



MORRINSVILLE COLLEGE BOARD OF TRUSTEES HARASSMENT/BULLYING POLICY

DEFINITION

Harassment is unsolicited verbal/physical conduct by a young person, group of students or adult that is unwelcome, offensive and often aggressive. It may be intimidatory or discriminatory in relation to gender, race, disability, sexuality or beliefs.

Harassment is:

NOT PERMITTED in the classroom, or school community

OFFENSIVE

NOT based on MUTUAL CONSENT

A SERIOUS MATTER and may include:

- * all forms of bullying
- * verbal abuse
- * cyber-bullying - abusive text messaging, emails, offensive social media comments or taking and sharing private images
- * physical assault - holding, pushing, shoving, punching or pinching
- * intimidation or stand-over tactics
- * offensive gestures or comments
- * making remarks about someone's body and sexuality that they find offensive
- * offensive touching
- * suggestive remarks

Bullying is one particular form of aggressive harassment. Bullying is deliberate, involves a power imbalance, has an element of repetition and is harmful. It compromises the ability of students to learn, achieve and feel safe and healthy in school and teachers to teach and feel safe and healthy. It can be covert or overt in nature. It is influenced by the actions and values of peer groups, families and whanau, and communities.

RATIONALE

All individuals in the Morrinsville College community have a right to be respected and free from harassment and bullying, which are seen as being counter to the social aims of the NELPs.

Morrinsville College will foster:

- 1 a safe, positive physical and emotional school culture to ensure students' and staff members' well-being
- 2 a respectful and inclusive school environment so that each student and staff member is considered an individual of worth
- 3 sensitivity to, and concern for, the needs of others
- 4 tolerance of individual differences, with special regard for racial, cultural, sexual, religious diversity and physical and mental differences, so that every student and staff member is treated with respect and dignity
- 5 skills which enable people to have mutual respect for each other and to work together harmoniously with a sense of belonging and purpose
- 6 positive relationships between staff, students, parents and whanau to effectively ensure inclusive practices and deal with bullying

PURPOSES

- 1 To make the school community aware of forms of harassment/bullying that exist
- 2 To make the school community aware of procedures individuals may follow if they suffer harassment
- 3 To implement strategies that deal with the problems or issues associated with harassment, including bullying
- 4 To fulfil the legal requirement under the Human Rights Act 1993 and the aims of the NELPs.

