East Preston Islamic College

STUDENT

WELLBEING

&

BULLYING

POLICY

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide students, staff members, parents, and guardians with clarity as to the behaviour expected of students at the College and the consequences when those expectations are breached.

School-wide expectations encourage consistent communications and establish an effective community for all staff and students and across our college.

The college has a zero tolerance to child abuse and aims to implement fairness. Students develop personal awareness and responsibility while learning to use lifelong sills of active listening, expressing emotions and problem solving.

Aims:
The policy aims to:

- support a culture of positive behaviour with high levels of student engagement as essential for ongoing achievement and wellbeing,

- establish a transparency around processes followed when students exhibit adverse behaviours,

- ensure the safety of all the members of the community,

- support the development of self-discipline, self-respect, self-worth, and respect for others; and

- to create an environment where the right of students to learn and the right of teachers to teach is respected.

Rights and Responsibilities

It is our aim to foster an environment that shapes our students into people who can take responsibility for their own actions and who will grow to contribute to their wider community.

We expect students to behave, both in and out of school, in a courteous manner that will bring respect and honour to the school, their families, and themselves.

Students have the right to learn in a mutually respectful and safe environment. For this to happen, students must realise that their personal behaviour is a key determinant of the school's environment.

Bullying

Bullying is the repeated and intentional behaviour of causing fear, distress or harm towards another person that involves an imbalance of power. It can involve humiliation, domination, intimidation, victimisation, and harassment. In any bullying incident there are likely to be three parties involved: the bully, the person being bullied, and bystanders.

Bullying can take many forms including:

• Physical bullying which involves physical actions such as hitting, pushing, obstructing, or being used to hurt or intimidate someone. Damaging, stealing, or hiding personal belongings is also a form of physical bullying.

• Psychological bullying which is when words or actions are used to cause psychological harm. Examples of psychological bullying include name calling, teasing, or making fun of someone because of their actions, appearance, physical characteristics, or cultural background.

• Indirect bullying which is when deliberate acts of exclusion or spreading of untrue stories are used to hurt or intimidate someone.

• Cyber bullying which is the ongoing abuse of power to threaten or harm another person using technology. Cyber bullying can occur in chat rooms, on social networking sites, through emails or on mobile phones.

What Is not bullying

There are many negative situations which, whilst being potentially distressing for students, are not bullying. These include:

• Mutual Conflict Situations which arise where there is disagreement between students but not an imbalance of power. Mutual conflict situations need to be closely monitored as they may evolve into a bullying situation

• One-Off Acts (of aggression or meanness) including single incidents of loss of temper, shouting or swearing do not normally constitute bullying.

Signs of Bullying

Major behavioural changes in a student may be indicative of bullying. Such behavioural changes may include:

• crying at night and having nightmares

• refusing to talk when asked "What's wrong?"

• having unexplained bruises, cuts, or scratches

• an unwillingness or refusal to go to school

• feeling ill in the mornings

• a decline in quality of college work

• becoming withdrawn and lacking confidence

• beginning to bully siblings

• acting unreasonably.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to recognise signs of bullying and notify the College through a trusted staff member immediately (such as a class teacher or College counsellor), if they suspect their child is a victim of bullying.

EPIC's Policy

EPIC recognises its duty to students to provide a safe and positive learning environment where individual differences and diversity within the College is respected and accepted.

Bullying is not tolerated at EPIC. It is our policy that:

• bullying be managed through a 'whole-of-College community' approach involving students, staff, and parents/guardians

• bullying prevention strategies be implemented within the College on a continuous basis with a focus on teaching age-appropriate skills and strategies to empower staff, students, and parents/guardians to recognise bullying and respond appropriately

• bullying response strategies be tailored to the circumstances of each incident

• staff establish positive role models emphasising our no-bullying culture

• bullying prevention and intervention strategies are reviewed on an annual basis against best practice.

Bullying Prevention Strategies

EPIC recognises that the implementation of whole College prevention strategies is the most effective way of eliminating, or at least minimising incidents of bullying within our community.

The following initiatives form part of our overall bullying prevention strategy and our strategy to create a 'no bullying' culture within the College:

• a structured curriculum and peer group support system, which provides age-appropriate information and skills relating to bullying (including cyber bullying) and bullying prevention, to students over the course of the academic year

• education, training, and professional development of staff in bullying prevention and response strategies

• regular provision of information to parents/guardians, to raise awareness of bullying as a college community issue to equip them to recognise signs of bullying, as well as to provide them with clear paths for raising any concerns they may have related to bullying directly with the College

• promotion of a supportive environment that encourages the development of positive relationships and communication between staff, students, and parents/guardians

• promotion of responsible bystander behaviour amongst students, staff, and parents/guardians

• reporting of incidents of alleged bullying by students, bystanders, parents/guardians, and staff are encouraged, and made easy through the establishment of multiple reporting channels (as specified below)

• regular risk assessments of bullying within the College are undertaken by surveying students to identify bullying issues that may ordinarily go unnoticed by staff

• records of reported bullying incidents are maintained and analysed, in order to identify persistent bullies and/or victims and to implement targeted prevention strategies where appropriate

• statements supporting bullying prevention are included in students' College diaries

• education of staff, students, and parents/guardians on health conditions to promote understanding and to reduce stigma and fear

• anti-bullying posters are displayed strategically within the College

• promotion of student awareness and a 'no-bullying' environment by participating in events such as the National Day of Action Against Bullying and Violence.

