



BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY - STUDENTS

This Version:

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Prepared by	Head of School
Approved by	TNS Board of Directors
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Version history:

1.0	04 May 2018	Draft
1.1	16 May 2018	Final
1.2	29 March 2019	Reviewed
1.3	6 March 2023	Position update

1. Purpose

The Nature School Inc. (TNS) expects all students to treat each other with respect and courtesy. The purpose of the School's Bullying Prevention Policy – Students is to make students and their parents / carers aware of:

- what 'bullying' means;
- the procedures the School has in place to deal with bullying behaviours;
- what parents can do when supporting students experiencing bullying behaviours;
- support available for students who are engaging in behaviours which are impacting others;
- who can be contacted at the School regarding complaints or when seeking support.

Please refer to TNS-036 Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Policy – Staff, Contractors and Volunteers in relation to bullying between staff, contractors and volunteers (including community members, members of the Board of Directors, and parents / carers).

2. Context

TNS is committed to creating and maintaining a safe, productive and harmonious educational environment for students, free from bullying. TNS will provide support to students experiencing bullying behaviour and will assist those who are engaging in behaviour which impacts others, to learn from and change their behaviour.

TNS students are responsible for complying with the School rules outlined in TNS-012 Behaviour Management and Discipline Policy and relevant policies as outlined below:

Related TNS policies	TNS-012 Behaviour Management and Discipline Policy TNS-004 Safe and Supportive Environment Policy TNS-014 Grievance Resolution Policy TNS-015 Pastoral Care Policy
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	TNS-016 Disability Inclusion Policy TNS-036 Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Policy – Staff, Contractors and Volunteers
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3. Policy

TNS takes a zero tolerance approach to bullying. TNS is committed to addressing such behaviours in a manner that is fair, equitable, prompt and confidential.

This policy applies to all students and applies to behaviour:

- at School, including while engaged in School-related activities outside of normal School hours;
- while undertaking School-related activities away from the School, for example, excursions or sport activities;
- at School-related events; and
- on social media.

This policy addresses the behavioural expectations of TNS students. TNS has a specific policy which addresses bullying involving employees, contractors and volunteers (including community members, members of the Board of Directors, and parents / carers); please refer to TNS-036 Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Policy – Staff, Contractors and Volunteers.

4. Definitions

Bullying - deliberate and repeated action towards others which can involve misuse of power. It can be physical, verbal, sexual, social or discriminatory and it includes spoken, written and/or electronic.

Harassment - any behaviour which hurts, threatens, or frightens a person. It can be expressed physically, verbally, in writing or through social behaviours. Some forms of harassment are unlawful.

4.1 Examples of Harassment or Bullying

Examples include but are not restricted to the following:

Physical: Fighting, punching, pushing, shoving, intimidating gestures, invasion of personal space.

Social: Ganging up against, isolating or rejecting from the group.

Verbal: (includes photos or drawings) Mocking, name calling, putting someone down, offensive language, embarrassing, sending or posting offensive, hurtful or threatening comments via mobile phone, email, social media or any other electronic means. This also includes harassment (e.g., repeated phone calls) of a student or their family.

Victimisation: Offensive notes or graffiti, removing or hiding possessions, “trashing” areas, damaging others’ possessions, gossip.

Sexual: Sexual inferences, touching or brushing against in a sexual manner, writing or drawing, or commenting about someone’s body sexually, sexually oriented jokes or sexual name calling, comments or questions about someone’s private life e.g. calling someone ‘gay’.

Discrimination: Of any kind on the basis of skin colour, race or religion.

5. Procedures

5.1 School practices

TNS staff will work to prevent bullying and associated harmful behaviour, by guiding students to understand respectful and disrespectful forms of behaviour, and assisting them to learn from their actions and make appropriate choices regarding their behaviour. This will be achieved by:

- Discussing behaviour and impacts on others during class activities
- Acting promptly to address unsatisfactory behaviours
- Role-modelling appropriate behaviours

TNS staff will:

- Create an environment and atmosphere that is respectful and caring
- Create a culture that does not accept or encourage harassment or bullying
- Ensure that all students understand about respectful behaviour, and prevention and identification of bullying through its inclusion in curriculum
- Attempt to minimise the harm caused by bullying
- Respond immediately to allegations and investigate any allegations
- Take appropriate action at the completion of the investigation
- Ensure their training on forms of bullying and appropriate responses is current
- Be alert to any signs of distress or suspected incidents of harassment or bullying. Take positive steps to discourage it and alert staff (e.g. Head of School)
- Model appropriate behaviour so that students learn how to behave towards each other with empathy and respect.
- Implement the TNS-012 Behaviour Management and Discipline Policy.
- Encourage students to report and talk about behaviour which affects them.

5.2 Advice for students

It is essential that all students understand their rights and responsibilities regarding prohibiting, prevention and reporting any actual or potential incidents of harassment or bullying.

