



HARASSMENT & BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY

Beachcombers Academy & Little Oysters Child Care

Approved: Nov 25, 2017; updated Feb 4, 2021, updated Jan 20, 2023

Introduction:

Beachcombers Education Society is committed to providing an educational environment that is safe, welcoming, respectful, orderly, caring, and affirming for all students, families and staff. The Board recognizes and values diversity within the community and will foster and promote inclusive and accepting cultures.

For these reasons the Board will strive to promote safe environments, free from fear, harassment and discrimination by engaging in pro-active strategies, guidelines and education to ensure that all students, employees and families are equally welcomed and included in all aspects of education and school life, and treated with respect and dignity.

The purpose of this policy is to define inappropriate behaviours and actions in order to prevent discrimination and harassment. It is intended to support the protection of students, families and staffs physical safety within the school environment; and students' social connectiveness within an environment of inclusion.

Any communication or behaviour (which may include but is not limited to assault, bullying or harassment) that deliberately degrades, denigrates, labels, stereotypes, incites hatred, prejudice and discrimination towards students on the basis of one's real or perceived sexual or gender orientation, appearance, capacity, disability, ethnicity or religion, or for any other reason, will not be tolerated. This also includes making gestures, publishing or displaying anything that would indicate an intention to discriminate against an individual or group, or expose them to contempt or ridicule.

The Board recognizes that students who are facing gender and sexual diversity issues (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning) face a unique set of challenges within our schools and communities. Individuals who are dealing with, or those perceived to be dealing with, issues of gender identity, gender expression, inter-sexuality or sexual orientation, as well as their families, are frequently the targets of homophobic, trans-phobic and/or heterosexist behaviours. This may have profound social consequences including discrimination, harassment,

physical and sexual violence, social and emotional isolation, substance abuse, homelessness, school truancy and drop-out, self-harm and suicide.

Beachcombers Education Society shall specifically include the prohibition of any derogatory language and behaviour in their Codes of Conduct. Behavioural expectations and Codes of Conduct shall be communicated and distributed to all students, staff, parents and guardians in written form. Each member of the school community should share the responsibility of modeling respectful conduct regardless of perceived differences and should refuse to tolerate any form of discrimination.

All members of the community shall have the individual and collective responsibility to identify and act upon discriminatory attitudes and behaviours and strive to eliminate systemic inequities and barriers.

Purpose of the Policy

Beachcombers Academy considers bullying and harassment to be an unacceptable form of behaviour, which will not be tolerated under any circumstance. Such behaviour has no place in an organization that espouses and promotes values and respect for the individual and the community.

The aim of this policy, in conjunction with the School's Respect & Care booklet and Parent-Student handbook is to: 1) develop each student's self-respect and self-esteem: respect for the feelings; rights and property of others; to learn how to make appropriate behaviour choices and to take responsibility for his/her own actions; 2) ensure a safe and respectful environment for families; and 3) ensure a safe and respectful environment for staff.

Beachcombers aims to build within its student body, and school community, mutual respect and consideration of others and an acceptance of people's differences.

1. Scope:

This policy applies to all staff, volunteers, Board Members, students and parents/guardians of Beachcombers Academy.

2. Definitions used in this policy:

Bullying (also referred to as harassment or, in the case of staff, workplace harassment) is *repeated* behaviour (or threatened behaviour) that is humiliating, intimidating, undermining, or threatening. It may be: verbal, non-verbal, emotional, social, electronic or physical, and conducted by an individual or group against others. Bullying may be carried out by anyone in the School community.

PHYSICAL

Stand over tactics
Hitting / punching
Property taken and thrown around
Taking and hiding property
Borrowing without permission
Tripping
Grabbing
Pushing / jostling
Unwelcome touching

VERBAL

Name calling
Threats
Abuse
Unwanted requests
Suggestive or unwanted comments
Obscene or vulgar language/swearing
Teasing / taunting
Intimidation

RUMOURS/SOCIAL

Talking about others
Writing notes about others
Use of electronic media to spread misinformation, rumors, or to threaten
Cyberbullying
Being left out
Being ignored
Rejecting
Ostracizing
Instilling fear

NON-VERBAL

Threatening body language
Hand or body gestures
Exclusion
Facial expressions

EXTORTION

Demanding money or possessions

Important elements of bullying and harassment are:

- It is repeated over time as part of a pattern of behaviour
- It results in offence, injury, embarrassment or isolation of another person or persons
- It targets a specific person or persons
- It involves an imbalance of effect i.e. bully is calm, victim is upset

Principles

Beachcombers will uphold the following principles under this policy:

- Seek to prevent bullying and harassment from happening in our community.
- Regularly raise awareness about bullying and harassment so that everyone knows what their rights and responsibilities are.
- Deal with any bullying or harassment complaint seriously, sympathetically, quickly, impartially (fairly) and confidentially.
- Ensure that no-one is victimized for either making a bullying or harassment complaint or for supporting someone who has made a bullying or harassment complaint. Beachcombers will help to provide whatever reasonable support is necessary.
- Action may be taken against anyone who victimizes another person because they made a bullying or harassment complaint or supported someone who has made a bullying or harassment complaint. Beachcombers will not tolerate victimization.
- Implement appropriate action to ensure as far as possible the risk of bullying or harassment is eliminated or significantly reduced.

What should you do about bullying and harassment?

Anyone within the Beachcombers community observing or having knowledge of bullying or harassment must act and not ignore the behaviour. The complaints procedure is set out below.

The prevention of conduct that is in breach of this policy is the responsibility of all members of the Beachcombers' community. Each person must ensure that they fully understand this policy and must notify if they become aware that bullying and harassment may be occurring at the school.

Students can seek help from:

- A teacher
- The Principal
- A staff member
- A friend

Parents can seek help from:

- A teacher
- The Principal
- A staff member

Staff can seek help from:

- Preschool & Admin Manager
- The Principal
- The Operations Manager
- The President

Bullying and harassment will not be tolerated at Beachcombers. The consequences for this behaviour on the part of students will take into account the student's age, maturity and special needs, if any. The following courses of action may need to be taken by Beachcombers to address bullying and harassment by a student:

- Temporary removal from group – class/grounds
- Community service
- Suspension
- Counseling by a teacher or mediation
- Disciplinary action
- Expulsion / dismissal

Education and information:

- Beachcombers will ensure that students receive information and training about their rights and responsibilities in maintaining an environment free from bullying and harassment during the morning community meetings within each class.
- Beachcombers will ensure that staff (including volunteers) receive training about their rights and responsibilities in maintaining an environment free from bullying and harassment, and how to deal with and identify instances of bullying and harassment upon commencement and annually.
- Information will also be supplied to parents/guardians regarding their rights and obligations and the Beachcombers policies and procedures relevant to bullying and harassment issues.

Complaints procedure

Students: All allegations of bullying or harassment of students shall be reported to the principal or a designated staff member.

Parents: All allegations of bullying or harassment of parents shall be reported to the principal, or a designated staff member.

Staff: All allegations of bullying or harassment shall be reported to the principal or president.

The principal or designated staff member shall keep a written or electronic record of complaints and, in the case of students, the parents of all students involved shall be notified.

Investigation of Bullying and Harassment

Once reported, any allegation of bullying or harassment will be promptly investigated. Whoever is designated to accept complaints will be responsible for investigating the allegation in a timely manner and taking an appropriate course of action.

The principal, president or designated staff member will be held accountable for taking reasonable actions to resolve the situation. Proper disciplinary action will be taken immediately following the conclusion of the investigation.

Beachcombers Academy and Little Oysters Child Care is committed to take reasonable steps to prevent retaliation by a person against a student who has made a complaint of a breach of policy.

Mediation and Counseling for Students

If possible, supervised mediation between the students involved may be attempted, but measures shall be taken to limit the exposure of the target to further bullying and harassment. If necessary, counseling will be provided by a teacher for the target or the student perpetrating the bullying or harassment.

Disciplinary Sanctions

Students: Disciplinary actions for bullying or harassment by students may include but is not limited to: warnings; counseling; loss of opportunity to participate in some activities, school social events, loss of school bus transportation; community service, in-school suspension; short term suspension; or expulsion.

Parents and Families: Any parent or family member who violates or does not follow this policy may have limits placed on their access to the school and school grounds; may have modifications to service provided to their family; and may be required to withdraw their child/ren from Beachcombers Academy and Little Oysters Child Care.

Staff and Volunteers: Any staff member who violates or does not follow this policy may be subject to remedial or disciplinary action, up to and including termination.