

HARASSMENT AND BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY

OVERVIEW

This policy outlines Torrens Valley Christian School's policy in relation to harassment and bullying prevention.

OVERARCHING PRINCIPLES

Torrens Valley Association for Christian Education Inc is a member school of Christian Education National (CEN).

Torrens Valley Christian School is committed to establishing and maintaining a school environment which is based on Christian principles where we care for others, accept others, respect others, forgive and restore relationships, and where we do not judge or devalue the worth of others.

All members of our school community are valued and have a right to learn and work in an environment which is safe, inclusive, conducive to learning and free from harassment and bullying.

Torrens Valley Christian School is committed to taking all reasonable steps to prevent and respond to harassment and bullying and to create an environment for all students, staff and families that is free from harassment and bullying.

WHAT IS BULLYING AND HARASSMENT?

Harassment is any repeated action or words that are not acceptable to another person. Harassment causes hurt, offence, fear or anxiety. Preventing harassment is a priority in our school. If someone feels they are being harassed, then harassment is occurring. Anyone feeling harassed should tell a trusted friend, teacher, a parent, or school counsellor/chaplain.

Bullying is something done deliberately and repeatedly against a person or group of people to upset or hurt them, or to damage their property, reputation, or acceptance by others. Bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social, or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons.

Cyber bullying is when an individual or group uses the internet, mobile phones or other digital or communication technology to hurt another person or group of people. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Initiating inappropriate emails, messages.
- Sending abusive or malicious emails and text messages, including unwanted text messages that contain sexually explicit content – i.e., sexting.
- Accessing, altering, or deleting others work or folders.
- Identity theft.
- Intentional exclusion from online groups.
- Posting mean, nasty, or hurtful comments or pictures.
- Writing harmful or hurtful comments about any member of the school community on social networking websites such as Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat etc.
- Unauthorised recording, taking, or publishing of photos.

EFFECTS OF BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

When people are bullied or harassed, they may feel angry, embarrassed, frightened, humiliated, uncomfortable, scared, unfairly treated, or unsafe. Some signs that a student is being bullied or harassed may include:

- Refusal to attend school, using excuses not to go.
- Unexplained cuts, bruises, or scratches.
- Stolen or damaged possessions/clothing.
- Headaches or stomach aches.
- Asking for extra pocket money or food.
- Acting out, tearfulness and depression.

EXAMPLES OF BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

- Physical: hitting, pushing, touching, grabbing, looking, staring, facial expressions, gesturing, spitting, taking or damaging property.
- Verbal or written: spoken or written insults, threats, suggestive comments, name-calling, unfair criticism, spreading rumours.
- Graffiti: using pictures, tags, or words.
- Social: forming groups to leave out, ignore and disrespect; influencing, encouraging or organising someone else to be involved in any type of bullying or harassment.
- Sexual: unwanted sexual advances, other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature including comments, pictures and actions.

EXAMPLES OF CYBERBULLYING

- Harassing and threatening messages.
- Sending nasty SMS, pictures, or prank phone calls.
- Using someone else's screen name to pretend to be them. Identity theft.
- Forwarding others' private emails, pictures, messages, or videos without permission.
- Posting mean or nasty comments or pictures on social networking sites or chats.
- Sending sexually explicit images – any sexually explicit images of or to a child under the age of 18 is child exploitation material.
- Intentionally excluding others from group chats.

RESPONSIBILITY OF STAFF

All TVCS staff have the responsibility of addressing harassment and bullying. If staff are aware of bullying and harassment between students they must:

- Intervene to stop the harassment and/or bullying.
- Report the incident to the student's Care Group Teacher/Class Teacher.
- Foster positive relationships with students.
- Establish, maintain, make explicit and model the school's expectations related to bullying.
- Support students to be effective bystanders.
- Respond to reported incidents as soon as possible.
- Keep open communication between students, parents, and the school regarding the progress of the report.
- Record any incidents on TASS and any ongoing incidents to the relevant Deputy Principal.
- Ensure that follow up of students occurs after the report has been resolved.

RESPONSIBILITY OF EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP STAFF

- Develop, implement, and regularly review the school's Harassment and Bullying Prevention Policy.
- Ensure that all new students to the school, and their families, are aware of the Harassment and Bullying Prevention Policy.
- Ensure that the Harassment and Bullying Prevention Policy is visible on the TVCS website.

RESPONSIBILITY OF STUDENTS

- Be respectful towards other students, staff and members of the school community.
- Report the incident to a teacher immediately.
- Support peers to report incidents.
- Learn to be an effective bystander, so that bullying, and harassment are discouraged through peer influence.