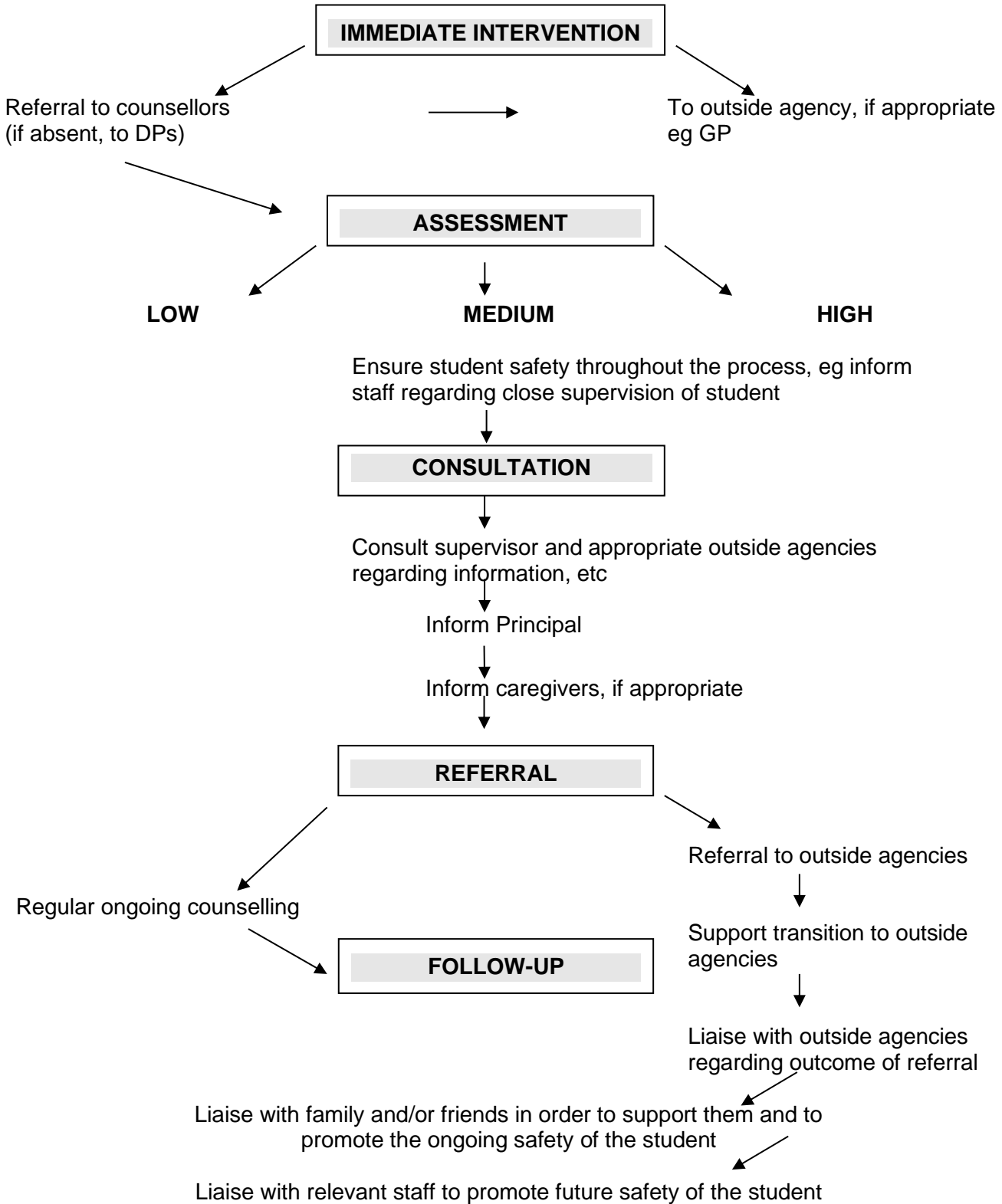
GUIDELINES

- 1 The school's perception of harassment is defined and communicated to the school community
- 2 The procedures that should be followed when harassment occurs are outlined and publicised
- 3 School support services and appropriate external agencies are involved wherever appropriate.

PROCEDURES

- 1 Morrinsville College will be held and continue to develop procedures and practices for encouraging positive behaviour in all school settings and discouraging negative behaviour, including all forms of harassment and bullying
- 2 Teachers will set clear and explicit standards in their classroom and address all forms of bullying. They will recognise that some students may be more vulnerable to bullying and at greater risk of depression, self-harm and suicide. This bullying may for instance include targeted harassment of students with special needs, those who are physically vulnerable, those who are challenged due to poor social skills, those students who may be bullied because of their gender orientation or sexuality diversity, and those who may be targeted because of their religious and cultural beliefs, customs and dress. When these students are identified, individualised approaches to preventing and responding to bullying behaviour may be included in individual education plans.
- 3 Teachers will endeavour, in the first instance at least, to use a restorative approach to solving minor harassment/bullying issues.
- 4 Teachers will understand that digital technology can be a medium for all kinds of cyber-bullying through using emails, cell-phones, chat-rooms, social networking sites and instant messaging. They will be responsible for doing all that they can to ensure that students understand the concept of digital citizenship, including honesty and integrity and ethical behaviour in their use of ICT
- 5 The school will ensure that on enrolment all students and parents are given a copy of the ICT Acceptable User Policy For Students and that students clearly understand the requirements of this policy
- 6 The school will ensure that all teachers uphold the Professional Standards for teachers, including in building respectful relationships with students, their parents and teaching colleagues
- 7 The school will promote good teaching practice which includes teaching the Key Competencies. Of particular importance to the prevention of harassment and bullying will be developing *managing self* (so that students are self-motivated, show a can-do attitude and see themselves as capable learners), *relating to others* (so that students interact effectively with a diverse range of people in a variety of contexts), and *participating and contributing* (so that students are actively involved in their community and practise good community values)
- 8 Through the Health Learning Area, teachers will inform students about harassment and bullying, how to deal with these issues and the importance of making our school a respectful and inclusive environment
- 9 The Principal will make clear the school's Harassment Policy and the implications for students and staff members who contravene this policy
- 10 Teachers will inform students of appropriate ways of dealing with and reporting incidents, and of appropriate support people
- 11 Teachers will actively promote a culture of confidential 'safe telling', so that harassment/bullying behaviour is reported by victims or witnesses
- 12 In order to achieve the above, Staff will participate in at least one training session facilitated by the Guidance Counsellor at a full Staff meeting every two years
- 13 The main contact people in the school are the Guidance Counsellors, Learning Coaches, Kaitiaki and Manukura Senior Leaders. They will accept that harassment/bullying exists, that it is a serious issue to be dealt with, provide opportunities for students to learn new ways to manage social behaviours and ensure that support and strategies are put in place for both the victims and initiators of harassment/bullying (in the latter case to change the behaviour of the bullying student)
- 14 Where a case is regarded as very serious, consideration may be given to referring the matter to someone with special expertise, such as a person from the Rape and Sexual Abuse Healing Centre, Human Rights Commission, a PPTA representative, Police, or Morrinsville Community House.
- 15 Serious issues of harassment/bullying will result in serious consequences through the Senior Leadership Team, including the Principal
- 16 The Board will deal strongly with students and staff members referred to them by the Principal for serious or repeated harassment/bullying. This may include further referral to the local Police for follow-up action
- 17 In the case of the complainant being a staff member, they may invoke the personal grievance procedure of the Employment Contracts Act 1991.
- 18 The following principles shall apply in all proceedings relating to sexual harassment:
 - a) Confidentiality must be maintained by all people involved in a complaint
 - b) No person is to exert pressure on any person making a complaint to withdraw it or continue with proceedings if the complainant wishes to withdraw the complaint
 - c) Records must be kept from the stage of mediation of all discussions, interviews and meetings, and be read and signed by the people involved. They should be stored securely by the mediator until there is a resolution. With the permission of the complainant the Principal should be kept informed.

**IT IS EVERYBODY'S RESPONSIBILITY TO IDENTIFY
POTENTIAL STUDENTS AT RISK - NOT TO DEAL WITH IT**



Revised 4/8/2023

N Te Ahu
Board Presiding member: