Anti-Bullying

- includes response to - harassment
                          - bullying

Review every 2 yrs by the Board of Directors
March 2021

Available
- Online
- Given to Parents as the children enter the School.

CSO   Child Safe Officer
PCE   Principal for College Executive
CTE   The College of Teachers Executive

We acknowledge the use of material from:

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Part 1 Policy

1. Purpose of this policy

1.1 Ghilgai rejects all forms of bullying. It is not acceptable for any student to experience bullying within the learning and social environment of our School.

1.2 In rejecting bullying and harassment, the School is committed to the development and the reinforcement of a culture of positive behaviour, respect and tolerance.

1.3 This Anti-Bullying Policy sets out the principles and framework governing the School's behaviours and activities that support all members of the School Community in enacting zero tolerance of bullying.

2. Principles

2.1 Ghilgai rejects all forms of bullying and takes a zero tolerance stance in response to bullying wherever and whenever it occurs within the School Community. This applies to real and virtual environments. Onsite and off site.

2.2 The School believes that, in order to reduce and eliminate bullying behaviour, it is essential to create a culture of positive behaviour, respect and tolerance.

2.3 Underpinning the School's zero tolerance stance in response to bullying is a belief that all students, no matter what their background, race, ethnicity, gender, physical and intellectual attributes, are to be valued and respected.

2.4 The School is committed to the importance of students both being and feeling safe within the School.

2.5 The School, in discharging its duty of care, understands that it has a responsibility to enable students to flourish in relation to their emotional, mental and physical health.

3. Aims of the policy

3.1 To set out the School's clear expectations in relation to positive student behaviour and in so doing to define what constitutes bullying behaviour.

3.2 To support the School and its employees, parents and students themselves in creating a climate characterised by respectful and positive relationships.

3.3 To comply with the requirements of the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 to implement anti-bullying (including cyberbullying) and harassment strategies and procedures as part of the School's responsibility to provide a safe environment where the risk of harm is minimised and students feel physically and emotionally secure.

4.   Legal and regulatory basis for compliance

4.1   Duty of Care

4.2   Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic.)

4.3   Education and Training Reform Regulations (2007)

4.4   Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) Minimum Standards

4.5   Victorian Government Department of Education and Training's (Vic DET) guidance for government schools, equally applicable to non-government schools, on bullying, cyberbullying and the role of the school.

4.6   Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth.)

4.7   Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth).

4.8   Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth.)

4.9   Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic.)

4.10   Racial and Religious Tolerance Act 2001 (Vic.)

5.   Scope

5.1   The application of the policy is relevant to the Board of Directors, PCE, to School staff, students and parents.

It applies to all School activities – onsite/offsite.

6.   Roles and responsibilities

6.1   The Board of Directors is responsible for reviewing the anti-bullying policy and its implementation.

6.2   The Principal for the College Executive is responsible for ensuring the school has anti-bullying policies and procedures in compliance with the VRQA minimum standards.

6.3   The College of Teachers Executive is responsible for:

   a.   developing strategies that ensure the culture of the school is one in which positive behaviour and respectful relationships are given high priority
   b.   developing and implementing strategies and procedures that, as far as possible, reduce bullying to zero.

6.4   The PCE is responsible for ensuring clear procedures are in place for the reporting and monitoring of bullying incidents and behaviour.

6.5   The PCE is responsible for ensuring Staff have access to regular training in the development of positive behaviour and in strategies for reducing bullying, particularly cyberbullying. They are also responsible for providing regular training and support for parents in respect of Bullying and Cyberbullying.

6.6   The PCE is responsible for overseeing the development and implementation of anti-bullying strategies and for monitoring their effectiveness.

6.7   All staff in the School are responsible for working together in collaboration with students and parents to ensure issues of behaviour and relationships are given high priority at all times.

6.8   All Teachers are responsible for keeping detailed notes re behavioural incidents and for notifying the PCE immediately regarding intimidatory acts.

7.   Accountability

- The College of Teachers Executive reports regularly to the Directors via CSO/written Reports/combined meetings. And specifically, if requested to do so.

- The College of Teachers Executive initiates the review of each major incident.

- The College of Teachers Executive initiates the review of the Code of Conduct and the Anti-Bullying Policy every 2 years and involves staff/community in it. Directors ratify both.

