Respecting Each Other Policy

Clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience… and over all these virtues put on love." Colossians 3:12-14

Purpose: The Head of Barker College and the Council of Barker College are committed to the safety of all children and young people in a safe, loving and supportive learning environment, free from bullying and harassment. The purpose of this policy is to summarise the obligations on the School and to provide guidelines as to how the School will deal with certain matters.

Scope: This Policy applies to student conduct in all School activities, including both physical and online, when a student is using a Barker supplied device.

Mandatory or specific requirements: Barker College staff will report welfare concerns or risk of harm reports regarding child safety or welfare and document when appropriate to do so, in pastoral care document management systems.

Responsibility: The Head of Barker College and Deputy Head Student Experience.

POLICY STATEMENT

Barker College commits as a School to:

1. Providing a safe, secure and caring environment for students and promoting respectful relationships between students;

2. Raising awareness and understanding of bullying, violence and harassment including restoring relationships in a safe environment for children and young people;

   2.1. Responding to *observed* or *reported* bullying and taking reasonable steps to assess under the definitions of this Policy;

   2.2. Breaking down any code of secrecy and counter the view that bullying is acceptable behaviour;

   2.3. Providing clear, consistent and equitable procedures for dealing with harmful behaviours including being informed by a trauma-informed approach;

   2.4 Providing safety planning and support for those involved in bullying behaviours and involving parents and carers where indicated; and

   2.5 Staff related concerns are addressed in separately in other School procedures

DEFINITIONS IN THE CONTEXT OF THIS DOCUMENT:

3. Bullying is a repeated form of harassment, physical or psychological that causes discomfort, embarrassment or pain. It is unwanted, unwelcomed, unsolicited and persistent and can be the misuse of power, position and/or privilege by an individual or a group of people.

4. It could be done to intimidate, coerce, engender fear, or control and could aim to upset or create a risk to another person's health and wellbeing, their property or their social acceptance.

DIRECT PHYSICAL BULLYING

5. (when it aligns with the definition of bullying above) includes, but is not limited to:

    5.1. Hitting, tripping, pushing, kicking;
    5.2. Inappropriate gestures;
    5.3. Invasion of personal space;
    5.4. Stand-over tactics or threats; and/or
    5.5. Interfering with another's property by stealing, hiding or damaging.

DIRECT VERBAL BULLYING

6. (when it aligns with the definition of bullying above) includes but is not limited to:

    6.1. Name calling, insults or verbal abuse;
    6.2. Teasing and put-downs e.g. belittling others' abilities, achievements or efforts;
    6.3. Negative remarks about a person's race, gender, religion, appearance & sexual orientation; and/or
    6.4. Threats.

INDIRECT OR COVERT BULLYING

7. (when it aligns with the definition of bullying above) is harder to recognise as it is often carried out behind the victim's back and designed to harm reputation and/or cause humiliation. It includes but is not limited to:

    7.1. Lying or spreading malicious rumours to others;
    7.2. Playing jokes to embarrass, intimidate and/or humiliate;
    7.3. Mimicking;
    7.4. Staring at someone deliberately in such a way that they feel uncomfortable or threatened;
    7.5. Excluding or encouraging others to exclude; and/or
    7.6. Making comments about a person's morals.

CYBER-BULLYING

8. Is an intentional misuse of power using technology and includes but is not limited to:

    8.1. Sending unpleasant emails or text messages
    8.2. Posting items or photos on social media to threaten, humiliate and distress with or without consent.
    8.3. Peer to peer harmful sexual behaviour that is exploitative or abusive.
    8.4. A post that is published on social media or the internet. It does not need to be repeated to be bullying.
    8.5. Manipulating a peer's image using generative AI.

BULLYING IS NOT:

9. Mutual conflict where there is an argument or disagreement between persons but not an imbalance of power.
10. Social rejection or dislike as it is not feasible to think that all individuals will like every other person. Refusing to play with a particular child or not inviting them to a party, for instance, is not bullying provided that social rejection is not directed to a specific person or involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.
11. Single acts of nastiness or meanness, random acts of aggression or intimidation, while not acceptable, are not defined as bullying.

PROMOTING POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS APPROACH

12. The School will address behaviour's outside of the expected standards in a caring way to all involved with a view to restoring relationships and learning together.

13. Staff will use the Promoting Positive Relationships Framework available to parents and students and the pastoral care system to manage additional supports, communicate with parents and caregivers and the needs of the student reporting.

    13.1. A student may report an alleged incident of bullying to any member of staff.
    13.2. Staff will respond in a caring way to a student report of bullying and harassment.
    13.3. Any staff member who has received an allegation of bullying must report it to the relevant Head of House, Dean or Head of School.
    13.4. Allegations of bullying will be investigated as outlined in the Promoting Positive Relationships Framework and provide students with an opportunity to respond and share their experience of the behaviours or conduct and the impact it has on them.
    13.5. Any student found to have committed bullying will be involved in a restorative process and may be subject to disciplinary procedures as outlined in the Promoting Positive Relationships Framework.
    13.6. If serious conduct of bullying and harassment is supported following a fair process as outlined in the Promoting Positive Relationships Framework, consequences imposed may vary according to the behaviour, prior record, age and maturity of the student.
    13.7. Consequences are outlined in the Promoting Positive Relationships Framework and may range from a warning to suspension or termination of enrolment.
    13.8. Parents will be informed of the process by the School if an enrolment is under consideration. The Head of Barker College will provide a forum for the student voice and commence the consultation with parents and caregivers regarding the outcomes.

14. Information about this policy will be conveyed regularly to students and parents through our website, newsletters, the student diary, Connect groups/classes, assemblies and meetings.

15. This Policy is not intended to extend the responsibilities of the School.

16. Barker College reserves the right to change or modify this Policy at any time by notice on the School website.

Version control:

Policy owners	Natalie Potent – Deputy Head Student Experience Nick Moss – Head of the Senior School Tim Eastman – Head of the Middle School Martin Lubrano – Head of Junior School and Indigenous Campuses	
Version number	Date reviewed	Reviewed by and comments
1.0	1 January 2025	Head of Barker College
1.1	11/12/25	Key Leaders. For further review and input
1.2	26/02/2026	Key Leaders Approved – to GRCC and publish

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