



Cleveland District State High School Anti-Harassment Policy

Cleveland District State High School is committed to providing a safe, supportive environment where cultural understanding is fostered and individual differences are respected.

The school works with students, teachers and the community to promote the values of tolerance of, and respect for, diversity. Everyone entering our school has the right to feel safe and freely express themselves without fear of bullying or harassment. We take direct steps to prevent bullying by raising awareness of bullying and harassment, encouraging and supporting reporting of incidents and addressing all concerns raised.

Definitions:

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.

Cyber Bullying refers to bullying that is carried out through information and communication technologies. Examples of cyber bullying behaviour are: teasing and being made fun of; spreading rumours online; sending unwanted messages; and defamation.

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 and/or disability. It offends, humiliates, intimidates or creates a hostile environment.

Behaviours that **do not** constitute bullying 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
- isolated incidents of aggression, intimidation or violence

However, these conflicts still need to be addressed and resolved.

Student Responsibilities

- Show respect for all members of the school community.
- Speak out when you see bullying and harassment. Be a positive influence to encourage respectful relationships.
- Report to a staff member or Student Representative if you feel you are being bullied or harassed.
- Support students who are bullied or harassed by encouraging them to report the incident/s, or report the incident/s yourself, to a staff member or Student Representative.
- Support school initiatives that help to promote understanding, inclusion and respect for everyone.
- Report violence or threats of violence immediately.

What can I do about Bullying and Harassment?

You have to decide what you want to do. Here are some courses of action you can take:

- Try ignoring the behaviour completely. If you don't react, it may stop. Selective ignoring can be a powerful strategy but it is important that you take action if the behaviour doesn't stop.
- Tell the person (or people) bullying or harassing you that you don't like it and that you want it to stop. **Be specific about what it is that you want them to stop doing or saying.**
- If it is cyberbullying, block this person and disengage. Do not communicate with them online and block their friends if necessary. Do not engage with people who try to draw you back into the troubling online behaviour. This may include your own friends who may think you want to know what is being posted. Tell people that you are not engaging with cyberbullies.
- If the cyberbullying continues despite your best efforts to disengage, collect some evidence like screen shots, to share with your Year Level Deputy, and make a report.
- Talk to a parent or trusted adult to get advice on how to manage the situation.
- If it is ongoing, tell them to stop, again identifying the specific behaviours that are unacceptable, and that you will report the behaviour to a staff member if it continues.
- **Make a report** to a member of staff. See the Year Coordinator, a teacher or member of the school support staff who will advise you on courses of action in confidence.
- Talk with the Chaplains, School Based Youth Health Nurse, Guidance Officer (Senior School) or Guidance Officer (Junior School)
- See a member of the Administration, like your Year Level Deputy

What will happen when I make a report?

- The person will listen to you sympathetically and keep what you say confidential.
- Together, you will work out the best way to handle the situation.
- If you decide not to go any further, this is all right.
- If you decide that you want more to be done about it, this is also alright and the person will discuss this with you and support you in what you decide to do.
- The goal will be to stop the bullying or harassment and to make sure you feel supported and empowered to manage the situation.
- You may be asked if you would like to be involved in a mediation. This is a process supported by trained staff, who will make sure the behaviours of concern are identified and that each student make a commitment to stop the behaviour.
- You must **make another report** if the intervention strategy did not cause the bullying or harassment to stop. You might make a report to the same person or seek the help of another member of staff, like your Year Level Deputy or Head of School.

If you become aware of other students who may be being bullied or harassed, it is really important to do something about it. Talk about the situation to a teacher or another staff member or speak to a senior student such as a Student Rep. When we support each other and work together, we create a happier and healthier school community.