

Bullying Prevention Policy

At Avenues College we believe that all students have the right to a safe, inclusive and supportive learning environment. We foster positive relationships and partnerships that complement our College values of **Courage, Creativity, Resilience and Respect**. Bullying, including cyber - bullying, harassment and violence is not acceptable in our College community and will be dealt with seriously. Prevention, intervention and post-intervention strategies are actively implemented across B-12.

Bullying

Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening. Bullying can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour is repeated, , or has the potential to be repeated, over time (for example, through sharing of digital records). Bullying of any form or for any reason can have immediate, medium and long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders. Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.

National definition of Bullying Education Council (2018)

Bystander

A bystander is someone who sees or knows about child maltreatment, harassment, aggression, violence or bullying that is happening to someone else. Supportive bystander behaviours are actions and/or words that are intended to support someone who is being attacked, abused or bullied. The actions of a supportive bystander can stop or diminish a specific bullying incident or help another student to recover from it.

Discrimination

Discrimination occurs when people are treated less favourably than others because of their race, culture or ethnic origin; religion; physical characteristics; gender; sexual orientation; marital, parenting or economic status; age; ability or disability. Discrimination is often on-going and commonly involves exclusion or rejection, and may be subject to investigation under the Equal Opportunity Act 1984.

Harassment

Harassment is behaviour that targets an individual or group due to their identity, race, culture or ethnic origin; religion; physical characteristics; gender; sexual orientation; marital, parenting or economic status; age; ability or disability and that offends, humiliates, intimidates or creates a hostile environment.

Violence

Violence is the intentional use of physical force or power; threatened or actual against another person(s) that results in psychological harm, injury or in some cases death. Violence may involve provoked or unprovoked acts and can be a single incident, a random act or can occur over time. This may constitute an assault which is a police matter.

Cyber bullying

Cyber-bullying refers to bullying through information and communication technologies such as the internet and mobile phones. It intends to harm and victimise another person through the use of technologies such as email, chat room, discussion groups, instant messaging, web pages, social media, SMS and MMS (text and picture messaging). Examples include communication that seek to intimidate, manipulate, put down, threaten or humiliate others.

Cyber-bullying includes behaviour such as abusive texts or emails, hurtful messages, images or videos, intimidating or excluding others online, nasty online gossip and chat of a personal nature. Cyber-bullying is not just confined to students but can occur between adults, including parents/carers and staff.

How to recognise a student maybe being bullied or harassed

Ongoing signs that a student is being bullied may include:

- refusing to go to school or truanting
- feeling unwell in the mornings
- having vague headaches or stomach aches
- asking for extra pocket money or food
- being tearful, anxious or having difficulty sleeping
- unexplained cuts or bruises
- damaged or ripped clothing
- 'hiding' information on mobile phones, emails or social networking pages.

Reporting bullying and harassment

If you are bullied or know someone who is being bullied please report it to college staff. It is the responsibility of students, parents/carers and staff to report bullying. **If we do not know then we cannot follow up.**

Who to report to

Parents/carers and students can report bullying, including cyber-bullying, to their classroom teacher, Care Group teacher, subject teachers, Student Well Being Leaders, Community Development Coordinator and members of the College leadership team.

How to report

Bullying and harassment incidents can be reported to staff members in person, by phone or email. Years 8-12 students can also write a Student Report which can be accessed via Student Services.

When to report

Reporting of an incident should occur as soon after the incident as possible. This gives the College the best opportunity to appropriately follow up the incident.

Staff support the College in maintaining a safe and supportive environment by:

- developing and modelling positive respectful relationships with students, staff and families
- explicitly teaching and modelling our college values and Behaviour Code of Conduct
- teaching the *Keeping Safe*; Child Protection Curriculum and health and wellbeing curriculum
- supporting students to resolve issues and to be supportive bystanders.
- using restorative justice and collaborative problem-solving processes to create restorative agreements from bullying and harassment incidents
- informing the school community about anti-bullying and harassment resources and programs via college website and newsletter
- participating in relevant professional learning opportunities and providing induction for students and staff
- reviewing the Avenues College Anti-bullying and Harassment Policy annually and conducting student wellbeing surveys regularly.

Students support the College in maintaining a safe and supportive environment by:

- being respectful towards other students, staff and members of the local community
- reporting if they are being bullied or harassed or if they see someone else being bullied or harassed
- acting as supportive bystanders and reporting bullying behaviour
- following the college policies and procedures to resolve social issues.

Parents/carers support the College in maintaining a safe and supportive environment by:

- being respectful towards other students, staff and members of the local community
- communicating with our College staff about any behaviour or wellbeing issues of concern soon after they arise
- following up on these concerns and, if necessary, following the Avenues College Complaint Procedure or the Raising a Complaint with the Department for Education guidelines.

Note: Issues are best resolved with discussion only between the people who need to know. Information should be kept as confidential as is appropriate.

Responding to reports of bullying and harassment

- Incidents reported will be recorded and followed up as soon as possible.
- All responses will employ a restorative justice approach allowing the person using bullying behaviours the opportunity to repair any damage done and rebuild relationships through restorative agreements.
- The student targeted by bullying behaviours will be supported to develop coping strategies including; ignoring and walking away, speaking assertively, asking friends for help, talking with others, and focusing on the positives.
- After the incident has been initially dealt with students involved will continue to be monitored.
- Appropriate consequences will be put into place in line with the College Behaviour Policy and the Department for Education School Discipline Policy (if required). Consequences will depend on the nature and severity of the incident, and may include: an apology, a restorative agreement, counselling, parent/carer contact, yard program/restrictions, ongoing monitoring of behaviour, take home/suspension, referral to Department for Education Support Services or external agencies.

Further information

- **Bullying Prevention Strategy: A Community Approach**
CONNECTED - A COMMUNITY APPROACH TO BULLYING PREVENTION WITHIN THE SCHOOL GATES AND BEYOND
<https://www.education.sa.gov.au/sites/default/files/connected-community-approach-bullying-prevention.pdf>
- Bullying No Way www.bullyingnoway.com.au
- Office of eSafety Commissioner www.esafety.gov.au
- Youth Beyond Blue www.youthbeyondblue.com
- Reach Out www.reachout.com
- Kids Helpline 1800 551 800 www.kidshelpline.com.au
- eHeadspace www.eheadspace.org.au

The following supporting documents can be found on the Avenues College website: www.avenuescollege.sa.edu.au/

- Department for Education School Discipline Policy
- Avenues College Behaviour Policy and Student Behaviour Code of Conduct
- Avenues College Complaints Procedure
- Cyber-safety, Keeping Children Safe in a Connected World – Guidelines for Schools and Pre-Schools