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#### **14.2.1. INTRODUCTION**

Every student/client must feel safe and secure while on an Odyssey NSW (ONSW) site or participating in an external activity. This means that bullying and intimidation are unacceptable because of the fear and anxiety they engender. Accordingly, ONSW should be a place where all students/clients can feel safe, secure, and able to achieve their potential.

It is expected that all members of staff and students/clients– will work together to ensure that bullying, whether verbal or physical, subtle, or overt, face-to-face or via technology, does not happen. This requirement aligns with ONSW Client Charter.

#### **14.2.2. OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of this Policy are:

- (a) To create an environment in which all students/clients feel safe and secure.
- (b) To foster optimum conditions of learning, teaching and rehabilitation.
- (c) To encourage reporting of bullying.
- (d) To support the targets of bullying.
- (e) To counsel perpetrators so that bullying behaviours stop.
- (f) To provide, where necessary, appropriate disciplinary consequences for those who persist in bullying.

#### **14.2.3. POLICY STATEMENT**

3.1 ONSW is committed to ensuring that each student/client can feel safe and secure while on site or undertaking an ONSW activity. Bullying by students/clients will not be tolerated under any circumstances.

3.2 Counselling and/or disciplinary action will be taken in any case where a student/client is found, upon reporting and investigation, to have bullied another student.

#### **14.2.4. WHAT IS BULLYING?**

- 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 refers to bullying through information and communication technologies (discussed in more detail below at 14.2.5 ).

- There are many types of bullying, which may include any one or more of the following:
  - (a) physical: punching, hitting, tripping, kicking.
  - (b) verbal: teasing, using offensive names, being abusive, constant criticism, inappropriate comments about a person's appearance, belittling remarks.
  - (c) non-verbal: writing offensive notes, rude gestures, graffiti.
  - (d) psychological: spreading rumours, hiding or damaging possessions, inappropriate use of information technology, unauthorised use of camera phones
  - (e) emotional: deliberately excluding others from a group, refusing to sit next to someone, overtly encouraging other people to actively ignore or avoid a person.
  - (f) sexual harassment: which involves behaviours such as unwanted touching, inappropriate joking, taunting or teasing of a sexual nature; and/or exposure.

#### **14.2.5. WHAT IS CYBER BULLYING?**

- Cyber bullying is the carrying on of some of the above forms of bullying (whether while at school or not) by use of electronic technologies such as email, websites, Facebook, online chatrooms, Twitter, blogs, Snapchat, Instagram etc. Cyber bullying can include:
  - (a) sending hateful or threatening comments or pictures via MSN, mobile phone, the internet, or social networking sites
  - (b) using technology to socially exclude someone.
  - (c) posting rude, explicit, or embarrassing pictures of someone on the internet.
  - (d) stealing someone's identity to harm them in some way.
  - (e) putting pressure on a person to send revealing or compromising pictures of themselves.
  - (f) covertly filming, recording, or taking a picture of someone and posting the images on the internet to cause hurt.
  - (g) 'outing' and disseminating confidential information about someone.
  - (h) flaming and multi-messaging to clog up a person's electronic system and to cause them distress.
  - (i) using aliases and pseudonyms in chat rooms and on social networking sites in order to harass and upset; and
  - (j) engaging in cyber stalking and the invading a person's privacy
- Sexting can be another type of cyber bullying. Sexting involves taking sexually explicit photos and making them available for others to see via a mobile phone or the internet. Sending explicit images of anyone including yourself is a crime if you are under the age of 18 years. If the person in the picture is under the age of 16 years, it can be a very serious crime resulting in charges of paedophilia.

#### **14.2.6. WHAT BULLYING IS NOT**

Behaviours that do not constitute bullying include:

- (a) mutual arguments and disagreements (where there is no power imbalance).
- (b) not liking someone or a single act of social rejection.
- (c) one-off acts of meanness or spite; or
- (d) isolated incidents of aggression or intimidation.

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

#### **14.2.7. OH'S ANTI-BULLYING STRATEGIES**

The methods used by the school to discourage bullying will vary from time to time and will depend on the needs of the School. The measures that are currently in place to discourage bullying, include but are not limited to:

- (a) emphasis is on preventative and early intervention including wellbeing programs.
- (b) classroom teachers will clarify with their students/clients, the School's policy on bullying at the start of the school year.
- (c) this policy being available in the ONSW website
- (d) undertaking surveys of student/client well-being.
- (e) including open discussions on anti-bullying strategies in the curriculum.
- (f) ensuring effective pastoral support for students/clients through the appointment of teachers and other staff.
- (g) encouraging students/clients to report incidents and assist them in adopting strategies to deal with bullying.
- (h) employing School Counsellors who have specialist skills in helping both victims of bullying and identified bullies.
- (i) training staff to detect bullying behaviour.
- (j) employing a suitable range of sanctions (including suspension and expulsion) to deal with and discourage bullies.

#### **14.2.8. RESPONSIBILITIES AND REPORTING**

Staff have a responsibility to:

- (a) be vigilant when in the classroom/group room, other areas on site and at co-curricular activities and be observant of signs of distress or suspected incidents of bullying.
- (b) educate students/clients about bullying.

- (c) empower students/clients to act to stop bullying if they witness it occurring.
- (d) model non-bullying behaviour always including tolerance and acceptance.
- (e) offer support to students/clients who are bullied.
- (f) listen and respond to all complaints of bullying.
- (g) record students' unacceptable behaviour; and
- (h) report incidents of unacceptable behaviour to the Principal

If the nature and seriousness of the bullying behaviour is such that it may be criminal or require consideration of mandatory reporting, staff should report the matter to the Principal. This may include physical assault, threats of violence, or problematic sexual behaviour.

Students/clients have a responsibility to:

- (a) ensure their behaviour does not intimidate or harass other students.
- (b) stop bullying behaviour when they witness it.
- (c) report bullying behaviour to staff as soon as they become aware of it.
- (d) behave as responsible digital citizens and do not tell anyone your passwords, private details or access codes.

#### **14.2.9. CONSEQUENCES**

- Students/clients who are found to have engaged in bullying behaviour will generally, in the first instance, be counselled. This may also involve a mediation session if appropriate
- Students/clients who do not respond to counselling and/or mediation, and who repeatedly bully others may be asked to leave the school/program for a short period of time or may be advised not to return to OH.
- The continued enrolment in the school of a student/client who is found to persistently bully others will be reviewed.

References:

<https://www.aisnsw.edu.au/>