

Safe School Policy

Statement of Purpose - Why do we have a Policy?

All members of Wirreanda Secondary school have the right to be included and have respect from others, the right to learn or to be taught, and a right to feel safe and secure in their school environment.

Acknowledges that Wirreanda Secondary School is a White Ribbon and Safe School Coalition site and promotes respectful relationships amongst all members of the community.

Forms of Bullying - What is bullying and harassment?

Bullying: Bullying is repeated intimidation and it can be physical, verbal, written, visual (including technological modes) and involve gestures or exclusion.

Cyberbullying: Occurs through ICT and can range from offensive messages, pictures, prank calls, forwarding pictures to unintended recipients, using fake profiles to target others, posting negative comments and more.

Harassment: involves powerful person or group oppressing others based on identity, race, culture, ethnic origin, religion, appearance, gender (identity and expression), sexual orientation, parenting or economic status, age, ability or disability and more. This can be may be physical, verbal, written, visual, through iCT and involve gestures, and or exclusion.

Sexual Harassment: is unwelcome actions of a sexual nature against another, where the other person feels offended, humiliated or intimidated. This can include: uninvited physical contact including touching, sexual comments or actions. Sexual pictures, objects, calls, emails, text messages, letters or notes. Questions or suggestions about a person's private life. Unwelcome propositions or requests for dates or favours. Questions about sexual activity including sexual jokes, banter or innuendos. Viewing, downloading or printing pornography or sexually explicit material.

Preventative Actions - How can we address bullying?

Bullying and harassment both hard a person self-confidence and self-respect, sense of belonging and self-worth. All members within our community have a role to play:

1. The Student's Role

Being proactive is the first step is addressing concerns. If you feel unsafe or have questions always talk to a support person.

Step 1. **Ignore them or walk away.** Bullies may stop if they do not get the reaction they are after.

Step 2. **Be assertive.** If the bullying or harassment continues, ask them to stop. Communicate your feelings and set clear boundaries about what you would like them to stop. Be assertive but not aggressive.

Step 3. **Report.** If the bullying or harassment continues, report the behaviour immediately to your class teacher or another staff member.

2. The Bystander's Role

As a bystander, bullying or harassment should not go unreported. Bystanders need to:

1. Refuse to be involved in any bullying or harassment.
2. Ask for the bullying to stop (where appropriate), and report the incident if bullying or harassment is witnessed: You can also be supportive and ask if the person who has been harmed is okay or if they would like help.
3. Refuse to be silent - a bystander who does nothing gives the bully permission to continue.

3. The Staff's Role

Staff have a duty to ensure that any bullying or harassment is addressed as soon as possible. Staff have a responsibility to:

1. Be role models in word and action at all times.
2. Notice signs of distress or suspected incidents of bullying or harassment.
3. Make efforts to prevent occasions for bullying and harassment.
4. Take steps to help victims such as remove sources of distress without placing the victim at further risk.
5. Educate others on the School's policy, and help students develop ways of addressing bullying / harassment while creating a climate where bullying and harassment is not tolerated.
6. Report suspected incidents as per school guidelines

4. The Parent's Role

The School expects parents to support in implementing a safe and secure school environment. Parents need to:

1. Watch for signs of distress in their children.
2. Take an active interest in their children's lives.
3. Advise their children to report any incidents.
4. Inform the school if bullying or harassment is suspected (and if the student is not confident in reporting this)
5. Keep copies of evidence of bullying (eg screenshots from social media)
6. Encourage their children not to retaliate.
7. Talk to their children that parental involvement may be appropriate
8. Being willing to attend interviews if their children are involved in any incident of bullying or harassment.

Breach of this Policy - What happens when someone is bullying and harassing others?

Bullying and Harassment

If a student is reported for bullying or harassment, appropriate members of staff (Year Level leaders) will fully investigate the matter. Students are to complete a student issue form available at the LWC.

Restorative Practices is used in this process

1. If a report is verified, the offender's actions will be brought to their attention and they have the chance to explain their actions:
2. Victims and others can speak to the offender, express their feelings, ask questions and have a say in the outcome. Offenders hear firsthand how their actions have affected others.
3. The offender may begin to repair the harm by apologising, making amends and agreeing to a simple contract.
4. This is part of the restorative practice approach: the goal is to make it clear to the offender that their behaviour is not acceptable, while being supportive and respectful of the individual. The report will be recorded and placed in the student file.
5. Any further notification of continued bullying or harassment will result in other measures being taken. These measures could include further counselling, formal warnings, and the possibility of suspension and/or exclusion. Offenders may risk criminal prosecution.

The Year Level Leader may interpret these consequences according to the age of the participants.

Safe School Coalition

Wirreanda Secondary School is a proud member of the Safe Schools Coalition. The School acknowledges the diversity of those within our community and the world around us. Students and staff are expected to support efforts in making the school more inclusive for same sex attracted, intersex and gender diverse young people. Homophobic or Transphobic behaviour will be treated in the same way as any other form of harassment and bullying outlined in this policy.

White Ribbon

Wirreanda Secondary School has committed to the White Ribbon “ Breaking the Silence “ in schools programs as part of the primary prevention of violence against women. The primary prevention of violence against women is an important first step to use an educational setting as a platform to raise awareness and build a culture of respectful relationships.