



HARASSMENT, BULLYING & DISCRIMINATION ACCOMODATION EXPECTATIONS

Guiding Statement

Home and Community

To develop strong partnerships with all stakeholders to ensure the safety, well-being and holistic development of all students, including those in Boarding and Homestay arrangements.

Student Well-Being

To provide a safe, welcoming and affirming environment reflecting the school's child protection and safeguarding guidelines, to develop students socially, physically, emotionally, intellectually and spiritually.

Harassment, Bullying and Discrimination in Private Accommodation

The Guiding Statements of the school demonstrates its commitment to student well-being by providing a safe environment so that students can flourish across a range of areas. Harassment, bullying and discriminatory behaviours run counter to this goal and so need to be dealt with effectively and fairly.

ACS (International) is not responsible for how accommodation providers oversee issues related to harassment, bullying & discrimination that may occur within their premises. However, the school provides the following guides and recommendations for families, students and accommodation providers to use.

What is Harassment?

- Harassment is verbal, non-verbal and/or physical attacks on a person by another person or group.
- Harassment may be an ongoing pattern of behaviour, or it may be a single act.
- It is intended to hurt, frighten, embarrass, offend, humiliate, make you feel angry or uncomfortable.
- It is usually deliberate, **but** it can also be just thoughtless or careless.
- Harassment is behaviour that targets an individual or group due to their identity, race, culture or ethnic origin; religion; physical characteristics; gender; sexual orientation; marital, parenting or economic status; age; ability or disability.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons. Cyber-bullying refers to bullying through information and communication technologies.

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved including bystanders.

What is not Bullying?

- Conflict or fights between equals and single incidents are not defined as bullying.
- A single incident of malicious or aggressive behaviour is not bullying. This behaviour may still be responded to as unacceptable behaviour and dealt with as part of the School's behaviour management processes.
- Dislike - although social rejection can be hurtful, it is not bullying unless accompanied by repeated and deliberate attempts to distress or hurt.
- Conflict and arguments can be distressing but it is not bullying when two people are both upset and neither one is misusing power over the other. Conflict may still give rise to unacceptable behaviour which will be responded to as part of the School's behaviour management processes.

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What is Discrimination?

Discrimination occurs when people are treated less favourably than others because of their race, culture or ethnic origin; religion; physical characteristics; gender; sexual orientation; marital, parenting or economic status; age; ability or disability. Discrimination is often ongoing and commonly involves exclusion or rejection.

What is Violence?

Violence is the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against another person (s) that results in psychological harm, injury or in some cases death. Violence may involve provoked or unprovoked acts and can be a single incident, a random act or can occur over time.

Examples of Bullying and Harassment

Here are some **examples** to help you decide about things you **see**, or **do**, or that might happen to you:

- Hitting, kicking, punching, pinching, jostling, pushing or spitting
- Threats, stand-over tactics
- Hiding, damaging or destroying property
- Using offensive names or abusive language
- Teasing
- Sexual abuse, including making suggestive comments, touching or grabbing
- Making insulting comments about another's culture, gender, religious or social background
- Putting a person down about his or her body, abilities or achievements
- Writing graffiti about others, including writing crude notes or making crude drawings
- Insulting or spreading rumours about people or their families
- Deliberate exclusion in order to hurt, frighten, embarrass or humiliate
- Offensive gestures, sounds or sarcastic laughter
- Nasty telephone calls to annoy or upset you and/or your family.

Cyber Bullying

E-technology provides individuals with a powerful means of communicating instantly with others in both positive and negative ways.

Cyber bullying is bullying which uses e-technology as a means of victimising others. It is the use of internet or mobile technologies - such as email, chat rooms, blogs, discussion groups, instant messaging, twitter, social networking sites, webpages, video sharing or SMS (text messaging) – with the intention of harming another person.

Cyber bullying can include communications that seek to:

- Intimidate
- Control
- Manipulate
- Put down or
- Humiliate

This is achieved through (but not limited to):

- Repeated negative messages
- Sexual and racial harassment
- Denigration
- Impersonation
- Trickery
- Exclusion and
- Cyber stalking.

Cyber bullying can occur from a single act when the message or picture is sent to more than one person. For example, a bully may only press the 'Send' button once, but the choice to send the message to multiple addresses makes the action more than a single incident. Cyber bullying may involve varying levels of severity, ranging from occasional messages to frequently repeated and highly disturbing threats to a person's life. The targeted person often feels powerless and may need help. Further information about ACS (International)'s response to cyber bullying can be found in the Social Media Policy and Mobile Phone Policy.

What is E-Crime? (Electronic Crime)

Cyber bullying can be an e-crime, a fact often not clearly understood by those involved.

