

# Rangiora High School Board of Trustees



## Harassment and Bullying Policy

### Rationale

Rangiora High School is committed to promoting a positive supportive environment within which all members of the school community, are treated with dignity and respect, and can participate to their full potential. All of us have a shared responsibility to be protected from harm, including students, staff and others in the workplace and to promote positive workplace behaviours.

### Definitions

**Abuse** means the harming (whether physically, emotionally or sexually), ill-treatment, neglect or deprivation of any person.

**Bullying** is a form of harassment involving the exercise of power over another person through negative acts or behaviours that undermine them personally and/or professionally usually perpetrated in an ongoing and repeated manner. Bullying can be threatening, insulting, abusive, disparaging or intimidating behaviour which places inappropriate pressure on the recipient or has the effect of isolating or excluding them.

**Harassment** is a form of abuse that includes physical, verbal or visual behaviour by a person or group which is unwelcome, unsolicited or offensive. Harassment can be based on the personal or physical characteristics of a person such as gender, age, ethnicity, sexual orientation, marital status, religious or ethical beliefs, disability, employment status or affiliation. Harassment is behaviour, contact activity or interaction that is repeated or significant enough to cause harm and is intended to discriminate, humiliate, intimidate, bully or pressure an individual or group and that is unwelcome or offensive to that individual or group and has a detrimental effect on them, their employment, job performance or job satisfaction.

**Sexual harassment** is a form of harassment that involves unwelcome or offensive sexual behaviour that is repeated or is significant enough to have a harmful effect on an individual's study, employment, job performance or job satisfaction. Unwelcome means behaviours that are not solicited or invited and are regarded by a person as undesirable or offensive at the time.

Although the terms 'harassment' and 'bullying' are not synonymous, the guidance in this procedural policy relates to both issues and the term 'harassment' will be used from this point onwards to encompass both. The term 'harassment' also includes all forms of sexual harassment.

### Policy: Our commitment is to:

1. create a safe environment that is free from harassment and where everyone is treated fairly.

2. ensure all members of the school community feel comfortable, listened to, safe and secure.
3. ensure the Board, leaders and staff model appropriate behaviours that support and enforce this policy.
4. support the implementation of communications, training and awareness creating strategies to ensure that all students, employees and leaders know their rights and responsibilities.
5. have zero tolerance for, and prompt appropriate handling of incidents of harassment.
6. foster a climate of trust within the school where individuals feel comfortable about sharing concerns and reporting of behaviour that breaches this policy to an appropriate person.
7. ensure the well-being of the complainant and the respondent, and be respectful of their legal rights and natural justice.
8. seek to resolve issues at the lowest appropriate level of intervention.
9. discourage all forms of casual and innocent harassment that are not significant and may not meet the definition above. Allowing them to proliferate creates the climate within which more serious and harmful forms of harassment can more easily occur.

### **Where does the policy apply?**

The policy covers all harassment behaviours that happen:

- Between students in school hours on the school grounds, during school events, trips and activities, including on social media while at school or on school events, trips or activities;
- between work associates and between staff and students, at any time, for example, on social media; or any work situations social or professional; during work events such as conferences, training, and work based activities and / or outside the workplace if it is in the context of the employment relationship or affects the workplace.

### **Implementation Guidelines**

1. The care and protection of students **and staff** must be paramount in all considerations.
2. The school will provide an ongoing **regular** education programme for Board of Trustees members, staff, students, parents and whānau designed to educate as to
  - a. what constitutes abuse, bullying and harassment
  - b. The signs and indicators of students /staff at risk of abuse
  - c. Strategies designed to recognise and respond to abuse and harassment including Restorative Practice
3. All staff and students have a responsibility to report any concerns around harassment or abuse. The school will implement an appropriate reporting mechanism.
4. Sometimes those who are subject to harassment may find it difficult to make a complaint. The school will provide a range of options to make it easier for people to complain or speak up.
5. In all cases of serious abuse, the reporting process for suspected or disclosed child abuse should be followed (see Child Protection Policy)
6. Leaders must maintain the confidentiality of the individuals concerned at all times, during and after the completion of the process. Strict confidentiality must be maintained in both informal and formal management of a harassment complaint to avoid victimisation, humiliation, and defamation.

## Related Policies

- Child Protection Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Protected Disclosures Policy
- Staff Social Media Policy**
- Media Communications Policy**

## Relevant Documentation and Legislation

- Current collective employment agreements for principals, teachers and support staff
- Care of Children Act, 2004
- Children, Young Persons and Their Families Act, 1995
- Crimes Act, 1961
- Domestic Violence Act, 1995
- Education Act, 1989
- Employment Relations Act, 2000
- Health and Safety At Work Act 2016
- Human Rights Act 1993
- Privacy Act, 1993
- Reporting of Suspected or Actual Child Abuse or Neglect
- Safer Organisations, Safer Children
- State Sector Act 1988
- <http://www.ssc.govt.nz/sexual-harassment-policy-guideline>
- Vulnerable Children Act 2014 for schools - Ministry of Education
- Vulnerable Children Act 2014 - NZSTA
- Vulnerable Children Act, 2014

<b>Date of Review</b>	August 2019
<b>Date of Next Review</b>	August 2021
<b>Date Adopted by the BOT</b>	14 August 2019