



ANTI-BULLYING PROGRAMME FOR Southern Cross College

Policy Statement

Southern Cross College adopts a zero tolerance approach to bullying and harassment. We aim to establish a learning environment in which everyone feels valued and safe and where individual differences are appreciated, understood and accepted. Each learner has a right to be happy at school.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying and harassment can take many forms, including –

- Deliberately bumping, flicking, kicking, punching and hitting;
- Teasing, taunting, mocking, name calling;
- Spreading rumours;
- Picking on someone, tormenting;
- Repeatedly 'putting down' or humiliating;
- Deliberately ignoring, avoiding, excluding and isolating;
- Interfering with, taking or damaging another's property;
- Using threatening gestures;
- Writing offensive notes, text messages, emails or graffiti about or to someone and
- Making degrading comments about another's gender, religion, culture, family members, sexual orientation or social background.

Goals of the Bullying Procedure

1. To aid, support and educate all staff, parents and learners in the maintenance of a safe and nurturing environment, which encourages the development of coping skills necessary for successful human interaction.
2. To provide a process for discovery, evaluation, monitoring and remediation of hurtful behaviour.
3. To provide an easily accessible process by which learners can report hurtful behaviour and receive adult support.
4. To provide a process wherein the learner being hurtful receives support / education in the learning of alternative behaviours or discipline / consequences should the hurtful behaviour continue.

To the Learners

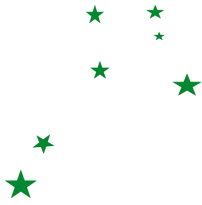
It is your right and responsibility to report bullying, whether it happens to you or to someone else. To remain silent is to condone (allow and accept) bullying. Speaking out is the greatest weapon we have against bullying.

- It is your right to be respected - It is your responsibility to respect others
- It is your right to feel valued - It is your responsibility to value others
- It is your right to feel happy - It is your responsibility not to destroy the happiness of others

Are you in a conflict situation (fighting) or are you being bullied?

There are three ways for you to check if a behaviour is bullying. Ask yourself:

- a) Is the behaviour malicious (mean and unacceptable - see Definition of Bullying on the front page)?
- b) Is it deliberate / intentional?
- c) Is it persistent (happening over and over)?
- d) If this is the case, even if only one of these is true, then you can follow the bullying procedure.



If the above is **NOT** true, but you are fighting, unhappy or struggling to get along with someone, try to remember the following three things:

1. Remember that each person is **unique** (different from you) **special** and **worthwhile**.
2. **Be aware** of yourself and your feelings and your reactions as well as being aware of the impact of your words and your actions on others.
3. **Show respect** to yourself and others at all times.

Hopefully, if each of you have remembered these three points and are putting them into practice, the conflict will dissolve within a day or two. Remember you need to take responsibility for yourself.

Procedure to follow when you have established that you **ARE** being bullied:

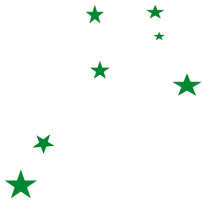
1. Remember it is your right and your responsibility to report bullying.
2. Clarify all the details in your mind e.g. what has been happening, when, how often, etc.
3. Have a look over the Bullying Procedure, so that you are familiar with the process that is going to be followed.
4. Go to your mentor and ask them to assist you in filling out a **Hurtful Behaviour Report**. Your mentor's name and contact number will be on the Bullying Procedure document up in your classroom. If you feel you have followed the Bullying Procedure and are not happy with the outcome, please contact the school counsellor (who will be made known to you from time to time in the College). **All reported cases of bullying will be taken very seriously.**

To the Mentors

1. Take it seriously – remember our approach is one of zero tolerance in regard to bullying.
2. Try to ascertain whether it is actually a case of bullying or more of a friendship issue - i.e. is it about natural changes in friendship groups and/or misunderstandings, **or** is it any of the following:
 - a) Is the behaviour malicious (see Definition of Bullying);
 - b) Is it deliberate / intentional and/or
 - c) Is it persistent.

If the answer is yes to **any** one of the above (a to c), then please follow the Bullying Procedure. If you feel that the behaviour has been hurtful, and yet this is more about someone who needs some support in coping generally with life at school, or perhaps a group of friends that need some guidance on handling differences, please offer them the support and counselling you can in order to assist them, or if you would prefer, you can refer them to another member of staff for counselling. Once you have had your discussion, please always check with the learner who has approached you if they want to follow the Bullying Procedure, and if they do, then please assist them to do so.

If the learner comes to you repeatedly with similar issues, and you are not the mentor, please follow the Bullying Procedure, or refer them to their mentor to follow the Bullying Procedure. Whenever a learner comes to you with an issue of this nature, it is important to follow up with all the learners concerned after a few days to ensure that the behaviour has changed, the situation has improved and the learner is happier and coping. Please remember that a key factor in changing an environment to be 'hurt free' is teaching and modelling RESPECT. So it is vital that we respect the learners. Their confidences and personal information needs to be kept private and, at all times, we need to respect their issues and struggles, whether we agree with them or not.



BULLYING PROCEDURE

This procedure is to be followed once it has been established that this is a case of bullying / harassment, (see bullying criteria (a to c) in Procedure for class teachers / mentors plus Definition of Bullying) or if a learner specifically requests it.