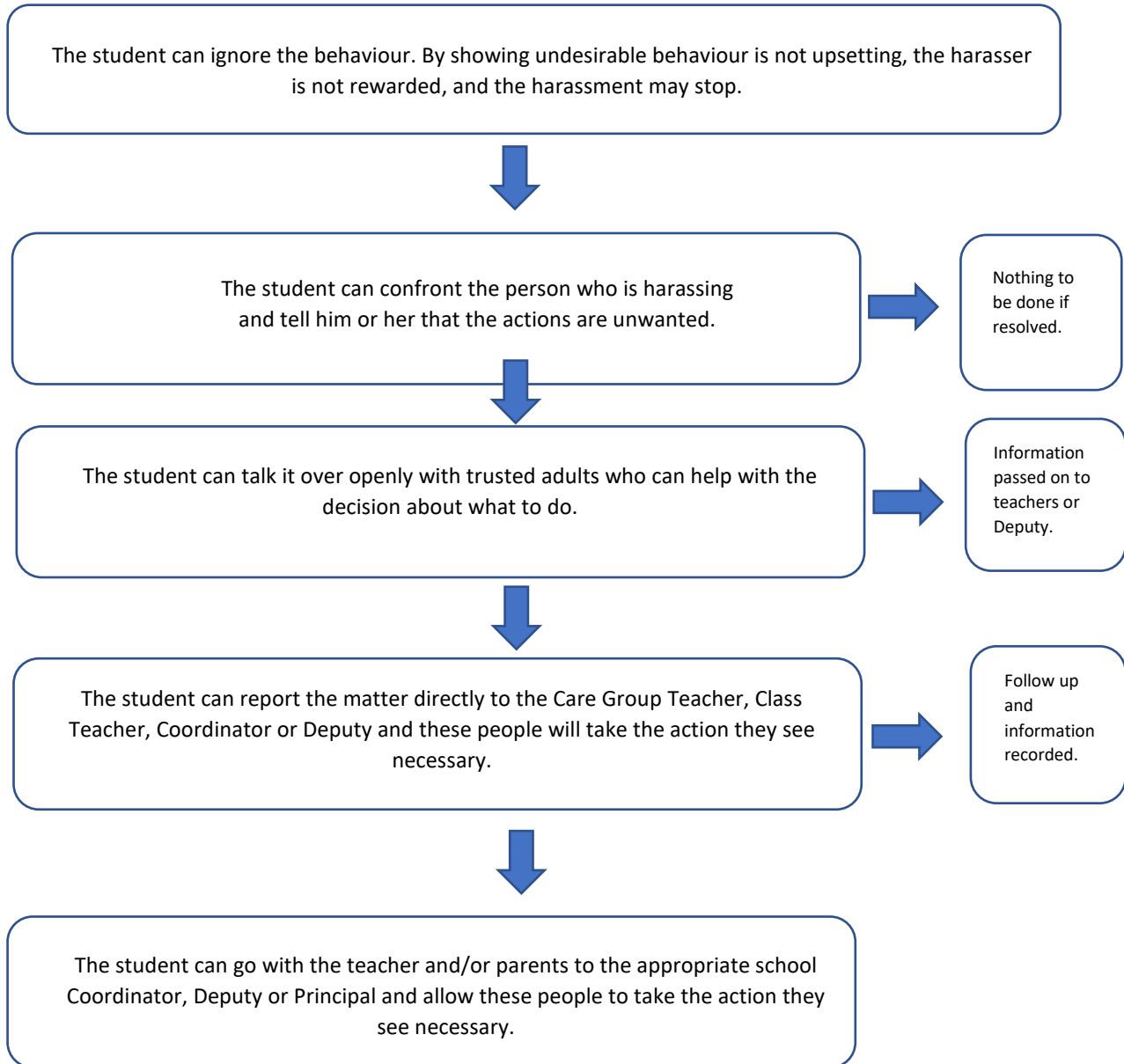
RESPONSIBILITY OF PARENTS AND FAMILIES

- Provide support for their child to report incidents as soon as possible.
- Communicate in a respectful manner with school staff regarding their concerns.
- Be familiar with the school's Harassment and Bullying Prevention Policy.
- Understand your valuable contribution as parents and families.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FAMILIES AND PARENTS

What should students do if they are being harassed or bullied?

Students who are experiencing bullying and harassment are encouraged to follow the outlined actions. Teachers will then implement TVCS Restorative Behaviour Improvement procedures to address unwanted and inappropriate behaviour and apply the appropriate consequences.



WHAT SHOULD STUDENTS AND FAMILIES DO IF CYBERBULLYING OCCURS?

If Cyberbullying occurs in your home, complete following steps in this order:

- Reassure your child.
- Report the incident to the school/police in person.
- Keep a copy of the evidence (screen shot, photo, print out).
- Don't respond or engage with the other party.
- Block the other party but *do not* close the account.

WHAT WILL TVCS DO ABOUT HARASSMENT AND BULLYING?

TVCS is committed to ensuring all students and staff to feel safe, accepted, respected, and valued. Harassment and bullying are not part of our TVCS culture and will not be tolerated.

Action 1 – Restorative Behaviour Improvement procedures are put in place.

Action 2 – Deputy, Parents and Student discussion. This may include reports with external departments if appropriate.

Action 3 – Internal Suspension.

Action 4 – Principal discussion to review enrolment.

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