



Tanglin Gippsland

Bullying and Harassment Prevention Policy

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1 Overview

- 1.1 Members of the Tanglin Gippsland community have the right to an environment in which they feel safe, happy and respected and which promotes learning, personal growth and positive self-esteem.
- 1.2 Tanglin Gippsland rejects all forms of bullying and harassment. It is not acceptable for any members of the community (students, teaching and non-teaching staff, parents and visitors) to experience bullying or harassment, no matter their background, race, ethnicity, gender, physical and intellectual attributes, within the learning and social environments.
- 1.3 In rejecting bullying and harassment, Tanglin Gippsland is committed to the development and reinforcement of a culture of positive behaviour, respect and tolerance.
- 1.4 The purpose of this policy is to:
 - explain the definition of bullying and harassment so that there is a shared understanding amongst all members of the Tanglin Gippsland community
 - make clear that no form of bullying or harassment at Tanglin Gippsland will be tolerated
 - ask that everyone in our community be alert to signs and evidence of bullying or harassment and accept responsibility to report it to staff, whether as an observer or victim
 - ensure that all reported incidents of bullying or harassment are appropriately investigated and addressed
 - ensure that support is provided to students who may be affected by bullying or harassment (including victims, bystanders and students engaging in bullying or harassment)
 - seek parental and peer-group support in addressing and preventing bullying or harassment
 - comply with the requirements of the Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017 and the Education and Training Reform Act 2006 (Vic.), to implement anti-bullying (including cyberbullying) and harassment strategies and procedures as part of Tanglin Gippsland’s responsibility to provide an environment which is safe, where the risks of harm are minimised and where students feel emotionally and physically secure.
 - be consistent with Ministerial Order No.1359 which provides the framework for child safety in schools and school boarding premises
- 1.5 Tanglin Gippsland, in discharging its duty of care, understands that it has a responsibility to enable students to flourish in relation to their emotional, mental and physical health and will take reasonable steps to reduce the risk of reasonably foreseeable harm, which can include harm that may be caused by bullying or harassment.
- 1.6 This policy applies to all activities, including field trips and excursions.

2 Definitions

- 2.1 *Bullying* – In 2018 the Education Council of the Council of Australian Governments endorsed the following definition of bullying for use by all Australian schools:
 - 2.1.1 Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or

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psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening.

2.1.2 Bullying can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time (for example, through sharing of digital records).

2.1.3 Bullying of any form or for any reason can have immediate, medium and long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders. Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.

2.2 Bullying has three main features:

- It involves a misuse of power in a relationship
- It is ongoing and repeated
- It involves behaviours that can cause harm.

2.3 Bullying can be (but not limited to):

- Physical bullying – hitting, tripping, pushing, shoving or intimidating or otherwise physically hurting another person, damaging or stealing their belongings. It includes threats of violence.
- Verbal bullying – name calling, insults, teasing or making fun of someone because of their actions, appearance, physical characteristics or cultural background, verbal abuse.
- Indirect bullying – hand gestures and threatening looks, whispering, playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate, mimicking, restricting where a person can sit and who they can talk with, encouraging others to deliberately exclude a person, spreading rumours, sharing information that will have a harmful effect and/or damaging a person’s social reputation or social acceptance.

2.4 *Cyberbullying* – Is any form of bullying behaviour using digital technology, for example via a mobile device, computer, chat room, email, social media, etc. It can be verbal or written and include threats of violence as well as images, video and/or audio.

2.5 *Harassment* – Is unwelcome behaviour that intimidates, offends, or humiliates a student because of a particular personal characteristic. Harassment is similar to bullying because someone hurts another person through cruel, offensive and insulting behaviours. Harassment is different from bullying in that it is a form of discrimination and is unlawful where the basis for harassment relates to a personal characteristic which is protected by law, such as:

- sex and gender identity or sexuality and sexual orientation
- race, religion, ethnic background
- disability

2.5.1 Harassment can be (but is not limited to):

- Sexual harassment – unwanted physical contact, persistent jokes or innuendos of a sexual nature, intrusive enquiries into another student’s private life, sexual propositions, displaying offensive photos, stalking
- Racial harassment – abusive, threatening or insulting words and behaviour, deliberate exclusion from conversations, displaying abusive writing and pictures, insensitive jokes or pranks related to race
- Disability harassment – humiliating comments or insults about a student’s disability, disparaging remarks to students with learning adjustments, comments or actions which create a hostile environment for a student with a disability, deliberately excluding a student where the disability is not an issue.

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3 Details

- 3.1 Tanglin Gippsland aims to create and maintain a community where all students are free to learn and achieve at the highest level, without interference from others, and where they are comfortable to be individuals and to be themselves.
- 3.2 Bullying and harassment prevention at Tanglin is proactive to prevent and address bullying and harassment. This is achieved in the following ways:
- We strive to build strong partnerships between Tanglin Gippsland, families and the broader community and encourage open communication
 - We encourage all community members to recognise and respond appropriately when bullying or harassment occurs
 - Students are encouraged to look out for each other and to talk to staff about any bullying or harassment they have experienced or witnessed
 - Tanglin Gippsland’s Pastoral Care program raises awareness about bullying and harassment and its impacts, it teaches students what constitutes bullying and harassment and how to respond to bullying or harassment behaviour assertively. This promotes resilience, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving
 - We seek to empower students to be confident communicators and to resolve conflict in a non-aggressive and constructive way.
 - Feedback from students is sought regularly to monitor Tanglin’s culture regarding bullying and harassment
 - Offending individuals are assisted to see value in changing their behaviour and asked to consider ways in which they could make restitution
 - Individuals who continue to offend undergo further education and are disciplined according to the Student Code of Conduct and Student Discipline and Behaviour Policy
 - Providing professional development for staff relating to bullying, harassment and proactive strategies to counter-act them.
- 3.3 Staff at Tanglin undertake a number of additional measures to prevent bullying and harassment behaviours. Initiatives are as follows:
- Staff aim to get to know each student as soon as possible
 - Staff are required to report any incidents or unusual behaviour to the Head of Pastoral Care as soon as practical via email, phone or conversation
 - Students are encouraged to seek assistance immediately if they feel unhappy and they are aware of those to whom they can report this unhappiness. A number of staff members are available so that students have some choice in whom they feel comfortable speaking with
 - The Head of Pastoral Care identifies trends or data patterns to respond to areas of concern
 - Where deemed necessary by the Head of Pastoral Care, Chaplains, Counsellors and Psychologists will be made available to support students in both one-on-one and group settings, as required
 - The Pastoral Care Curriculum addresses issues of bullying and harassment and promotes social inclusion
- 3.4 Bullying and harassment complaints will be taken seriously and responded to sensitively at Tanglin Gippsland. The ability to effectively reduce and eliminate bullying and harassment behaviour is greatly affected by students and/or parents and carers reporting concerning

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behaviour as soon as possible, so that the responses implemented by Tanglin are timely and appropriate in the circumstances.

- 3.5 All bullying and harassment claims will be managed by the Head of Pastoral Care to ensure the victim's welfare. Complainants cannot remain anonymous, if Tanglin is to be able to act effectively manage a complaint.
- 3.6 If an incidence of bullying or harassment is identified or brought to Tanglin Gippsland's attention by other members of the community, where appropriate and possible, the following action will be taken.
- 1) The Head of Pastoral Care leads the investigation and initial consultation
 - 2) The victim is addressed and given the opportunity to speak about their experience.
 - 3) The victim is given an opportunity to indicate how the staff member can raise the matter with the alleged bully
 - 4) The victim's parents are contacted to note the discussion and the planned course of action
 - 5) The alleged bully is addressed and a series of guiding questions are asked to clarify interactions with the other student and have them consider how certain actions/comments might impact the other student. The alleged bully is offered counselling / support. If the alleged bully remains adamant that no bullying or harassment is taking place, the staff member notes that the alleged victim will be consulted now, and in the future, to make sure that all interactions are positive between the students
 - 6) The alleged bully is guided towards a resolution or action to restore the relationship. The restoration may include a mediated discussion between victim and bully, if the victim feels it could be effective
 - 7) The alleged bully's parents are called to give an outline of how events unfolded and to offer an opportunity to discuss matters further, after they have consulted their son/daughter
 - 8) The consequences will be determined by the Head of Pastoral Care often in consultation with the Head of Campus with reference to the Student Discipline and Behaviour Policy.
 - 9) Repeat incidents will result in meetings with parents, internal suspension or returning home, in consultation with the Head of Campus.
- 3.7 Any matters referred to the Head of Campus are considered serious either in nature or due to their repeated occurrence. The Head of Campus is the final point of reference for disciplinary matters.
- 3.8 Tanglin Gippsland reserves the right to assess each incident on its merits and to refer any incident to the most appropriate level.

4 Communication

- 4.1 This policy will be communicated to our Tanglin Gippsland community in the following ways:
- Available publicly on the Tanglin parent portal
 - Discussed at staff briefings/meetings as required
 - Discussed at student forums/through communication tools
 - Made available in hard copy from the administration upon request

5 Roles and Responsibilities

- 5.1 Tanglin Gippsland staff have a responsibility to:
- Respect and support students
 - Model and promote appropriate behaviour

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- Have knowledge of the policy relating to bullying and harassment behaviour
- Educate and make students aware of their obligations under this Policy and the law
- Promote a supportive environment that encourages the development of positive relationships and communication between staff, students and parents/carer
- Respond in a timely manner to incidents of bullying and harassment, according to the Bullying and Harassment Processes, outlined in this policy
- Ensure students who raise an issue or make a complaint are not victimised
- Be vigilant in monitoring students that have been identified as either persistent bullies or victims
- Provide curriculum and pedagogy that supports students to develop an understanding of bullying and its impact on individuals and the broader community.

5.2 Students have a responsibility to:

- Treat all students, staff and any other person at Tanglin Gippsland professionally and with respect
- Behave appropriately, respecting individual differences and diversity
- Behave as responsible digital citizens
- Follow Tanglin Gippsland’s Student Code of Conduct
- Behave as responsible bystanders
- Report incidents of bullying, in line with the Tanglin Gippsland Bullying and Harassment Prevention Policy.

5.3 Parents and caregivers have a responsibility to:

- Support their children to become responsible citizens and to develop responsible on-line behaviour
- Be aware of Tanglin Gippsland’s Bullying and Harassment Prevention Policy and assist their children in understanding bullying and harassment behaviour
- Support their children in developing positive responses to incidents of bullying consistent with the Bullying and Harassment Prevention Policy
- Report incidents of school-related bullying and harassment behaviour to Tanglin Gippsland staff
- Work collaboratively with Tanglin Gippsland staff to resolve incidents of bullying and harassment when they occur.

5.4 All members of the Tanglin Gippsland community have a responsibility to:

- Model and promote positive relationships that respect and accept individual differences and diversity within the school community
- Support Tanglin Gippsland’s Bullying and Harassment Prevention Policy through words and actions
- Work collaboratively to resolve incidents of bullying and harassment when they occur.

5.5 Tanglin Gippsland’s policy recognises and supports the Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006, which outlines the basic human rights of all Victorians, including the right to recognition and equality, freedom from discrimination, cultural rights and right to protection of families and children.

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6 Related Tanglin Gippsland Policies

- Child Safety and Wellbeing Policy
- Cybersafety Policy
- Electronic Communication and Information Technology Policy
- Student Code of Conduct
- Student Discipline and Behaviour Policy

7 Policy Review

7.1 This policy is approved by the Board of Tanglin Australia and will be reviewed at least every two years by Tanglin’s Leadership Team. *Leadership Team* consists of the Tanglin Gippsland Head of Campus, Head of Learning and Head of Pastoral Care.

7.2 Any significant changes to this policy must be approved by the Board.

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