A.

1. Fill in the Hurtful Behaviour Report together with the learner.
2. Offer nurturing care and support to this learner during the process.
3. Call in the learner who is behaving hurtfully and, with respect and care, make them aware of the report against them.
4. Allow them an opportunity to present 'their side of the story', while listening in an unbiased way.
5. Fill in the Behaviour Warning Form and assist the learner in understanding the consequences of hurtful behaviour. Explain the Learner Response choice on this form.
6. Offer some assistance in helping the learner find alternate, more socially acceptable behaviours that they can adopt.
7. Instruct the learner to write a letter of apology to the learner who has been hurt and ensure that it is given.
8. Place a copy of the Hurtful Behaviour Report and the Behaviour Warning Form, plus a copy of the apology letter into both learners' files.
9. Depending on the severity of the case, the mentor can, at his/her discretion, administer a disciplinary consequence (see below).
10. Do a follow up check after 3 days with each learner concerned to ensure that the behaviour has changed. Continue to monitor the situation for the next two weeks.

NB. If a person reporting bullying behaviour experiences any increase in the bullying and/or any other related harassment as a result of reporting the bullying, this will be investigated immediately by the Headmaster and a consequence, as outlined in the Disciplinary Consequences (below) will be administered.

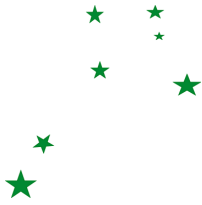
B.

If the same learners are involved in a second incident of hurtful behaviour, please get the learner(s) concerned to fill in a second Hurtful Behaviour Report and refer them immediately to the designated College Counsellor and he/she will do the following:

1. Offer counselling and assistance to both parties.
2. Give a second Behaviour Warning Form to the hurtful learner, which will need to be signed by the parents.
3. Refer the matter back to the mentor for a disciplinary consequence.

C.

If the same learner is again reported for a bullying incident, the school counsellor will repeat the steps 1. and 2. explained in B. and then refer the matter to the Headmaster. It will be at the Headmaster's discretion as to which of the disciplinary consequences will be administered.

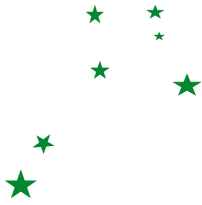


Disciplinary Consequences

Bullying is categorized as a Major Offence in the Southern Cross Schools' Code of Conduct. Disciplinary measures outlined in the Code of Conduct for such an offence will be instituted against the offender.

The consequences could be the following:

- Verbal warning
- Issued with a yellow / red card
- School detention
- Removal of privileges
- Community service at school, e.g. picking up litter, etc
- Suspension from school
- Expulsion



Behaviour Warning Form

No: _____

Date: _____

Staff Member Issuing Warning: _____

Learner's Class Teacher (if different): _____

This behaviour warning is given to: _____

For the following unacceptable behaviour (as set out in a Hurtful Behaviour Report dated _____):

Learner Response Choice:

_____ I have had the opportunity to tell 'my side of the story', but would like to discuss this further.

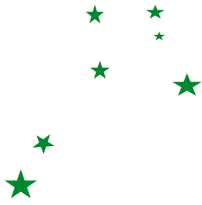
_____ I have had the opportunity to tell 'my side of the story'. I agree to stop this behaviour immediately and undertake a commitment not to repeat it.

_____ I agree to write a letter of apology to the learner I have hurt.

_____ I do not believe there is a problem. I choose not to work any further on this situation. I will face the consequences if I decide to continue this behaviour.

Learner's Signature: _____

Parent's Signature: _____



Hurtful Behaviour Report

No: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Lately, I have been extremely unhappy because I feel that I am being hurt **on purpose** at school. I have thought carefully about **my** involvement in the problem and looked at **both sides** of the story. I am answering this report with **complete honesty**, taking **time** to write things down **accurately** and **truthfully**. I am now going to explain what is happening in **as much detail** as I can, by answering the following questions:

The person(s) who is (are) deliberately picking on me is (are): _____

What is happening?

Where does it happen?

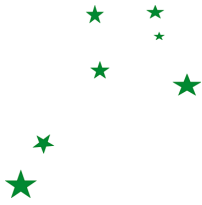
Are there any **witnesses**? _____ If yes, who? _____

Has this happened **more than once**, from the same person or people? _____

About how many times have you been treated hurtfully? _____

Since **when** has this been going on? _____

Can you **truthfully** say that you have not, **at any stage of this problem**, been hurtful also? (Is there anything **you** may have done, or not done, to get the situation started, or to keep it going on?)



Southern Cross College

Nature Based Schooling

I realise that **I** am responsible for my own life and that I have a **free choice** to make things better, worse, or to let them stay the same. Any change in my life begins with **me**. I can answer the following:

Have you tried to stop the behaviour, so that things can change and improve, and if so, how have you done that:

What action would you like your teachers to take, so that this unhappy situation can be resolved?

Thank you for taking time to think things through clearly. Our school should be your 'home from home' where you feel relaxed and happy. Your teachers care very much for you. Your teacher or counsellor will now deal properly with this information and will ensure that your feelings and needs are respected.

Received by: _____

Date: _____