TIAS-TSC-06-01  Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedures

Note: This document will be subject to revision. Once it is downloaded it is no longer a controlled document.
1 **PURPOSE**

The college believes that for students to learn to the best of their ability and to extend personal growth, they must have a safe, friendly and respectful school environment. The college provides a positive culture where bullying is not accepted, and in so doing, all will have the right of respect from others, the right to learn or to teach and the right to feel safe and secure in their environment. The colleges’ policy aims to prevent bullying, cyber-bullying and other unacceptable behaviours.

2 **SCOPE**

This policy applies to local and overseas students undertaking any of the following courses:

- Taylors English Language Preparation (TELP)
- Year 10
- Year 11
- Year 12

The following table identifies the provider of each of these courses.

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<th>Course</th>
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<th>Trading as</th>
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<td>Embassy English Victoria</td>
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<td>Year 10</td>
<td>Taylors Institute of Advanced Studies Ltd (TIAS)</td>
<td>Taylors Senior College (TSC)</td>
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3 **RELATED DOCUMENTATION**

The National Code 2007

ESOS Act

Relevant Commonwealth legislation relating to bullying, harassment, discrimination and violence include:

- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*
- *Racial Discrimination Act 1975*
- *Racial Hatred Act 1995*
- *Sex Discrimination Act 1984.*

4 **DEFINITIONS**

1. **Bullying:**

- Is the deliberate intention to harm someone who does not have the power to stop it
- Is the harassment or any form of discrimination. It is immoral and can be unlawful because it interferes with the right of a person to feel safe and valued as a member of a community.
- Takes many forms. It can be FACE-TO-FACE such as fighting, pushing, taunting, insulting, embarrassing, intimidating and invading personal space, and BEHIND-THE-BACK such as writing threatening or offensive messages, sending distressing emails and writing anonymous notes that are hurtful.
- Can be done individually such as a person mocking or teasing someone. It can be done as group by such means as social exclusion or hate group recruitment.
- Can be physical and psychological
- Can be sexual harassment which involved behaviours such as unwanted sexual touching, inappropriate joking, exposure, making sexual advances or demeaning someone due to their sexual orientation, and racial harassment which involves behaviours such as social exclusion, teasing, taunting and threats based on another person’s race.
- Is deliberately causing harm by traditional methods such as punching, kicking and spreading hurtful rumours.
- Includes causing hurt by contemporary means such as cyber bullying, sexting, engaging in identity theft or by trashing someone on social networking sites

**The key features of bullying are that it:**
- Causes hurt and distress,
- Is repeated
- Involves the use of power in an unfair way

Bullying need not always be done by the older or stronger. “Bullying up” is bullying done by the smaller, the younger and the weaker, who either use anonymous means to bully, such as cyber bullying, or overt means to bully, knowing that any retaliation would make the provoked person look like they are the bully.

**Symptoms of Bullying**

For behaviour to be classified as bullying, it needs to involve repeated actions that are designed to cause hurt. Not having friends or not being popular isn’t necessarily a sign that a person is being bullied. It may simply mean a person lacks interpersonal skills. There is a difference between bullying behaviour and what can be described as normal interpersonal conflict.

The symptoms associated with bullying include, but are not limited to; not wanting to go to school, anger, tears, depression, low self-esteem and a raft of psychosomatic symptoms such as headaches and stomach aches. Bed wetting and sleeplessness can also be symptoms of bullying, particularly in the young. Withdrawal and reluctance to ‘join in’ can be a warning sign, as can truancy, misbehaviour and aggressive behaviour. Cuts, bruising, torn clothing request for extra food or money as well as a decline in academic performance can also be clues that a student may be suffering from bullying.

**Students who are bullied are more likely to:**
- feel disconnected from school and not like school
- have lower academic outcomes, including lower attendance and completion rates
- lack quality friendships at school
- display high levels of emotion that indicate vulnerability and low levels of resilience
- be less well accepted by peers, avoid conflict and be socially withdrawn
- have low self-esteem
- have depression, anxiety, feelings of loneliness and isolation
- have nightmares
- feel wary or suspicious of others
- have an increased risk of depression and substance abuse
- in extreme cases, have a higher risk of suicide, however, the reasons why a person may be at risk of suicide are extremely complicated.

**Contributing factors to being bullied may include:**
- depression
- family problems
• history of trauma
• belonging to a minority group, where isolation or lack of community support is an issue.

2. Cyber Bullying:

Cyber bullying is causing hurt via modern technologies such as the Internet and other forms of social media, and through the use of smart phones and other mobile devices.