8. Communication of the policy

8.1   The School will embed the language of positive behaviour, respect and tolerance in all its communications.

8.2   The School will make regular public statements to demonstrate its commitment to a zero tolerance culture with respect to all forms of bullying.

- via our Newsletter to Parents.
- at weekly sharing with students

9. Policy review

9.1   The Ghilgai Board of Directors reviews the Anti-Bullying Policy biennially.

9.2   The PCE reports to the Board of Directors on the implementation of the Anti-Bullying Policy as part of the Board's review of the policy.

Part 2   Key definitions and descriptions.

1. Duty of Care

Schools have a **duty of care** to ensure the safety and wellbeing of students. In discharging this duty, principal, teachers and other staff are held to a high standard of care in relation to students. The duty requires principals and teachers to take all responsible steps to reduce the risk of harm to students, including the implementation of strategies to prevent bullying. The duty is non-delegable, meaning that it cannot be assigned to another party.

2. Bullying – What is it?

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.

- **Our national definition of bullying for Australian schools**

- **In short**, bullying is an ongoing misuse of power in relationships involving harmful physical, verbal or social behaviour.

- **The definition of bullying** has three critical aspects: misuse of power within relationships, it is repeated and ongoing, and it involves behaviours which can cause harm. All three aspects need to be present in order for a behaviour to be called bullying.

- **Misuse of Power**
  In a situation where there is a power imbalance, one person or group has a significant advantage over another, and if this power is misused, this enables them to coerce or mistreat another for their own ends. In a bullying situation this power imbalance may arise from the context (e.g. having others to back you up), from assets (e.g. access to a weapon) or from personal characteristics (e.g. being stronger, more articulate or more able to socially manipulate others).

- **Bullying occurs in a social setting**
  The critical aspect that distinguishes violence, harassment and discrimination from bullying is that bullying happens within social relationships, featuring repeated and harmful behaviours that stem from a misuse of power. Violence, harassment and discrimination can occur as part of bullying, but also can occur in one-off conflicts or between strangers
  .

- **Bullying can be overt or covert**

  Covert bullying is a subtle type of non-physical bullying which usually isn't easily seen by others and is conducted out of sight of, and often unacknowledged by adults. Covert bullying behaviours mostly inflict harm by damaging another's social reputation, peer relationships and selfesteem. Covert bullying can be carried out in a range of ways (e.g. spreading rumours, conducting a malicious social exclusion campaign and/or through the use of internet or mobile phone technologies).

  Covert bullying includes social exclusion and intimidation. The term 'covert' highlights the fact that not all bullying is physical or obvious to others. Covert bullying can have the same harmful impacts as more obvious bullying, as it can be more isolating, can go on for longer before other people become aware of it, and can be more easily denied by the other person.

- **Bullying roles are changeable**
  Bullying is highly dynamic. Students' roles can change in different contexts. Individuals can occupy various roles in bullying, including the individual being bullied, those bullying others, and bystanders who may be assistants, reinforcers, outsiders, or defenders. One individual can play one role in one context while taking a different role in another.

- **The bully often has reinforcers**
  - Engaging directly in bullying behaviour or assisting and actively joining in.
  - Encouraging the bullying behaviour by giving, for example, silent approval, by smiling, by laughing or by making comments.
  - Standing by silently and passively, doing nothing when knowing or seeing bullying behaviour.

  - Excerpts from Bullying No Way!
    bullyingnoway.gov.au

Bullying Behaviour

Bullying behaviour seeks to harm, humiliate, dominate, intimidate, ostracise, or isolate.

Bullies use many tactics

- ∼ Hitting, punching, shoving, elbowing etc
- ∼ Ridicule by word or gesture
- ∼ Making threats intimidation, invasion of space.
- ∼ Blackmail
- ∼ Teasing
- ∼ Deliberate exclusion/strategies in games
- ∼ Refusal to work with a fellow student allocated by teacher – display of distain via facial or other gestures
- ∼ Subtle strategies to mar or destroy the students work
- ∼ Grabbing/hiding clothing or property or damaging clothing or property
- ∼ Tripping
- ∼ Name calling
- ∼ Nonverbal expressions of contempt
- ∼ Spreading rumours
- ∼ Spitting
- ∼ Pulling the chair away
- ∼ Accidental "throws" designed to hurt the victim
- ∼ Gang up and lies about the student
- ∼ Unfair game rules designed to exclude
- ∼ Threats to others who talk/play with their victim

This list is not exhaustive, it is a framework for observation.

