

# NPSC BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY

## 2021

### Child Safe Commitment

Our school is committed to child safety.

We want children to be safe, happy and empowered. We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers. We are committed to the safety, participation and empowerment of all children.

We have zero tolerance of child abuse, and all allegations and safety concerns will be treated very seriously and consistently with our robust policies and procedures.

We have legal and moral obligations to contact authorities when we are worried about a child's safety, which we follow rigorously. Our College is committed to preventing child abuse and identifying risks early, and removing and reducing these risks.

Our College has robust human resources and recruitment practices for all staff and volunteers.

Our College is committed to regularly training and educating our staff and volunteers on child abuse risks.

We support and respect all children, as well as our staff and volunteers. We are committed to the cultural safety of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, the cultural safety of children from culturally and/or linguistically diverse backgrounds, to providing a safe environment for children with a disability, and vulnerable children.

We have specific policies, procedures and training in place that support our leadership team, staff and volunteers to achieve these commitments.

Noble Park Secondary College is committed to creating safe and inclusive environment for all its students from all backgrounds, cultures, languages, LGBTI, religious and other minority groups.

### **If you believe a child is at immediate risk of abuse phone 000.**

Child abuse includes —

(a) any act committed against a child involving—

(i) a sexual offence; or

(ii) an offence under section 49M(1) of the Crimes Act 1958; and

(b) the infliction, on a child, of—

(i) physical violence; or

(ii) serious emotional or psychological harm; and

(c) the serious neglect of a child;

## PURPOSE

Noble Park Secondary College is committed to providing a safe and respectful learning environment where bullying will not be tolerated.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- explain the definition of bullying so that there is shared understanding amongst all members of the Noble Park Secondary College community
- make clear that no form of bullying at Noble Park Secondary College will be tolerated
- outline the strategies and programs in place at Noble Park Secondary College to build a positive school culture and prevent bullying behaviour
- ask that everyone in our school community be alert to signs and evidence of bullying behaviour, and accept responsibility to report bullying behaviour to school staff
- ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are appropriately investigated and addressed
- ensure that support is provided to students who may be affected by bullying behaviour (including targets, bystanders and students engaging in bullying behaviour)
- seek parental and peer group support in addressing and preventing bullying behaviour at Noble Park Secondary College.

When responding to bullying behaviour, Noble Park Secondary College aims to:

- be proportionate, consistent and responsive
- find a constructive solution for everyone
- stop the bullying from happening again
- restore the relationships between the students involved.

Noble Park Secondary College acknowledges that school staff owe a duty of care to students to take reasonable steps to reduce the risk of reasonably foreseeable harm, which can include harm that may be caused by bullying behaviour.

## SCOPE

This policy addresses how Noble Park Secondary College aims to prevent, address and respond to student bullying behaviour. Noble Park Secondary College recognises that there are many other types of inappropriate student behaviours that do not meet the definition of bullying which are also unacceptable at our school. These other inappropriate behaviours will be managed in accordance with our *Student Code of Conduct* which is in the School Planner (diary) and *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy* and *Inclusion and Diversity policy*.

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions.

## POLICY

### Definitions

#### **Bullying**

In 2018 the Education Council of the Council of Australian Governments endorsed the following definition of bullying for use by all Australian schools:

*Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or*

*psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening.*

*Bullying can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time (for example, through sharing of digital records)*

*Bullying of any form or for any reason can have immediate, medium and long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders. Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.*

Bullying has three main features:

- It involves a misuse of power in a relationship
- It is ongoing and repeated, and
- It involves behaviours that can cause harm.

Bullying can be:

1. *direct* physical bullying – e.g. hitting, tripping, and pushing or damaging property.
2. *direct* verbal bullying – e.g. name calling, insults, homophobic or racist remarks, verbal abuse.
3. *indirect* bullying – e.g. spreading rumours, playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate, mimicking, encouraging others to socially exclude a person and/or damaging a person's social reputation or social acceptance.

*Cyberbullying* is direct or indirect bullying behaviours using digital technology. For example via a mobile device, computers, chat rooms, email, social media, etc. It can be verbal, written and include images, video and/or audio.

### **Other distressing and inappropriate behaviours**

Many distressing and inappropriate behaviours may not constitute bullying even though they are unpleasant. Students who are involved in or who witness any distressing and inappropriate behaviours should report their concerns to school staff and our school will follow the Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy and Code of Conduct.

