



POLICY STATEMENT PROCESS TO RESPOND TO HARASSMENT AND BULLYING

Under the Anti-Discrimination Act of 1991 any form of harassment is unlawful.

KEY ISSUES EXTRACTED FROM HILLBROOK RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- * The right to be happy at school and the responsibility to help others to be happy; WE SHOULD TREAT EACH OTHER WITH KINDNESS, GOOD MANNERS AND CONSIDERATION.
- * The right to be treated fairly by fellow students and teachers, and the responsibility to treat them in the same way; WE SHOULD TREAT EACH OTHER WITH RESPECT, REGARDLESS OF AGE, CULTURE, SEXUALITY OR FAITH, OR WHETHER WE BE MALE OR FEMALE.
- * The right to be safe, and the responsibility to help others feel secure; NO-ONE SHOULD PHYSICALLY THREATEN ANOTHER, THROW THINGS, HIT, BULLY OR ABUSE.
- * The right to be accepted, and the responsibility to accept others; NO-ONE SHOULD CRITICISE OR LAUGH AT OTHERS FOR THE WAY THEY LOOK, WALK, TALK OR ACT.
- * The right to our name, and the responsibility to address each other in a way that does not offend.

If a student believes s/he is being harassed - be it verbal, physical or sex-based - by anyone involved in the school community, s/he should approach a trusted member of the school staff and seek advice. If a student believes that one of his/her friends is being harassed s/he should urge them to seek help in the same way. If it is clear that harassment has occurred, it will be impartially investigated. Parents also have a responsibility to inform the school if their child believes he/she is experiencing harassment.

FIRST OCCASION

1. The behaviour will be clearly identified with the student to ensure that the student has a clear understanding of the issue. The student will be given the opportunity to respond. If it is clear that harassment has occurred, then it is expected that the student will make a commitment to change to appropriate behaviour.
2. The rights and responsibilities of Hillbrook students will be discussed. The student will be asked to identify which rights and responsibilities relate to the incident.
3. The legal implications of harassment will be stated.
4. Mediation between the students concerned, under the supervision of the Student Management Team, may be conducted depending on the situation.
5. The student will be required to inform his/her parents and this will be confirmed by the parents in writing or by phone.
6. The consequences for a further infringement will be clearly stated.



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SECOND OCCASION

1. The behaviour will be clearly identified with the student to ensure that the student has a clear understanding of the issue. The student will be given the opportunity to respond. If it is clear that harassment has occurred, then it is expected that the student will make a commitment to change to appropriate behaviour.
2. The rights and responsibilities of Hillbrook students will be discussed. The student will be asked to identify which rights and responsibilities relate to the incident.
3. The legal implications of harassment will be stated.
4. Parents of the student will be contacted.
5. The student will be withdrawn internally or externally from school activities for up to one week. During this period the student will draw up a contract detailing how the student proposes to change his/her behaviour. If requested/recommended, counselling will be made available.
6. The student will re-negotiate his/her way back into school with the Student Management Team and/or the Admin Team by means of an interview and discussion of the contract.
7. The consequences for a further infringement will be clearly stated.

THIRD OCCASION

1. The behaviour will be clearly identified with the student to ensure that the student has a clear understanding of the issue. The student will be given the opportunity to respond. If it is clear that harassment has occurred...
2. The rights and responsibilities of Hillbrook students will be discussed. The student will be asked to identify which rights and responsibilities relate to the incident.
3. The legal implications of harassment will be stated.
4. Parents of the student will be contacted.
5. The student will be withdrawn from school and it would be difficult to see how the student could continue at Hillbrook without undertaking a program of counselling outside the school.

NB If the initial infringement is severe it may be appropriate to by-pass step one or two and go directly to the procedure for the second or third occasion.

Underlying these procedures is a humane, pro-active educative approach.