

# Student Bullying and Harassment Policy



## Statement of Intent

Bullying and Harassment at Golden Grove High School is NOT acceptable. Bullying and Harassment behaviours are not consistent with our schools iCARE values.

Bullying and Harassment is hurtful and destructive and will be dealt with seriously and expediently.

At Golden Grove High School we work with the school community and other services and agencies to support our students in being responsible and productive members of the community.

The implementation of this policy supports the aims of the National Safe Schools Framework which include “building safe school communities where diversity is valued, the risk from all types of harm is minimised and all members of the community feel respected, included and supported”.

## Definitions

### Bullying

Bullying is **repetitive** behaviour of a person (staff or student) or **group**, which upsets or hurts another person or persons. A student demonstrating bullying behaviour may try to:

- Hurt the student(s) physically and/or mentally
- Socially isolate or exclude the student(s) from activities
- Make the student(s) feel uncomfortable or hostile
- Say hurtful or humiliating things to or about the student(s)
- **Bystanders** who do not attempt to stop the incident - by doing nothing you are condoning the bullying/harassment

### Cyber-bullying

Cyber-bullying is a term used to describe bullying that is carried out online using the internet and or mobile devices. Cyber-bullying is often combined with face to face bullying. It may include a combination of behaviours such as:

- Sending insulting text or online messages
- Publishing someone’s private information
- Creating hate sites
- Implementing social exclusion campaigns in social networking sites
- Unwanted or sharing sexually explicit content (images, language, etc.)
- Nasty online gossip and rumours

### Harassment

Harassment is behaviour that targets an individual or group due to their identity, race, culture or ethnic origin (**racism**), physical characteristics, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, and/or ability or disability, and that offends, humiliates, intimidates or creates a hostile environment. Harassment may be an ongoing pattern of behaviour, or it may be a single act.

## **Homophobia**

Homophobic language is any language that uses sexual orientation or sexual identity as a put down. This includes calling someone a faggot, homo, dyke, leso, or calling a person, object or situation "gay": to mean something negative. Homophobic language is harassment as it creates a hostile environment and reduces a sense of safety for students who hear this language even if it is not directed at them.

## **Strategies for Dealing with Harassment / Bullying**

There are many ways of dealing with harassment and bullying and each way is different for every individual and/or situation. Some examples are:

- Ignore it and walk away
- Tell the person who is bullying you to STOP – use a strong and confident voice (assertive) – stay positive
- Deflect with humour, show it does not upset you
- If you feel safe, talk with the person who is bullying you to sort out the problem. If you feel scared, ask a friend to come too
- DO NOT try and get back at them, you can get into trouble too

If it is happening online or your phone:

- DO NOT respond to the messages
- Save any online messages and posts and show an adult
- Block the person on the mobile device or social network
- Download the 'Cybersafety Help Button'

If the harassment/bullying continues, follow the flow chart on the back page.

## **Signs of a Student Being Harassed or Bullied**

Students who are being harassed or bullied may not talk about it with their teachers, friends or parents/caregivers for fear of making things worse.

This is why teachers and parents have an important part to play in helping the school and student deal with bullying. A change in behaviour in students may be a signal that they are being harassed, bullied or have some other concern.

Signs include:

- Unexplainable injuries
- Lost or destroyed clothing, books, electronics, or jewelry
- Frequent headaches or stomach aches, feeling sick or faking illness
- Changes in eating habits, like suddenly skipping meals or binge eating. Kids may come home from school hungry because they did not eat lunch.
- Difficulty sleeping or frequent nightmares
- Declining grades, loss of interest in schoolwork, or not wanting to go to school
- Sudden loss of friends or avoidance of social situations
- Feelings of helplessness or decreased self esteem
- Self-destructive behaviors such as running away from home, harming themselves, or talking about suicide

Signs of a student harassing/ bullying others:

- Get into physical or verbal fights
- Have friends who bully others
- Are increasingly aggressive
- Get sent to the principal's office or to detention frequently
- Have unexplained extra money or new belongings
- Blame others for their problems
- Don't accept responsibility for their actions
- Are competitive and worry about their reputation or popularity

### **Guide for Parents – What to do if my child is being harassed/bullied?**

You need to consider what you know about your child and the details of the situation to make the best decision for your child.

Let your child know that you will take the harassment/bullying seriously and that you can help them to report it to the school.

Tips:

- Stay calm and positive
- Talk with your child
- Do not advise your child to fight with the other child
- Report the harassment/bullying to the school
- Seek help for your child to develop his/her social skills

The strategies mentioned above for dealing with harassment/bullying also applies to dealing with cyberbullying. You can teach your child how to be safe on line, as well as supervising and restricting access to technology.

### **Useful Websites for Students and Parents**

[www.kidshelp.com.au](http://www.kidshelp.com.au)

[www.bullyingnoway.gov.au](http://www.bullyingnoway.gov.au)

[www.takeastandtogether.gov.au](http://www.takeastandtogether.gov.au)

[www.stopbullyingnow.gov](http://www.stopbullyingnow.gov)

[www.cybersmart.gov.au](http://www.cybersmart.gov.au)

[www.reachout.com](http://www.reachout.com)

# How is it dealt with at GGHS?