Cyber bullying is a growing problem in society. Modern technologies empower the individual, even the most unlikely of individual, with an immense capacity to cause harm. It is also an attractive means of bullying for it can, under certain conditions, be carried out with relative anonymity.

Cyber bullying can be particularly damaging because of the capacity it has to humiliate, hurt and harm a person in front of a large ‘audience’.

A dangerous feature of cyber bullying is that it can be done quickly and easily. On an impulse, a person can create emotional havoc for another and do so before the voice of reason hints at the inappropriateness of the action.

A further problem with cyber bullying is that the bully is often unaware of the extent of the harm they are causing because cyber bullying seldom occurs face to face. The feedback is muted by distance so the bully is protected from an understanding of the awfulness of their behaviour.

Cyber bullying represents unlawful activity that may result in police laying charges. Cyber Bullying has been linked to depression, self-harm and even suicide.

Examples of Cyber Bullying:

• Sending hateful or threatening comments or pictures via MSN, mobile phone or the internet and by social networking sites such as Facebook, MySpace, QQ or RenRen.
• Using modern technologies to engage in the social exclusion of someone and in hate group recruitment.
• Posting rude, explicit or embarrassing messages or pictures about someone on the Net.
• Stealing someone’s identity in order to harem them in some way.
• Putting pressure on a person to send revealing or compromising pictures of themselves.
• Covertly filming, recording or taking a picture of someone and posting the images on the Net to cause hurt.
• ‘Outing’ and disseminating confidential information about someone.
• ‘Flaming’ and multi-messaging to clog up a person’s electronic system and to cause them distress.
• Using aliases and pseudonyms in chat rooms and on social networking sites in order to harass and upset. Engaging in cyber-stalking and the invading of privacy.
• Referring to your school in a negative or disparaging way on the Net.

Sexting

Another expression of cyber bullying is sexting. Sexting is taking sexually explicit photos and making them available for other to see via a carriage service such as a mobile phone or computer. Sending explicit images of anyone, including yourself, is a crime if you are under the age of 18 years. If the person in the picture is under 16 years, it can be a very serious crime resulting in charges of paedophilia.

Cyber anonymity
Students and staff need to remember that something sent electronically can never be entirely removed even with a press of the ‘delete’ button. The image may emerge at any stage in their future life and lead to serious consequences.

Using pseudonyms, passwords and avatars does not protect the identity of a cyber-bully. Technologies exist to identify those who mis-use modern technologies to harm others.

It should be noted that even if cyber bullying is engaged in while not at school, the matter will be taken up by the school because the welfare of its students and staff is of importance to Taylors Senior College, as is anything that brings the school into disrepute.

The Impact Of Bullying

Bullying has a negative impact on everyone.

Impact on Bullies

Students who frequently bully others are more likely to:

- feel disconnected from school and dislike school
- get into fights, vandalise property and leave school early.

Impact on Bystanders

Students who witness bullying may:

- be reluctant to attend school
- feel fearful or powerless to act and guilty for not acting
- have increased mental health problems, including depression and anxiety
- have increased use of tobacco, alcohol, or other drugs.

Impact on Schools

When bullying continues and a school does not take action, the entire school climate and culture can be negatively affected. This impacts on student learning and engagement, staff retention and satisfaction and parental confidence in the school, which can lead to:

- the school developing an environment of fear and disrespect
- students experiencing difficulty learning
- students feeling insecure
- students disliking school
- students perceiving that teachers and staff have little control and don't care about them.

Students can protect themselves some forms of cyber harm by noting the following advice:

1. Never tell anyone, even your friends, your passwords, private details or access codes.
2. When speaking to someone you do not know on the Net, be aware they may be who they say they are.
3. Be aware that there are predators that use the internet to lure young people into inappropriate sexual relationships. Others use tricks, such as pretending to be a bank to get the victim to share their confidential financial details. This usually results in identity fraud and the stealing of money.
4. Never tell people you do not know well what your address is, or how they can meet up with you.
5. Always be careful what you say or what you show a person in confidence on the Net for it is never guaranteed to remain confidential. The information may be sent on to others.

6. Know that the most frequent use of the Net is for illegal activities such as scams, pornography and gambling.

Finally, if you find yourself the victim of cyber bullying, keep the evidence and report the bully to an appropriate adult. It is generally best not to respond to the cyber bully, or give them any satisfaction they have caused you hurt. If you do respond to the bully, do not do so while hot with anger. This can result in mutual cyber bullying which means both parties become guilty of bullying.