E-crime occurs when a computer or other electronic communication devices (e.g., mobile phones, tablets, e-readers) are used to commit an offence, are targeted in an offence, or act as a storage device in an offence.

Examples of Possible E-Crime

- Sexting
- Impersonation
- Intimidation
- Harassment
- Publishing suicide or self-harm related material
- Making a threat
- To menace, harass or cause offence

Suggested Approach By Accommodation Providers

There should be an expectation of respect for all others within the accommodation setting.

In practice, this means we really value the three C's.

Courtesy to all

Cooperation with each other

Consideration for those we meet

When we are harassed, bullied, discriminated against or if we do this to others, our School Community is damaged. We must also understand that harassment, bullying, discrimination and violence may contribute to us becoming angry, humiliated, embarrassed or frightened, and encourages us to retaliate in equally hurtful ways.

Within private accommodation there should be NO harassment, bullying, discrimination or violence, irrespective of the form, action or mechanism through which it occurs.

Reporting

If the bullying is occurring in your accommodation you should let a responsible adult know. This could be the staff in the Boarding Hall, your Homestay Provider, Parents or Guardian.

If you, or you are aware of someone else, are being bullied, harassed or discriminated, it should be reported to the accommodation provider and someone else, for example:

- Telling a teacher e.g., House Tutor or Head of House
- Telling the School Counsellor or International Student Coordinator
- Telling a Vice-Principal
- Telling your parent or guardian and asking them to approach the school on your behalf
- Asking a trusted friend to tell a responsible adult.

You may be asked to complete an Incident Reporting Form, depending on the nature of what you are reporting.

Principles for Response To Harassment, Bullying and Discrimination

The following Principles are recommended to be followed by accommodation providers as they respond to incidents:

- Listen and take your issue seriously.
- All reported incidents will be dealt with.
- He or she will consult you to reassure you and find out more details.
- He or she will work out the best way to handle the situation.
- There are consequences for harassing behaviours, such as – warnings, detentions and suspension.
- Cases of criminal behaviour will be referred to the Police.
- For repeated offences, the offender may be asked to leave the accommodation

All harassment complaints will be handled

- promptly;
- confidentially;
- impartially; and
- according to the following procedures.

Information Will Be Sought

A suggested approach is outlined below for accommodation providers if a harassment incident is provided. The school invites accommodation providers to involve the school in these processes or to have the school lead the investigation.

The Adviser to whom the complaint was made or referred to will firstly gather full information about the complaint from both the Complainant and the Supposed Offender in the following manner:

The Person Making the Complaint

- The person making the complaint will be interviewed by the Adviser in order to clarify the matter about which the complaint has been made and to determine how they want the complaint resolved. The complainant can request that a support person be present during the interview.
- The adviser will ask the person lodging the complaint to write down in his or her own words what actually happened, but if this is not able to be done, the Adviser will make notes and have the complainant sign agreement to their accuracy.
- The Adviser will interview any witnesses and will make notes of those interviews and have the witness agree the accuracy of those notes.
- The person making the complaint will be asked not to talk to others, however a student who lodges a complaint will be advised to talk to his or her parents about the incident.
- In cases where the complaint relates to cyber bullying, harassment or e-crime evidence will be gathered of the purported offensive material.

The Supposed Offender

- The supposed offender will be interviewed by the Adviser and will be asked to tell in his or her own words what was done, or said, to the complainant.
- If the supposed offender admits that the harassment did take place, he or she will be advised why the action was wrong and will be requested to apologise to the complainant in the company of the Adviser. The offender will also be informed of any further appropriate action.
- If the supposed offender does not admit the harassment, a signed statement will be taken.

The Adviser will interview any additional witnesses who are identified by the supposed offender and will make notes of those interviews and have the witness agree the accuracy of those notes.

The Complaint will be Resolved

a) Is the complaint justified?

- After weighing up the evidence gathered from the interviews, the Adviser, in consultation with another responsible teacher will make a decision as to the validity of the complaint.
- If it is decided that the complaint was not justified, both parties will meet together with the Adviser for reconciliation.
- If it is decided that the complaint was justified it will be resolved as follows.

b) Complaint justified – student offenses

- If the complaint is justified and the offender is a student, the Adviser in consultation with another responsible teacher, will decide on the appropriate method of resolution according to the severity of the complaint. T
- In each case it would be expected that the offender would apologise to the victim either verbally or in writing. The parents/guardians of the offender, and where appropriate the parents/guardians of the complainant, will be informed in writing of what has happened.
- The Adviser shall take immediate steps to remove, seize, disable any offensive materials (including cyber materials)
- In serious cases, the parents/ guardians of the offender and where appropriate the parents/ guardians of the complainant, will be asked to come to the School separately to discuss the matter with the Principal and Head of School.
- iv) Follow up counselling for both the complainant and offender will be arranged where appropriate.