3. Cyber Bullying

Ghilgai deems that cyber bullying is a school related activity – because the aggressor is targeting a contact made at school and is thus breaching the trust and respect due to fellow students. Cyber bullying impacts on the recipient's wellbeing at school.

- **What is it?**

Cyber bullying is the use of technology to harass, threaten, embarrass, harm, humiliate, ostracise, isolate or target another person. Like bullying it is based on a power imbalance.

- **Characteristics**
  - Availability – it can happen at any time
  - Anonymity – The impression of anonymity in the 'online world' leads people to feel less accountable for their actions and provides a false bravado to would-be-bullies.
  - Geography – Rather than being limited to the schoolyard, cyber bullying can operate where ever person uses the internet or mobile phone.
  - Impact – The internet provides the means for 'bullying' comments to be available to a wider audience, via social networking sites. The impact caused by these statements is increased many times over.
  - Twisting – A private message or joke that is forwarded on may be twisted to appear offensive or harassing even though that was not the intention of the original sender.
  - Permanence – Verbal comments are fleeting. Online content is tracked and stored and can potentially resurface at any time.
  - Recipients – Anyone can be a victim – students, teachers, parents.

- **Cyber Bullying has many forms**
  - Embarrassing/threatening video clips passed on to others.
  - Insulting comments put up for others to read.
  - Threatening emails – perhaps with a pseudonym.
  - Bullying/embarrassment, via chat rooms & instant messaging.
  - Pranking – anonymous mocking/threatening phone calls/repeated hang ups
  - Sexting
  - Spreading rumours online
  - Publishing private information online.
  - Identity theft – taking the identity of another and sending false messages.
  - Exclusion campaigns

- **One action** – such as comment or an embarrassing photo – which is repeated through sharing and forwarding to others, can be bullying if the individuals involved know each other, and have ongoing contact either online or in person.

4. Harassment / Discrimination / Violence

- **Harassment**

Harassment is behaviour that targets an individual or group due to their race, culture or ethnic origin; religion; physical characteristics; gender; sexual orientation; marital parenting or economic status; age 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.

Aspects of harassment

- Inappropriate patting/touching
- Violation of the child's personal space
- Brushing against another
- Offensive gesturing
- Subtle verbal needling
- Derogatory remarks or gestures designed to intimidate

- **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 and/or ability or disability. Discrimination is often ongoing and commonly involves exclusion or rejection.

Intervening early can often prevent harassment, discrimination and more serious negative behaviours from becoming part of a bullying pattern.

- **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.

It includes:
- shoving
- Pushing
- Tripping
- hitting

5. Pedalling Sexual imagery/information

- **What is it?**

Passing on to others – verbally or visually – unrequested sexual imagery derived from adult literature, age restricted movies/video clips, video games, magazines, or the like.

Pedalling sexual imagery can be a subtle form of intimidation …… "If you tell I won't be your friend"……

It is an act of mental and emotional violation.

- **Effects**

Such images and their associated language and behaviours can have a polluting, festering and lingering presence in what Steiner Schools deem a sacred realm of childhood – imagination. This is the capacity we use for healthy relationships and future vision.

These images may disturb sleep, cause anxiety, and undermine wellbeing.

Every child has the right to enjoy the innocence and purity of childhood.

Part 3   Reporting Incidents
- A culture of whole community vigilance

- **Procedures for**

1. **Staff –**
   - Teachers/Staff must report intimidatory acts to CSO within the hour via an incident form or notes of the incident.
   - Teachers/Staff must report all phone calls re intimidatory acts within the hour/as above.
   - Teachers/Staff must give the CSO a copy of all parent letters/emails via intimidatory acts within the hour.

- **See Obligatory Reporting-notes for staff.**

2. **Parent/School Community**
   - All parents/visiting adults who witness demeaning incidents must report to a teacher immediately and follow up with a note. This is an integral part of the parent's responsibility in the school community.
   - Any parent who hears about demeaning actions may report it to CSO via a note. This report may be about the parent's child or another child.

