

Somerville SC

Bullying & Harassment Policy

Definition:

A person is bullied when someone, or a group of people, deliberately upset or hurt another person or damage their property, reputation or social acceptance on more than one occasion. There is an imbalance of power in incidents of bullying with the bully or bullies having more power at the time due to age, size, status or other reasons. Bullying may consist of physical harm, harassment, verbal insults or hurtful remarks, or actions designed to hurt somebody's reputation, social standing or to cause humiliation. Bullying may be carried out directly or indirectly, and may include the use of digital technologies such as social network sites, websites or on-line chat rooms.

Rationale:

- Somerville SC will provide 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 a right to feel safe and secure in their school environment at all times.

Aims:

- To reinforce within Somerville SC community what bullying is, and the fact that it is unacceptable.
- To alert everyone within Somerville SC community of the signs and evidence of bullying and to ensure bullying is reported to staff whether a person is an observer or a victim.
- To ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are followed up appropriately.
- To seek parental and peer-group support and co-operation at all times.

Implementation:

- Our school will adopt a zero tolerance position on bullying.
- Our school will combat bullying by providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment based on the Effective School's model.
- An annual survey of students will be conducted in relation to bullying & harassment with appropriate review and response enacted.
- We will adopt a four-phase approach to bullying:

1. Primary Prevention:

- Professional development for staff relating to bullying, harassment and proven counter measures.
- Through the Pastoral Care Program students are made aware of the types of bullying, as well as the consequences and impact of bullying.
- Community awareness and input relating to bullying, its characteristics and the school's programs and response, complemented by clear processes for reporting suspected bullying.
- The provision of programs that promote inclusiveness, resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving will form an integral part of our curriculum. In particular, assertiveness training and bystander training that builds skills in children to challenge and/or report unacceptable behaviour will be progressively built into our curriculum.
- Anti-bullying messages and posters will be displayed around Somerville SC.

- Student Representative Council, staff and students to promote the philosophy of ‘No Put Downs’.
- The provision of structured activities to students at recess and lunch breaks.
- Teachers will be trained in cybersafety. Cybersafety awareness programs will be provided for parents and cybersafety will form part of each child’s PCP curriculum.

2. Isolated, Infrequent or Less Serious Incidents:

- All instances of suspected bullying or inappropriate behaviour will be responded to by staff.
- Parents will be encouraged to contact the school if they suspect a bullying or harassment problem.
- Somerville SC will reinforce with children the importance of appropriately reporting incidents of inappropriate behaviour involving themselves or others. The college will reinforce with staff the need to respond to allegations appropriately and proportionally to each allegation consistent with the school’s Student Code of Conduct, including the proper reporting and recording of the incident on Compass.
- Parents are to be contacted if their child is alleged to have been bullied or experienced inappropriate behaviour, or if their child appears to have behaved inappropriately or bullied someone else.
- Appropriate and proportional consequences will be determined based upon the nature of the bullying behaviour but may include detention, internal or external suspension, formal Bullying & Harassment Notice and ultimately exclusion from the college.
- Public recognition and reward for positive behaviour and resolution of problems will occur through the Student Recognition & Rewards Program.

3. Repetitive or Serious Incidents:

- Serious incidents and/or repetitive incidents of bullying or unacceptable behaviour will be reported, responded to by staff and documented.
- Serious incidents are those that include physical assault, sexual assault, criminal activity involving theft or serious damage of property, serious threats or homophobic bullying etc.
- All such incidents or allegations will be properly investigated and documented. Depending upon the nature of each incident, they may be also be reported to and investigated by police, reported to the Student Critical Incident Advisory Unit, and/or reported to the Department’s Emergency and Security Management Unit.
- Somerville SC may contact support professionals such as Welfare officers, Welfare coordinators or Councillors and/or Student Support Officers for assistance and support.
- Students and staff and parents identified by others as bullies will be informed of allegations.
- Both bullies and victims will be offered counselling and support.
- All repetitive or serious incidents will be brought to the attention of the principal class members of the school.
- The most appropriate staff member will contact parents of the targeted child. Principal class members will contact alleged perpetrators unless advised by police etc not to do so.
- Regional office will provide support as appropriate, and the principal will monitor the investigation and review the situation until matters are appropriately resolved.
- Consequences of repetitive or serious incidents may include criminal charges, suspension, expulsion, loss of privileges, counselling, conciliation or any other consequences consistent with Somerville SC’s Student Code of Conduct.
- A management strategy for all parties will be developed in consultation with the students and parents involved.
- Parents or community members who bully or harass or abuse staff will be provided with official warnings, and if necessary referred to the police, and/or have Trespass restrictions placed upon them by the principal consistent with the Summary Offences Act.

4. **Post Incident:**

It is important that appropriate strategies are put in place after the incident has been resolved for all students involved. Appropriate strategies may include:-

- conciliation meetings between all parties
- ongoing monitoring of students involved.
- identification of an agreed key contact staff member for each student involved.
- follow-up meetings regarding each child's management strategy.
- ongoing communication with parents.
- counselling from appropriate agencies of support officers etc for both parties.
- reinforcement of positive behaviours and appropriate behaviour strategies.

Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed annually as part of the school's review cycle.

This policy was last ratified by School Council on....

June 15, 2015