POLICY STATEMENT
HOW WE TREAT ONE ANOTHER

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The basis of the ways we treat one another at Hillbrook lies in the Declaration of Rights & Responsibilities.

1.2 The Declaration is grounded in the principles of trust and respect, and applies both to the adults and students, affirming the concept of the school as a community.

2.0 Bullying and Harrassment

Bullying and harassment, in all their forms, are not acceptable at Hillbrook. The school’s approach to these is outlined in the student brochure, A Guide to Understanding Harassment & Bullying. The principles underpinning this document also apply to the adults in the school.

2.1 What is Harassment?

Harassment is any unwelcome attention that is offensive, humiliating, intimidating or physically hurtful.

Harassment can be:

- physically hurting someone;
- threatening behaviour;
- causing people to be excluded from groups;
- teasing, calling names or making rude signs;
- telling smutty jokes or making suggestive comments that offend others;
- displaying offensive pictures, posters or graffiti;
- staring or ogling;
- following someone;
- patting, pinching or touching another person;
- pesterling someone to go out or making other unwanted approaches;
- sending offensive messages in writing, by telephone or computer;
- ridiculing, leering or wolf-whistling at, or making unwanted sexual comments about a person or group of people;
- spreading rumours about someone’s sex life or other activities;
- making belittling or ridiculing comments.
2.2 If someone’s behaviour makes you feel:

- offended or humiliated;
- intimidated or frightened;
- uncomfortable in their presence, then you have the right to object or make a complaint.

Harassment is not:

- paying genuine compliments;
- behaving with common courtesy;
- showing friendship;
- sharing humour.

2.3 Harassment can occur:

- between students;
- between staff and students - harassment of a student by a staff member or of a staff member by a student;
- between staff members.

Anyone can be harassed, female or male. Harassment can also be related to a person’s negative feelings about members of minority groups, for example, people from other cultural groups and people with disabilities or illnesses, or people who are different.

2.4 Harassment can:

- cause distress;
- lower self-esteem;
- reduce self-confidence;
- lead to work performance that does not reflect ability or effort;
- cause absenteeism;
- result in withdrawal from work or from particular courses and hence reduced career prospects;
- discourage participation in professional activities.

3.0 Protocols

3.1 If a member of staff believes s/he is being harassed, the first step is to make the perpetrator aware that the behaviour is not wanted, is unacceptable, and must stop.

3.2 If the harassment continues, a member of the school leadership team should be informed. The school leadership team will decide on what action to take. This may include an interview with the alleged perpetrator, advice to the person being harassed, or any other action deemed appropriate. It will be made clear that the harassment must stop.

3.3 If the harassment occurs again, the perpetrator will be warned by a member of the school leadership team that the behaviour must cease, and that if it does not, the perpetrator’s position at the school is likely to be terminated.
3.4 If the alleged harassment is being perpetrated by a member of the school leadership team, the member of staff should inform the Principal, who will follow the protocol above.

3.5 If the alleged harassment is being perpetrated by the Principal, a member of the School Council should be informed, and the protocol above will be followed.