3. **Students**
   - All students are encouraged to tell a teacher/parent/trusted adult about an incident that has demeaned them. Ghilgai supports students to honour their own person.
   - Student bystanders need to assist the victim if they can, then tell the teacher or inform a teacher via a note.

Part 4   Responding

1. **School's Response**

Overarching guidelines

- A get-tough, punitive response to bullying may appear to work in the short term.

However

- Bullying may continue at a covert level.
- Bullying may appear in a different way in a different place.

Effective Responses

- Solution-focused
- Relationship-based
- At the school level, the class level, the student level, and based on strong links between parents and schools

Ghilgai has a many layered approach

It includes

- Clear reporting expectations/channels so small incidents are nipped in the bud.
- Regular school/class conversations about positive behaviour and also about negative behaviour and its effects.
- Parent education/parent co-working re bullying.
- Empowerment of bystanders
- Restorative practices to re weave the social fabric.
- Addressing the underlying causes of bullying.
- Social skills development for the aggressor.
- Coaching/strategies/support for the recipient.
- Proactive conflict management
- Consideration of inequality among students and strategies to address that imbalance.
- Regular review of policy/and after incidents.
- Monitoring class/school data re bullying patterns/incidents
- A proactive approach to cyber safety.

2. The Teacher's Response

Teachers must take action to support the recipient. This may entail
- removal of a child from an unsafe position
- isolation of the aggressor
- calling the parents to collect the aggressor – after liaison with CSO or deputy
- Parents of aggressor must be notified. The CSO will support this/and may make the call.
- Parents of the recipient should be notified of the incident and of the School's response to it and of ongoing strategies to maintain the wellbeing of their child.
- Phone calls to parents must be made on the day of the incident.

3.   The Parent's Response to a child's report of bullying

1. Listen calmly to what your child wants to say and make sure you get the full story.
2. Reassure your child that he/she are not to blame and ask open and empathetic questions to find out more details
3. Discuss with your child some strategies to handle the bullying.
4. Contact the Class Teacher or Education Coordinator via a note delivered to reception or email to edadmin@ghilgai.com.au or phone the Education Coordinator on 9761 8369.
5. Check in regularly with your child.

4. Response from Reception

- All notes/letters addressed to the CTE or CSO must be walked up to the Education Coordinator as soon as possible so protective measures can be put in place.
- Any phone calls that alert Receptionists to intimidating behaviour must be reported to CSO as soon as possible. As above.
- Ask the parent to write a follow up note.

5. Response from the CSO

- **Immediate Response**

- CSO receives incident notes on behalf of College of Teachers Executive.
- CSO immediately informs the class teacher/relief teacher in order that this person may be proactive in supporting a vulnerable child or dealing with a potential aggressor.
- A letter to the College may not be shared with a class teacher – the essential contents must be relayed by the CSO.
- Where the risk is high or someone is in an unsafe position the CSO must act immediately to protect all involved and then call a special College meeting that day to consider the matter and plan the steps forward.
- If the incident is serious then the CSO informs staff right away via a circulatory note – so that everyone is aware/vigilant during the day and on goingly.

- **Ongoing duties - CSO**

- Liases with Education Coordinator who can assist teachers to deal with inappropriate behaviour - advice/group support/parent conversations.
- CSO tays in touch with issues/liaises with all concerned – calls a special College meeting if the issue seems blocked.
- Reports to staff meetings re incidents/the needs of specific child/children so the whole body can be supportive/protective/vigilant.
- Files incident notes in the School Behavioural Log so that class activity and whole school patterns are visible.
- Checks Specialist Lessons Day Book regularly and following up with the Class Teacher/Specialist as required.
- Reports regularly to CTE/special meetings if necessary – incidents/updates
- Reports to Directors. Keeps them informed.

6. Immediate Response to the perpetrator

- applicable to Bullying/Harassment/Discrimination/Violence

- The perpetrator will be told to stop and negative behaviour named and described.
- He/she could be withdrawn from peers.
- Parents will be contacted the same day.
- A 'Consideration Day' may be given whilst College plans steps forward.
- Further options see Breach of Code/Students/Page 10 – Child Safety – Our Code of Conduct.
- A parent meeting may be arranged. E/C present to represent the College Executive.