Reporting Bullying

Students and their parents/guardians are sometimes reluctant to pursue bullying incidents, for fear that it will only make matters worse.

A key part of the College's bullying prevention and intervention strategy is to encourage reporting of bullying incidents as well as providing assurance to students who experience bullying (and parents/guardians) that:
- bullying is not tolerated within the College.
- their concerns will be taken seriously.
- the College has a clear strategy for dealing with bullying issue.

Bullying incidents can be advised to the College verbally (or in writing) through any of the following avenues:
- informing a trusted staff member.
- informing the College counsellor.
- informing a student's Home Room Teacher, Year Level Coordinator , or Assistant Head of School.
- informing the Head of School, Vice Principal, or the Principal.

Responding to Bullying

Bullying behaviours vary enormously in their extent and intent and, as a consequence, each incident needs to be dealt with on its facts.
In all circumstances the College:
- takes bullying incidents seriously
- provides assurance to the victim that they are not at fault and their confidentiality will be respected
- takes time to thoroughly investigate the facts including discussing the incident with the victim, the bully, and any bystanders
- takes time to understand any concerns of individuals involved maintains records of reported bullying incidents
- will escalate its response when dealing with persistent bullies and/or severe incidents.
- Actions that may be taken when responding to bullying include:
- notification of/consultation with parents/guardians offering counselling to persistent bullies/victims implementing effective follow up strategies
- assisting both victim and bully to develop an action plan with a variety of responses to deal with various scenarios.
- requesting subject teachers to alter or make a seating plan.
- removing student/s from the yard.
- assigning a mentor to victim or bully or both.
- referring either victim or bully or both to counsellors for additional support and assistance.
- providing resources to parents of either party to assist them with their sons.
- Personalised Behaviour Modification Plan.
- If the incident is the first time that a student has bullied another student at the College and depending on the age and circumstances of the incident, the student may receive a pre-bullying

strike letter, which will be recorded on their file. The letter will outline the three strikes process if the student bullies again.

If a student found to have been bullying fails to modify his behaviour appropriately after a first intervention, further steps will follow:
- The next incident will attract a first strike bullying letter which outlines the situation and indicates the next steps if the student re-offends.
- A second incident will attract a second-strike bullying letter which warns the student that a third incident will automatically trigger a review of their enrolment at the College.
- A third incident will result in the student's enrolment being reviewed and may result in a negotiated transfer to another school.
- disciplinary action, at the principal's discretion, including suspension and expulsion of persistent bullies, or in cases of severe incidents.

Staff Responsibilities

All staff are responsible to:
- model appropriate behaviour at all times
- deal with all reported and observed incidents of bullying in accordance with this policy
- ensure that any incident of bullying that they observe or is reported to them, is recorded appropriately
- be vigilant in monitoring students that have been identified as either persistent bullies or victims
- acknowledge the right of parents/guardians to speak with the College if they believe their child is being bullied.
- recognise when a strategy is not working; there must be a follow-up system developed with a strategy to establish whether or not the bullying has stopped. In such cases, different strategies will be immediately devised.

Signage

Anti-bullying posters may be posted in strategic locations in the College to promote appropriate behaviour and encourage students to respect individual differences and diversity. Implementation This policy is implemented through a combination of:
- staff training
- student and parent/guardian education and information effective incident reporting procedures
- effective management of bullying incidents when reported
- the creation of a 'no-bullying' culture within the College community
- effective record keeping procedures
- initiation of corrective actions where necessary.

Discipline for Breach of Policy

Where a staff member breaches this policy EPIC will take disciplinary action, including in the case of serious breaches, summary dismissal.

Student Management Process & Policy

Points	Teacher Action	Consequence
1	Clear warning	Student-Teacher Conference
2	Parent informed via notice	Make up for time lost during lunch or recess
3	Parent phoned	Make up for time lost after school and ongoing Observation Card
4	Meeting with parents and relevant coordinator	In-school community service and potential loss of privileges
5	Meeting with Heads of Secondary School	Out-of-school suspension for preparation for panel meeting
6	Principal Meeting	Action Plan

Moderate — **Adverse** — **Behaviours**

Severe Adverse Behaviours

Logged into Compass & Restorative Action at each stage

Restorative Action may involve anything from a verbal or written reflection to projects related to correcting behaviour.