

## Rationale

Hazel Glen College students and staff have the right to a safe and caring environment which promotes learning, personal growth and positive self esteem. The college is committed to providing this, and each student and teacher has the responsibility to ensure this occurs.

Bullying, unlawful discrimination, harassment, vilification and other forms of inappropriate behaviour targeting individuals or groups because of their personal attributes will not be tolerated at Hazel Glen College.

## Aims

- To reinforce within the college community that no form of bullying is acceptable
- To alert everyone within the college community to the signs and evidence of bullying
- To ensure everyone in the college community is aware of their responsibility to report bullying to staff, whether observer or victim
- To ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are appropriately followed-up

### 1. Definitions

Bullying is a repetitive passive or aggressive act causing embarrassment, pain or discomfort to another. It is the misuse of power by one group and/or individual over another individual and/or group. Being bullied means that someone is subjected to behaviour that is hurtful, threatening, intimidating, unwelcome, offensive and/or frightening to them.

**1.1 Cyber-bullying** consists of covert, psychological bullying conveyed through electronic mediums such as phones, social media, on-line chat rooms, etc. It is verbal, visual or written, using the various mediums available. Some further examples of cyber-bullying include teasing, spreading rumours online, sending inappropriate messages or content, sexting or defamation.

**1.2 Verbal bullying:**

The use of language to threaten or hurt, including name-calling and put-downs.

**1.3 Physical bullying:**

Any intentional and unwelcome use of physical contact or deliberate property damage.

**1.4 Gesture bullying:**

The use of non-verbal signals to cause intimidation or fear.

**1.5 Exclusion bullying:**

Leaving someone out on purpose in order to cause feelings of non-acceptance and hurt.

**1.6 Extortion bullying:**

The use of threat and power to obtain favour and goods.

**1.7 Racial bullying:**

Antagonism or prejudice directed towards someone on the basis of their race.

**1.8 Emotional bullying:**

Repeatedly talking about others in a negative way and spreading rumours to defame a persons reputation.

**1.9 Sexual bullying:**

Any unwelcome and uninvited comment, attention, contact or behaviour of a sexual nature that is found to be humiliating, offensive or intimidating.

## 2 Hazel Glen College Guidelines Against Bullying

There is an increasing awareness that bullying exists within the community. Research and anecdotal evidence confirms that bullying takes place within schools.

Bullying can make people feel powerless, scared and insecure at school. This can affect their ability to learn and concentrate, and their relationships with others.

Members of the Hazel Glen community have the right to expect a safe and caring environment, which promotes emotional wellbeing and learning. This right has concurrent responsibilities which include accepting others and treating them with dignity and respect.

## 3 What do we do to Prevent Bullying at Hazel Glen College?

As a College community we will endeavour through a variety of approaches, and in collaboration with all parties concerned (staff, students and parents) to prevent bullying.

### 3.1 This requires the college to:

- Provide a safe environment for members of its community
- Provide a supportive environment that encourages positive relationships between peers, staff and parents
- Identify the hotspots for bullying in the school environment and find ways to address these hotspots
- Have procedures for reporting critical incidents involving insults, threats, intimidation or harassment via the student critical incident unit
- Liaise with the Victoria Police Youth Resource Officer where appropriate
- Provide the college community with contact information for appropriate support services
- Provide discussion forums and curriculum material that raises bullying awareness (e.g. definition and effects) and challenges attitudes and beliefs that spread the behaviour. In addition provide students with skills (e.g. conflict resolution) to negotiate potential bullying
- Maintain a wellbeing system that enables students to develop a feeling of connectedness and belonging, and fosters relationships based on trust
- Take all reports or signs of bullying seriously
- Provide ongoing professional development for staff in how to manage incidents of bullying (e.g. "The Method of Shared Concern"/"No Blame Method"/"Restorative Justice")

### 3.2 This requires students to:

- Refuse to be involved in bullying incidents. Students are encouraged to support the guidelines against bullying by reporting all incidents or suspected incidents of bullying so they can be investigated
- If possible, negotiate some form of preventative action
- If you are being bullied, the following are some strategies:
  - If possible remain calm
  - Positively ignore it. Show that it does not upset you; the bully is then disempowered and may stop
  - Confront the person bullying you, reminding them that their actions are unwanted and illegal, be assertive
  - Maintain strong body language (e.g. shoulders back, head up)
  - Positive self-talk. ("I can handle this situation")

- Find an exit (being assertive doesn't always mean confronting the bully). **Ask a trusted adult for support.**
- If bullying continues, report this to a teacher or a member of leadership at the College

### 3.3 The College recommends that parents:

- Watch for signs of distress in your child (e.g. unwillingness to attend school, missing equipment without explanation, a pattern of repeated headaches or unexpected abdominal pain)
- Advise your child to act assertively and avoid making emotional responses when the bullying first occurs
- Advise your child to report incidents of bullying. This will result in a greater sense of control and self-respect that the experience of bullying often diminishes.
- If your child is unable or unwilling to report incidents themselves, please report to a teacher or a member of the leadership team.
- Role model assertive approaches in interpersonal interactions
- Notify the college of any bullying incident you become aware of, even if your child was not involved
- Help your children to develop a "pro-victim" attitude. This may involve challenging beliefs such as "people who are bullied are wimps/deserve it"
- Challenge the age-old myths, such as "sticks and stones may break their bones but names will never hurt them" or "bullying is part of growing up"
- Support the school in its actions if your child has been bullying others
- Don't take matters into your own hands, seek assistance from the college for all bullying matters

#### **Please note:**

Parents, family members or friends are not permitted to enter the college grounds to confront students.

## 4 Intervention

Hazel Glen College is committed to dealing with bullying behaviour using preventative (as outlined above) and proactive/reactive processes. The college is reluctant to include a prescriptive reactive process in these guidelines, as this would minimise the myriad of complexities that often surround bullying incidents. However, we will take all reports of bullying seriously, tailoring interventions to the individual incident.

### 4.1 These could include:

- Education involving empathy raising, remembering that the "severity of bullying is often in the eye of the beholder"
- Consultations with parents
- Consultations with the peer group (e.g. "The No Blame Method")
- Structural changes (e.g. procedure, locker positioning)
- Referral to the college wellbeing leaders
- Referral to external counselling services
- Detention
- Suspension
- Expulsion

**There is Zero Tolerance for bullying at Hazel Glen College**

### **Related Policies / Documents**

Department of Education and Training

<https://https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/bullying.aspx>

Department of Education and Training Student Engagement Policy Guidelines

<https://https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/behaviour/engagement/Pages/engagement-policy.aspx>

National Centre Against Bullying

<https://www.ncab.org.au/get-help/>

Respectful Schools

<https://respectfulrelationships.education.tas.gov.au/about/>

Responding to Sexual Offending

<https://https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/pages/sexualassault.aspx>

HGC Child Safety Policy

HGC Student Wellbeing Policy

HGC Equal Opportunity Policy

HGC Grievances Policy

HGC Social Media Policy

HGC Inclusion and Diversity Policy

### **Evaluation**

This policy was created in Term 3 of 2018

This policy was reviewed in Term 3 of 2019

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