Part 5   Associated Documents

Care, Safety and Wellbeing of Students

The following School documents belong to this domain.

- Duty of Care
- Our School Community – Code of Conduct
- On being a Child Safe School – Protection from Child Abuse
- Mandatory Reporting – a resource for staff
- Behaviour Management including Suspension/Expulsion
- Discipline Policy
- Student Supervision – on site
- Camps – Policy & procedures
- Excursions – Policy & procedures
- Restraint of Students
- Obligatory Reporting – notes for staff
- Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedures
- An Integrated Policy for Incident Reporting
- First Aid Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Dress Code
- Adjustments for Individual Needs
- Covid Policy and Procedures
- Privacy

Part 6 Resource – Conversation prompts
- excerpts from Bullying. No Way!

If you hear about unfair behaviour or bullying talk to your child and offer some advice about stopping/avoiding/reporting this behaviour.

1. Parent to child suspected of bullying

Talk about:
- why they have been behaving this way
- taking responsibility for their behaviour
- how to sort out differences and resolve conflicts
- how to treat others with respect
- the effect of bullying on others
- the need to repair harm they have caused to others
- the need to restore relationships

Parents should also talk to the Class Teacher who will co-work with the parents to foster self-esteem, social growth.

2. Strategies for Bystanders

Give advice:
- refuse to join in
- don't watch, walk away
- tell the person doing the bullying to stop
- tell the person doing the bullying that you will talk to a teacher. – Support your child to do this.
- say something supportive to the person who is being bullied or invite them to join your group
- tell the person being bullied that the other person's behaviour is not okay, that it's not their fault.
- leave negative online conversations – don't join in with online bullying.

3. Parent to child who is being bullied.

Support your child by reporting to the School, right away. Give some strategies to reduce exposure and gain support.
- ignore the bully.
- tell them to stop and then walk away
- pretend you don't care, try to act unaffected or unimpressed
- try to deflect the bullying (e.g. pretending to agree in an offhand way 'okay, yeah, maybe')
- avoid areas that the bully and company use
- stay with other students
- tell your friends what happened
- talk to an adult at the school each incident is important
- keep sharing with your parent or a trusted adult

4. Parent to child who has experienced online bullying.

- Don't respond.
- Tell an adult right away.
- upgrade privacy settings
- report to e-safety Commissioner with adult support

Part 7   Websites - support/Resources

1. **Bullying – Harassment – Discrimination - Violence**

   - Bullying, No Way!
     www.bullyingnoway.gov.au
   - Bully Stoppers
      www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers

- Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800 or www.kidshelp.com.au   Age 5–25   24/7

- Parent Helpline   Tel: 1800 551 800

- Reach Out www.reach.com.au

- Beyond Blue   www.beyondblue.org.au

- Headspace   www.headspace.org.au

- Australian Psychological Society   www.psychology.org.au

- Australian guidance and Counselling Association   www.agca.com.au

2. Online Bullying

Community resources for Parents (https://esafety.gov.au/)

The e-safety Commissioner provides:
1. Online safety education for Australian children and young people
   https://esafety.gov.au/education-resources
2. A complaints service for young Australians who experience Serious cyberbullying
   https://esafety.gov.au/complaints-and-reporting
3. Illegal content scheme – addresses illegal online content
   https://esafety.gov.au/complaints-and-reporting/offensive-and-illegal-content-complaints

~ **iParent**
   - The ever changing nature of the internet can pose challenges for parents. iParent provides online safety resources targeted to the specific needs of parents and carers.
   - (/education-resources/iparent)

~ **Removal of offensive material**
   - We will work to get cyber bullying material removed from any communications service.
   - (/complaints-and-reporting/cyberbullying-complaints/i-want-to-report-cyberbullying)

~ **Report offensive or illegal content**
   - Reports can be made anonymously
   - (/complaints-and-reporting/offensive-and-illegal-content-complaints/report-offensive-or-illegal-content)

~ **Kids Helpline**
   - Kids Helpline (Age 5-25) provides free and confidential online and phone counselling 24 hours a day, 7 days a week on 1800 55 1800