It is important to remember that your “digital footprint” may be accessed many years after material is posted online and used by others, e.g. prospective employers and the media. It is now standard practice for employers to search the Net and social networking sites for you before employing you.

5 POLICY
The college aims to provide the highest quality educational program to all students. We believe that for students to learn to the best of their ability and to extend personal growth, they must have a safe, friendly and respectful school environment. The school provides a positive culture where bullying is not accepted, and in so doing, all will have the right of respect from others, the right to learn or to teach and the right to feel safe and secure in their environment. The college policy aims to prevent bullying, cyber-bullying and other unacceptable behaviours.

The college is committed to providing an educational environment in which students feel valued, respected and secure. To achieve this end, the college will seek to create a school-wide culture that:

- Allows students to flourish free from discrimination, harassment or any other form of bullying.
- Does not tolerate, condone or trivialise bullying behaviours.
- Is aware of what constitutes bullying behaviour.
- Provides support to the victims of bullying.
- Deals firmly, but supportively, with bullies so that they either stop their bullying or leave the school.

6 PROCEDURE

How does Taylors Senior College discourage bullying?

The methods used by the school to discourage bullying will vary from time-to-time, with new initiatives being introduced when thought appropriate. The measures that have been used to discourage bullying in the past include, but are not limited to:

- Employing a suitable range of sanctions to deal with bullies, including suspension and expulsion.
- Putting up signage to promote a bully-free environment.
- Printing anti-bullying policies on the school website.
- Promoting a bully-free environment in assemblies, mentor groups and in classes.
- Ensuring effective pastoral support for students.
- Employing a school counsellor who has specialist skills in helping both the victim of bullying and the bully themselves.
- Training staff to detect bullying behaviours.
- Encouraging staff to adopt classroom management techniques that discourage opportunities for bullying behaviour to take place.
- Encouraging staff to take their supervision duties seriously so that there is a pervasive sense of staff presence when on duty.
- Employing staff who model tolerance, empathy and acceptance of individual differences.
• Reviewing the school’s anti-bullying policy to ensure it is effective and relevant.

If a student reports to a teacher that they are being bullied, the teacher should:

(Advice from Dr. Michael Carr-Gregg, Psychologist)

• Reassure the student that you will help them. That the school has processes to deal with bullying.
• Cyberbullying is a type of bullying, and although you may be required to collect different types of information, for example screen shots or text messages, you should respond to the student in the same way.
• Find a suitable place to talk or make a time to meet and discuss the problem privately.
• At the meeting, give the student your full and undivided attention. Make eye contact. Have a calm voice and open body language.
• Listen to the student without interrupting them. Let them do the talking.
• Use open questions such as “Tell me what happened”, “Then what”. “Mmmm...” shows that you are listening. Only after you have heard the whole story should you ask specific questions to clarify details such as:
  - When? 
  - Where? 
  - How? 
  - Who? 
  - Witnesses? 
  - Who else knows?
  - What words have been said or written?
  - Has anyone been physically hurt?
  - Who is usually around?

• Aim to distinguish between single incidents and ongoing bullying.
• Write down information and details or ask the student to write everything down for you.
• Reassure the student. It is not OK to be bullied and it is not their fault that the other person is behaving in that way.
• Praise the student for speaking out. Acknowledge that speaking out takes a lot of courage.
• Ask the student what they want you to do and whether they want you to do anything.
• Reassure the student that the school takes this seriously and that you will follow up and get back to them.
• Immediate Safety: Ask the student if they feel safe in the short term. If they do not, preventative measure will need to be put in place.
• Explain that the school will follow its procedures to investigate this report.

Investigating the report of bullying

• Report the incident of bullying to the Head of Student Support who will then speak to the victim and then the accused bully/bullies individually and clarify what has occurred. The Head of Student Support may involve the Manager of Student Welfare and Support and/or Deputy Principal.
• The Head of Student Support will liaise with the Manager of Student Welfare and Support, Deputy Principal and the Principal regarding sanctions. Both the victim and the bully/bullies will be offered support and/or counselling.
• Decisions regarding the contact of parents, Care Givers and the Police will be made case-by-case.

Sanctions

• Parents/Care Giver being informed
• Detention
• Suspension
• Expulsion
• Police being informed
7 RECORDS

Study Global: notes and scanned documents
Students’ written documentation of the incident/s
Screen shots (if cyber bullying is involved)

DOCUMENT VERSION CONTROL

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<td>Manager Student Welfare &amp; Support</td>
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