*Mutual conflict* involves an argument or disagreement between people with no imbalance of power. In incidents of mutual conflict, generally, both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution to the issue. Unresolved mutual conflict can develop into bullying if one of the parties targets the other repeatedly in retaliation.

*Social rejection or dislike* is not bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.

*Single-episode acts* of nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. However, single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression are not acceptable behaviours at our school and may have serious consequences for students engaging in this behaviour. Noble Park Secondary College will use its Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy to guide a response to single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression.

*Harassment* is language or actions that are demeaning, offensive or intimidating to a person. It can take many forms, including sexual harassment and disability harassment. Further information about these two forms of harassment, including definitions, is set out in our Inclusion and Diversity Policy.

Harassment of any kind will not be tolerated at Noble Park Secondary College and may have serious consequences for students engaging in this behaviour. Noble Park Secondary College will use its Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy to guide a response to students demonstrating harassing behaviour, unless the behaviour also constitutes bullying, in which case the behaviour will be managed in accordance with this Bullying Prevention Policy.

## **BULLYING PREVENTION**

Noble Park Secondary College has a number of programs and strategies in place to build a positive and inclusive school culture. We strive to foster a school culture that prevents bullying behaviour by modelling and encouraging behaviour that demonstrates acceptance, kindness and respect.

Bullying prevention at Noble Park Secondary College is proactive and is supported by research that indicates that a whole school, multifaceted approach is the most effect way to prevent and address bullying. At our school:

- We have a positive school environment that provides safety, security and support for students and promotes positive relationships and wellbeing.
- We strive to build strong partnerships between the school, families and the broader community that means all members work together to ensure the safety of students.
- Teachers are encouraged to incorporate classroom management strategies that discourage bullying and promote positive behaviour.
- A range of year level incursions and programs are planned for each year to raise awareness about bullying and its impacts.
- In the classroom, our social and emotional learning curriculum teaches students what constitutes bullying and how to respond to bullying behaviour assertively. This promotes resilience, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving.
- The Peer Support Program and the Peer Mediation program encourage positive relationships between students in different year levels. We seek to empower students to be confident communicators and to resolve conflict in a non-aggressive and constructive way.
- Students are encouraged to look out for each other and to talk to teachers and older peers about any bullying they have experienced or witnessed.
- We participate in the National Day of Action against Bullying and Violence.

### **Whole school approach to Bullying: Annual program**

- Anti-bullying sessions ran by Wellbeing team for each home groups in Year: 7 & 8 (Lesson plans & content developed from material's from <https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/>)
- Brainstorm Production Anti Bullying Play for all Year: 7 8 & 9 students
- Pre and Post Brainstorm sessions ran by Wellbeing team for each home group
- In class sessions for digital technology – Year 8
- External provider sessions as needed or required throughout year
- Year 7 – 12 sessions with Vic Police or Legal Aide focussing on Cyber safety and Cyberbullying
- Whole school event for National Day of Action against Bullying & Violence

### **Small groups as needed targeting specific issues:**

Aimed at Year: 7 & 8 levels ran by Wellbeing Team or if ran by external agencies supported by school staff

### **Mindfulness program targeting Year: 9 students**

Introduction to Mindfulness at end of Year: 8 Small groups session ran in Year: 9 on a voluntary basis

### **Mindfulness program:**

Available to whole school as individual sessions/groups sessions outside of class times by Wellbeing Team

### **Year 9 & 10 Health days rotating through different sessions:**

*Year 9 focus is Healthy Relationships/Healthy Bodies & is running in gender specific groups:*

Examples of sessions that run:

- Health Q & A run by Health Nurse or G.P's in school:  
(Safe supported session where students can ask all those questions they want to know the answers to and are afraid to ask. Questions can be put in anonymously and all will be addressed)
- SECASA: (Respect, connect, Protect program)  
(Promotes healthy & respectful relationships. Discussion around assertive communication, sexting & violence and how these may affect themselves and others. Discussion around nonviolent ways to deal with self and others)
- Physical activity: Ran by PE staff or External agency: (focusses on having fun while engaging in being fit an enjoying physical activity & the positive effects being active has)
- Mindfulness session ran by Wellbeing Team: (an interactive session focusing on mindfulness. Healthy minds and life balance)
- Other sessions: (as deemed necessary for addressing a current need)

*Year 10 focus - Harm Minimisation*

Examples of sessions ran:

- Vic police: (Interactive program based around harm minimisation. Discussion around safe choices & decision making in relation to the law & safe partying)
- City of Greater Dandenong (Interactive safe partying program, focusing on harm minimisation)
- Gambling Victoria (interactive sessions around gaming & its association with gambling)
- Road Safe (introduction to safe driving)
- Mindfulness session: Extended from Year 9: (interactive session focusing on healthy minds and habits to reduce stress and create life balance)
- Other sessions: (as deemed necessary for addressing a current need)

### **Peer Support program:**

This program is supported by the Wellbeing Team:

- Year 10 students go through a selection process.  
They are then identified as being role models for Noble Parks School Values:
- They assist with Year 6's transitioning into our school.
- (Leadership training is provided)

### **Hand On Learning (HOL):**

- The program aims to assist students from years 7 to 10 that are disengaged from mainstream schooling. It gives an alternative approach that assists students to take a more hands on approach to engage with the school more.
- Students set goals and are reviewed
- The students are out of the classroom one day a week and work "Hands on" with projects within and outside of the school community. The program enables students to shine in a different learning environment within the safety of their school environment (thus keeping them connected)

- Hands On Learning allows students to showcase their strengths and display school values within the projects they do and reconnect with the learning in the classroom.

#### **R U OK DAY:**

Is our national day of action dedicated to reminding everyone that every day is the day to ask, "Are you ok?" and support those struggling with life's ups and down.

- Students/VCAL alongside the Wellbeing Team develop and run information sessions to whole school on what R U OK day means
- Students run annual BBQ for whole school whilst raising awareness for this very important issue
- The school runs a variety of activities to engage and cater for student's diverse needs: Aims to engage and connect whole school in a positive activity.

#### **Other supporting program's:**

##### **Breakfast Program:**

- Runs once a week in the school canteen area.
- This program instils all the school values with many staff and students volunteering to assist.
- The program brings the connects peers with within the school building relationships between peers and also between staff and students

##### **Lunchtime Programs (offered to address current needs can include):**

- Mindfulness
- Board games
- Craft
- Running/walking group
- Chess club
- Outdoor games
- Other things are determined by need

##### **Bi annual Multi Cultural Day:**

- N.P.S.C. Multi-Cultural Day is a day of celebration in which we take much delight in
- Many students display their pride for both their culture and the culture of NPSC. It is inclusive of the wider school community, bringing large numbers of the community together to celebrate the richness and diversity within our school
- Staff and students from local primary schools are invited during the day as a part of transition (periods 3 & 4).
- There is also a night time performance for the whole school community. Gold coin donation at night. This date has been chosen to also incorporate the Japanese visit.

For further information about our engagement and wellbeing initiatives, please see our Student Wellbeing and Engagement policy/Student Engagement Policy.

## **INCIDENT RESPONSE**

### **Reporting concerns to Noble Park Secondary College**

Bullying complaints will be taken seriously and responded to sensitively at our school.

Students who may be experiencing bullying behaviour, or students who have witnessed bullying behaviour, are encouraged to report their concerns to school staff as soon as possible.

Our ability to effectively reduce and eliminate bullying behaviour is greatly affected by students and/or parents and carers reporting concerning behaviour as soon as possible, so that the responses implemented by Noble Park Secondary College are timely and appropriate in the circumstances.

We encourage students to speak to Year Level Coordinator/Leading Teacher in the first instance or Assistant Principal or Student Wellbeing Coordinator if the behaviour persists. However, students are welcome to discuss their concerns with any trusted member of staff including teachers, wellbeing staff, school social worker etc.

Parents or carers who develop concerns that their child is involved in, or has witnessed bullying behaviour at Noble Park Secondary College should contact Year Level Coordinator/Leading Teacher in the first instance or Assistant Principal or student Wellbeing Coordinator by phone on 9546 9066.

## **Investigations**

When notified of alleged bullying behaviour, school staff are required to:

1. record the details of the allegations in Compass and
2. inform the relevant Year Level Coordinator, Student Wellbeing Team, Assistant Principal, Principal.

The Year Level Coordinator and/or Leading teacher over the year level is responsible for investigating allegations of bullying in a timely and sensitive manner. To appropriately investigate an allegation of bullying, staff may:

- speak to the those involved in the allegations, including the target/s, the students allegedly engaging in bullying behaviour/s and any witnesses to the incidents
- speak to the parents of the students involved
- speak to the teachers of the students involved
- take detailed notes of all discussions for future reference
- obtain written statements from all or any of the above.

All communications with the YLC or Leading teacher the course of investigating an allegation of bullying will be managed sensitively. Investigations will be completed as quickly as possible to allow for the behaviours to be addressed in a timely manner.