To manage harassment or bullying, students will be taught and encouraged to:

- use their words e.g. "stop I don't like it"
- try to walk away
- not respond aggressively
- seek assistance from a trusted teacher, parent, staff member or adult immediately by reporting to staff as per Section 5.4.

To manage cyber bullying, students will be taught and encouraged to:

- not respond to message or image
- seek assistance from a trusted teacher, parent, staff member or adult immediately by reporting to staff as per Section 5.4.
- save and print the evidence
- block and delete the sender

5.3 Advice for Parents

Parents / carers play an important role in the prevention and management of all forms of bullying. TNS offers the following advice to parents / carers:

- Encourage children to discuss bullying and respectful behaviours.
- Communicate closely, frankly and regularly with your child's teacher to establish positive two-way lines of communication.
- Continue to take an interest in your child's School activities, encourage them to talk to you about School and talk to trusted teachers.
- Be alert to any tell-tale signs, such as distress or anxiety, unwillingness or refusal to attend School, missing equipment, vague headaches or stomach aches, damaged clothes or bruising.
- Contact the School if you have any concerns.

- Listen calmly to your child and let your child know that telling you about the bullying is the right thing to do.
- Reinforce that hitting back is an inappropriate response.
- Find out: What happened? Who was involved? Where did it happen? Did anyone else see it? Make a note of what your child says and contact your child's teacher.

5.4 Responding to bullying

Bullying is viewed as a major breach of the School rules and behavioural expectations and therefore follow up action will align with our TNS-012 Behaviour Management and Discipline Policy.

Any reports of bullying will be investigated and appropriate action will be taken promptly. The response to bullying may include:

1. instances of lower level bullying needs to be dealt with at the time of the incident by the teacher on duty and may be recorded on the online student management software.
2. guidance and other support for the recipient of the bullying (e.g. re-skilling and re-teaching of strategies, resilience and social skills, counselling, conflict management skills, social networking etc.).
3. guidance and support for 'bystanders', 'supporters' and witnesses of the bullying (e.g. intervention strategies etc).
4. age appropriate and consistent sanctions for the student who bullied (e.g. consistent with school TNS-012 Behaviour Management and Discipline Policy).
5. where appropriate interventions and support for the student who bullied included in a Behaviour Support Plan (e.g. specific interventions developed to reduce the bullying behaviour, teaching of replacement behaviours, reinforcers etc.).
6. where appropriate informing parents / carers as stated in the policy and involving them in any action and follow up.

7. Contact will be made with the Police Youth Liaison Officer for serious matters which require reporting to the police. The Head of School would make this report (see 5.6 Police Youth Liaison Officer).

5.5 Procedures for investigating bullying and follow up

In discerning appropriate responses to bullying, the collective welfare of the School community will be balanced with the individual needs of the student. The School will carry out appropriate investigations and follow up which will be recorded on the online student management software.

Investigations

- Preliminary interview(s) will be conducted to ascertain the specific nature of the bullying. These interviews should be with individuals initially (i.e. student being bullied, students witnessing bullying, student engaging in bullying behaviour, staff etc). Some of the questions that may be asked follow:
 - What happened? Be specific.
 - Has it happened before? Be specific.
 - Who has been involved?
 - Who else knows?
 - What led up to this?
 - What did you do?
 - What were you feeling or needing?
 - What could you have done to meet your needs?
 - Do you know a better way?
 - What are you going to do in the future?
 - How can you get things right this time?
- The initial interviews should also focus on the safety of individuals. This should include:
 - a clear statement on the consequences if the bullying continues or if there are any reprisals as a result of the reporting of the incident.
 - immediate preventative actions that will be implemented to avoid further incidents.

Decisions will be made as to the level of severity of the incident and whether the parents / carers of those involved need to be informed.

Follow up

- Follow up interviews should focus on appropriate strategies to assist and support all involved. Where a Behaviour Support Plan has been required, it should specifically identify the inappropriate behaviours, name the replacement behaviours, outline strategies to support the replacement behaviours and reinforcers (both negative and positive) when behaviours occur.
- A record of the separate interviews should be kept.
- Regular monitoring and follow up with the students involved is necessary. (for example daily, prior to and after break times etc).
- Review of the Behaviour Support Plan will take place to modify strategies and supports.
- Any further recurrence of bullying may result in an issue of warning re suspension and could lead to the implementation of suspension procedures and, if necessary, removal of the student from the school through:
 - Suspension pending negotiated transfer,
 - Negotiated transfer, or
 - Expulsion.

5.6 Police Youth Liaison Officer

Should it be required for either support in preventing bullying, addressing ongoing bullying issues, or for serious breaches of this policy requiring a report, the Head of School may directly contact the Police Youth Liaison Officer:

Senior Constable Wendy Hudson	6583 0175
General station number	6583 0199