



## Harassment (Student Against Student)

Harassment is unwelcome behaviour that intimidates, offends, or humiliates a student because of a particular personal characteristic.

Harassment is similar to bullying but is distinguished by the fact that harassment is a form of discrimination and is unlawful where the basis for harassment relates to a personal characteristic which is protected by law, such as:

- sex and gender identity or sexuality and sexual orientation
- race, religion, ethnic background, or
- disability.

### Good Shepherd Lutheran School's Policy

Good Shepherd Lutheran School is committed to providing a safe Learning Community learning and working environment that is based on mutual respect and is free from harassment. Harassment is not acceptable in any circumstances and will not be tolerated.

The Learning Community is responsible for ensuring that students are treated fairly and with respect, and is committed to ensuring that all staff:

- model appropriate standards of behaviour
- educate and make students aware of their obligations under this policy and the law
- intervene quickly and appropriately when inappropriate behaviour is identified
- act fairly to resolve issues and enforce the Learning Community's behavioural standards, making sure relevant parties are heard
- help students resolve complaints informally where this is reasonably practicable
- ensure students who raise an issue or make a complaint are not victimised.

The Learning Community investigates more serious incidents and formal complaints about breaches of this policy and will take appropriate prompt remedial action, including counselling, education, mediation and disciplinary action up to and including expulsion.

### What is sexual harassment?

Sexual harassment occurs when a student is subjected to unwelcome and uninvited sexual conduct by another student which could be expected to make a student feel offended, humiliated, or intimidated.

Sexual harassment can also result when a sexually intimidating or offensive environment is created.

Sexual harassment can be physical, verbal, written or pictorial, including social media, and can range from relatively mild sexual banter to actual physical violence.

It is important to remember that it is the way the victim perceives the behaviour that is important in determining whether or not harassment has taken place, not the intent of a particular individual.

Mutual attraction or consenting friendships do not constitute sexual harassment.

Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:

- unwanted physical contact, touching, brushing against another student, hugging
- persistent jokes or innuendos of a sexual nature
- repeated requests to go out
- offensive gestures
- persistent or intrusive enquiries into another student's private life, sexuality, or physical appearance



- sexual propositions
- sexually offensive phone calls, messages on email, voicemail or in writing
- displaying offensive screen savers, photos, calendars or objects
- sexual innuendo or sexually explicit emails, text messages, or posts on social networking sites (refer to the Social Media – Student Usage policy and Cyber Safety policy)
- stalking, both physical and electronic
- sexual assault.

## What is racial harassment?

Racial harassment is also found in many forms. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- abusive, threatening or insulting words and behaviour
- deliberate exclusion from conversations
- displaying abusive writing and pictures
- insensitive jokes related to race
- pranks.

## What is disability harassment?

Examples of disability harassment include, but are not limited to:

- humiliating comments or insults about a student's disability
- disparaging remarks to students who have received learning adjustments
- comments or actions which create a hostile environment for a student with a disability
- deliberately excluding a student where the disability is not an issue.

Refer to the Disability Discrimination policy.

## Victimisation of Complainants

Action will be taken against anyone who victimises a student who makes a complaint of harassment in good faith.

## Students' Responsibilities

All students are required to:

- treat other students, all staff and any other person at the Learning Community professionally and with respect
- avoid behaviour that could be interpreted as harassing and act to prevent other students from engaging in harassment, where this is reasonably practicable
- report any witnessed harassment at the Learning Community to a staff member.

## Harassment Response Procedures

A key part of the Learning Community's harassment prevention and intervention strategy is to encourage reporting of harassment incidents as well providing assurance to students who experience harassment (and parents/guardians) that harassment is not tolerated within the Learning Community.

Students who believe that they are being harassed should make it known that the comments, contact or behaviour is unwelcome and offensive.

If the student does not feel comfortable in talking directly to the perpetrators or if they seek advice on how to proceed, they should contact any of the following:

- a teacher
- the Learning Community counsellor
- a Director or the Principal.

The Learning Community will then apply its Bullying Prevention and Intervention policy and associated procedures.

## Implementation

This policy is implemented through:

- staff training
- education of students
- effective incident notification procedures
- timely initiation of corrective actions where necessary.

## Discipline for Breach of Policy

Depending upon the nature and seriousness of the breach of this policy, Good Shepherd Lutheran School may take disciplinary action against students, including in the case of serious breaches, suspension or expulsion. Engaging in unlawful harassment may result in legal action being taken against the perpetrator and the Learning Community.

Developed/Reviewed by:	Leadership Team
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## Appendix 1

What should I do, as a parent, if I think my child is being bullied or harassed?

If you think your child is being bullied or harassed, you may feel anxious or sad. However, it is important that you try to stay calm and take the following steps:

- ▶ listen calmly to your child
- ▶ let your child know that telling you about the bullying or harassment was the right thing to do
- ▶ find out:
  - what happened
  - who was involved
  - where it happened
  - if anyone else saw, read, or heard it
- ▶ talk with your child about what should be done
- ▶ make a note of what your child tells you to help you when you talk to the school.

Note: These steps are also useful if you think that your child:

- ▶ has been involved in bullying or harassment of others
- ▶ as a bystander, may be affected by bullying or harassment of others
- ▶ as a bystander, has information and is concerned about other students being bullied

### Talk to the school

Your child may not want you to talk about the bullying or harassment.

However, it is important you let the school know so the problem can be worked out together.

- ▶ make a time to speak to your child's teacher; relevant pastoral care staff; the counsellor, Deputy Principal or Principal
- ▶ be as clear as possible about what happened
- ▶ ask the school what else you can do to help your child and the school to stop the bullying or harassment from happening
- ▶ keep in touch with the school, and let the staff know if problems continue.

It is important to raise this matter with the school and not to contact the student you believe has been the perpetrator or the parent of the student.

*From Student Anti-bullying & Harassment: Policy Guidelines, Association of Independent Schools of South Australia, 2016*