The objective of completing a thorough investigation into the circumstances of alleged bullying behaviour is to determine the nature of the conduct and the students involved. A thorough understanding of the alleged bullying will inform staff about how to most effectively implement an appropriate response to that behaviour.

Serious bullying, including serious cyberbullying, is a criminal offence and may be referred to Victoria Police. For more information, see: [Brodie's Law](#).

## **Responses to bullying behaviours**

When the YLC or Leading teacher has sufficient information to understand the circumstances of the alleged bullying and the students involved, a number of strategies may be implemented to address the behaviour and support affected students in consultation with the Student Wellbeing Team, teachers, SSS, Assistant Principal, Principal, Department of Education and Training specialist staff etc.

There are a number of factors that will be considered when determining the most appropriate response to the behaviour. When making a decision about how to respond to bullying behaviour, Noble Park Secondary College will consider:

- the age and maturity of the students involved
- the severity and frequency of the bullying, and the impact it has had on the target student
- whether the student/s engaging in bullying behaviour have displayed similar behaviour before
- whether the bullying took place in a group or one-to-one context
- whether the students engaging in bullying behaviour demonstrates insight or remorse for their behaviour
- the alleged motive of the behaviour, including any element of provocation.

The school may implement all, or some of the following responses to bullying behaviours:

- Offer counselling support to the target student or students, including referral to the SWC, SSS, external provider
- Offer counselling support to the students engaging in bullying behaviour, including referral to the SWC, SSS, external provider
- Offer counselling support to affected students, including witnesses and/or friends of the target student, including referral to the SWC, SSS, external provider
- Facilitate a restorative practice meeting with all or some of the students involved. The objective of restorative practice is to repair relationships that have been damaged by bringing about a sense of remorse and restorative action on the part of the person who has bullied someone and forgiveness by the person who has been bullied.
- Facilitate a mediation between some or all of the students involved to help to encourage students to take responsibility for their behaviour and explore underlying reasons for conflict or grievance. Mediation is only suitable if all students are involved voluntarily and demonstrate a willingness to engage in the mediation process.
- Facilitate a Student Support Group meeting and/or Behaviour Support Plan for affected students.
- Prepare a Safety Plan or Individual Management Plan restricting contact between target and students engaging in bullying behaviour.
- Provide discussion and/or mentoring for different social and emotional learning competencies of the students involved, including i.e. connect affected students with an older Student Mentor, resilience programs, etc.
- Monitor the behaviour of the students involved for an appropriate time and take follow up action if necessary.
- Implement year group targeted strategies to reinforce positive behaviours, for example girls groups, boys groups, self-defence and confidence sessions.
- Implement disciplinary consequences for the students engaging in bullying behaviour, which may include removal of privileges, detention, suspension and/or expulsion consistent with our Student Wellbeing and Engagement policy, the Ministerial Order on Suspensions and Expulsions and any other relevant Department policy.

Noble Park Secondary College understands the importance of monitoring and following up on the progress of students who have been involved in or affected by bullying behaviour. Where appropriate, school staff will also endeavour to provide parents and carers with updates on the management of bullying incidents.

The YLC and Leading teachers are responsible for maintaining up to date records of the investigation of and responses to bullying behaviour.

## **FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:



- Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Parent Complaints policy
- Duty of Care Policy
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy

The following websites and resources provide useful information on prevention and responding to bullying, as well as supporting students who have been the target of bullying behaviours:

- [Bully Stoppers](#)
- [Kids Helpline](#)
- [Lifeline](#)
- [Bullying. No way!](#)
- [Student Wellbeing Hub](#)
- [Office of the eSafety Commissioner](#)
- [Australian Student Wellbeing Framework](#)

## EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years, or earlier as required following an incident or analysis of new research or school data relating to bullying, to ensure that the policy remains up to date, practical and effective.

Data will be collected through:

- discussion and consultation with students and parent/carers
- regular student bullying surveys
- regular staff surveys
- assessment of other school-based data, including the number of reported incidents of bullying in each year group and the effectiveness of the responses implemented
- Attitudes to School Survey
- [Parent Opinion Survey](#)

Proposed amendments to this policy will be discussed with

- SRC
- School Council
- Staff

## REVIEW CYCLE

This policy was last updated on 18<sup>th</sup> March 2021 and is scheduled for review in [March 2024].

Principal \_\_\_\_\_

*Pamela D Dixon*