts/tweets/chat messages, graffiti or drawings.

Exclusion

Being deliberately ignored, made to feel invisible, group hiding from a group member, not allowed to play on a regular basis. Often this is the most difficult form of bullying as it has subtle expressions.

Sexual bullying

Rude jokes about target, obscene illustrations or gestures, asking questions of a sexual nature designed to shame or embarrass.

Racial bullying

Comments about looks, social or cultural differences designed to be put down e.g. about food eaten or clothes worn.

Cyber bullying

Cyber bullying uses electronic means such as the internet and mobile phones to aggressively and intentionally harm someone.

It predominantly occurs through SMS, blogs and websites, including chat rooms and instant messaging, and online gaming.

Because cyberbullying can be anonymous, cyberbullies are often emboldened by the protection this gives them. The fear factor for victims can be high as the cyberbully can enter the security of the victim's home and they may feel that there is no escape. Cyber bullying is complex and may include:

- Posting and sharing nasty, angry or rude messages, known as harassment.
- Cyber stalking, which is repeated harassment usually containing threatening messages with the aim to intimidate and create fear.
- Sending personal information about others that has been shared privately which may include sensitive personal information or images, often of a sexual nature. This is known as outing.
- An extremely heated online argument using rude and offensive language.

Some behaviours, while not bullying, are conflicts that still need to be addressed and resolved. Examples include: mutual arguments and disagreements (where there is no power imbalance):

- not liking someone or a single act of social rejection;
- one-off acts of meanness or spite; and
- isolated incidents of aggression, intimidation or violence.

Policy

It is important that students and the school community understand what constitutes bullying behaviours so they can be identified and reported more accurately.

Hartford College deplores victimisation or bullying in any form. It will not be tolerated. The College community is a place where every student learns to exercise all the social virtues. There can be no justification for nastiness or violence.

Staff will investigate every report of bullying, with the aims of:

- bringing it to a prompt and effective stop,
- helping perpetrators to eradicate their negative attitudes towards others,
- building resilience in any boy who has been the target of teasing or bullying.

Staff will work closely with parents and mentors so that the opportunities to build character in all students involved is maximised. Our aim is to cooperate in the character education of all boys, including those who, in some particular way, have misbehaved.

Procedures

When an instance of bullying is brought to the attention of a member of staff, the following procedure should be followed.

1. The staff member, on the same day, will pass on the information to the College Deputy. Each will coordinate effective investigation and follow up, including involving the relevant class teachers and mentors. They should ensure that parents are contacted within 24hrs and maintain a record of all reports and correspondence.
2. Depending on the severity of the incident, parents will be informed immediately, or, if the incidents are minor, on any further occasion after a warning had initially been given.

Parents should always be immediately informed if there has been a substantiated complaint by another parent, or if their son has been involved in the physical harassment of another pupil. The mentors of all pupils involved will be informed, and all incidents will be entered by the investigating staff member in the Compass system.

3. When substantiating reports through interviewing the target of the bullying and/or those reporting the bullying, all parties should complete incident reports, along with incident reports from any other students involved and witnesses.
4. A student who has bullied another pupil, before he is allowed to re-associate with that pupil, is to make a genuine undertaking never to act in such a way again.

He should know that a record has been taken of the incident, and that a consequence will be given that is appropriate to the severity of the bullying behaviour. This may involve, mediation, formal apologies, isolation from classmates, or in more severe cases, suspension from school.

5. Ongoing monitoring and follow up with students where necessary/required.

Roles & Responsibilities

The **Principal** is responsible for:

- implementing the policy within the school.
- informing staff and keeping them up to date with the policy and any changes.

School staff have a responsibility to:

- respect and support students.
- model and promote appropriate behaviour.
- have knowledge of school policies relating to bullying behaviour.
- respond in a timely manner to incidents of bullying

In addition, **teachers** have a responsibility to:

- provide curriculum and pedagogy that supports students to develop an understanding of bullying and its impact on individuals and the broader community.

Students have a responsibility to:

- behave appropriately, respecting individual differences and diversity.
- behave as responsible digital citizens.
- follow the school's Student Code of Conduct
- behave as responsible bystanders.
- report incidents of bullying according to a teacher.

Parents and **caregivers** have a responsibility to:

- support their children to become responsible citizens and to develop responsible on-line behaviour.
- be aware of the school bullying policy and assist their children in understanding bullying behaviour.
- support their children in developing positive responses to incidents of bullying
- report incidents of school related bullying behaviour to the school.
- work collaboratively with the school to resolve incidents of bullying when they occur.

All members of the **school community** have the responsibility to:

- model and promote positive relationships that respect and accept individual differences and diversity within the school community.
- support the school's Anti-bullying Plan through words and actions.
- work collaboratively with the school to resolve incidents of bullying when they occur.

Suggestions for parents

When parents and mentors are seeking to foster charity in a young person, it can be productive to think in terms of building positive habits of behaviour such as kindness, compassion, understanding, tolerance, friendship for all, and respect for all.

It can be useful to find opportunities to reinforce the following principles:

1. Be kind to all, without discrimination.
2. We all are a "package deal". We all have strengths and weak points in our character. We should never judge others.
3. Only an insecure character attempts to dominate others, or seeks popularity by picking on a weaker, younger or newer boy.
4. We should focus on the strengths and good qualities of others.
5. We should have the courage to stand up for those who are being mistreated by others. If

we as bystanders do nothing, this can be seen as a form of silent approval. We must act to stop or diminish incidents when we see them.

6. Nobody should have to put up with bullying, victimisation, or harassment. We should speak up if there is any incident where a classmate is unjustly treated by others.
7. It is the responsibility of everyone in a community to foster harmony between its members.
8. A practical skill that a boy can use to handle situations when he is being harassed is to be assertive with the perpetrator, and to tell him directly that he is to stop his actions . He should say words to the effect: "Please stop that, I don't like it". If the harassment continues he should report the incident to a teacher, and to his parents.

Reports to the school of an instance of bullying or harassment are treated seriously, and will be investigated thoroughly. This may involve some time, and the facts may not be exactly as they first seemed. In any allegation of bullying all students involved will be interviewed, and all relevant parents will be contacted.

Additional Information and Contacts

Police Youth Officer

Kate Connaughton
0293499299
conn1kat@police.nsw.gov.au

Youth Engagement Officer

Constable Nicholas Psillis
0443 442 011
psil1nic@police.nsw.gov.au

Useful websites include:

- [Anti-bullying](#)
- [Bullying. No Way!](#)
- [Kids Helpline](#)
- [Office of the eSafety Commissioner](#)