



NOVA PIONEER
SCHOOLS FOR INNOVATORS & LEADERS

NOVA PIONEER ANTI BULLYING POLICY

June 2018

All individuals at Nova Pioneer uphold the six culture principles reflecting our philosophy and that define a Novaneer. We believe that you cannot have great learning or build a great community without a strong and positive culture.

Novaneers live these six culture principles in learning and behaviour

High Expectations	Greater Together	Servant Leadership	Joy of Learning	Always Growing	Solutions First
<i>We sweat the small stuff and take pride in what we do. We set goals that others think are impossible and never stop until we achieve them.</i>	<i>We constantly support our teammates because we know we can achieve more together.</i>	<i>Great leaders always put others before themselves and engage their community with humility and generosity. We see leadership as a way of improving the world, not simply promoting ourselves.</i>	<i>We are lifelong learners and we are fuelled by curiosity and discovery</i>	<i>We constantly seek out difficult challenges, share and receive feedback as a gift, and see every failure as an opportunity to grow.</i>	<i>Everything is possible when we think creatively and critically about a problem. We are always thinking of new solutions when faced with difficult problems.</i>

We cannot be Greater Together if our teamwork is blighted with bullying.

We are Always Growing in our behaviour, learning the correct way to treat each others and showing respect.

We adopt a Solutions First approach to bullying: what is the cause of the behaviour and what interventions will preclude repetition of the inappropriate conduct?

Within the concept of Servant Leadership is the understanding that the powerful are there to serve others.

Our High Expectations for all mandates that our behaviour toward each other is beyond reproach.

And there can be no Joy in Learning if members of our community are suffering from bullying by others.

Unacceptable Behaviour Involving Bullying

Nova Pioneer School does not tolerate bullying in any form, and all members of the school community are committed to promoting a safe, caring environment. No one

has the right to hurt others through any form of bullying. Staff, students and parents will work together to address bullying.

What is Bullying?

The term “bullying” has been used by some to apply to a whole range of behaviours, from verbal disagreements to physical altercations. However, the term “bullying” actually has a very specific meaning: **the use of strength or power to frighten or hurt weaker people** [from Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary]. Bullying can also be defined as a repeated and systematic harassment and/or ‘violation’ of others. Bullying can be perpetrated by individuals or groups.

Bullying takes many forms and can include many different repeated behaviours such as:

- **Physical:** any form of physical violence towards another, including pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching as well as damaging property or the belongings of others;
- **Verbal:** name calling, sarcasm, persistent teasing and put downs;
- **Social:** a more indirect form of bullying which includes social exclusion, spreading rumours, playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate, damaging someone’s social reputation or social acceptance;
- **Cyber:** bullying using digital technologies and online platforms, including the sending of abusive or hurtful text messages, posting images or videos online of others without their express consent, engaging in online dishonesty such as catfishing and hacking into other people’s social media accounts.

Bullying can be particularly hurtful and harmful when it takes on a sexual or prejudicial nature.

Sexual bullying is any form of bullying that has a sexual nature to it, including unwanted physical contact, comments, requests or name calling of a sexual nature, sexual propositioning.

Prejudicial bullying is when a student becomes the target of any form of bullying because of certain personal characteristics. This includes racist bullying which targets someone on the basis of their race, ethnicity or nationality, and homophobic bullying which targets someone on the basis of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Signs of being bullied might include:

- unwillingness to come to school.
- withdrawn, isolated behaviour.

- complaining about missing possessions.
- refusal to talk about problems.
- being easily distressed.
- defaced or incomplete school work.

The classic sense of bullying involves a power imbalance which is abused. A common example of this would be a larger student demanding the lunch money of a smaller student.

The various forms this type of behaviour can take result in differing violations of the Nova Pioneer Philosophy of Culture and Behaviour (including the school code of conduct). Thus, the lunch money example would constitute theft.

It is therefore unnecessary and potentially confusing to prescribe consequences for an act described only as “bullying”, as more detail is required to determine the exact nature of the conduct. The Philosophy of Culture and Behaviour document prohibits all forms of conduct that could be perceived as of a “bullying” nature. We are thus confident that our policies are well suited to deal with such behaviour whenever it occurs.

What is *not* bullying?

At Nova Pioneer, particularly in the Primary School context, students are learning how to interact with each other and developing their social skills. In the course of these experiences, there are numerous disagreements and points of conflict even among students who consider themselves friends.

These occurrences often require teacher intervention to help learners resolve their differences in an appropriate manner, but rarely constitute true bullying. Our preference at Nova Pioneer is for students, where possible, to work out their disagreements themselves, for example, who gets to go on the swings next, etc. But adult supervision is provided to facilitate healthy student interaction.

Teasing which is hurtful or malicious is also dealt with by teachers through the ethos of our Culture Principles, but again, this is not considered bullying, but rather unkindness which flies in the face of our Greater Together and High Expectations mandates.

Ultimately, the labelling of inappropriate behaviour is less important than the underlying principles which guide our behaviour. At Nova Pioneer, we are sensitive to student conflict and meticulous about our approach in dealing with it. Our learners are not only innovators and leaders of the future, but they are the

practitioners of ethical and socially conscious behaviour, with respect for the dignity of all.

Responsibility

At Nova Pioneer we believe it is the responsibility of the whole school community to prevent bullying.

Staff will

- supervise school activities.
- communicate and supervise appropriate movement between lessons.
- inform students of the expected code of behaviour.
- inform students of class rules and essential agreements.
- educate students and parents about bullying.
- be observant of signs of distress or suspected incidents of bullying.
- investigate all reported incidents.
- record all reported incidents of bullying on an incident report form and give it to the student's class teacher.
- assist victims of bullying and ensure that they are not placed at further risk.
- support the 'bystanders' of bullying to encourage a proactive response to bullying.
- report all suspected incidents of bullying to the class teacher.
- be role models in word and action.

Students will

- refuse to be involved in any bullying situation.
- report any incident or suspected incident of bullying by telling a teacher.
- reliably recall or record events of a bullying situation on request, if they are a bystander.

Parents and guardians will

- watch for any signs of unhappiness in their child's life.
- inform the school if there is any suspicion that their child is being bullied
- refrain from telling their child to retaliate.
- seek to address the situation and cooperate with the school if their child is found to have bullied another student.
- be provided with strategies to assist their children to work through bullying situations.

Intervention in bullying situations at Nova Pioneer will be dealt with in a systematic way and the following steps will be taken by teaching staff:

- Intervene immediately; stop the bullying behaviour as soon as you see it or become aware of it.
- Talk to the victim separately and obtain a vivid picture of what happened and how the victim has been harmed.
- Talk to the bully separately. If more than one child is involved in perpetrating the bullying, talk to each of the perpetrators separately in quick succession.
- Obtain a clear picture of what happened and remind child(ren) of the behaviour expectations.
- Talk to any bystanders separately.
- Arrange a meeting with the 'injured party' and the bully. The purpose of this meeting is to initiate a process of restorative justice. Perpetrators will have to face the consequences of their actions in terms of the Nova Pioneer Philosophy of Culture and Behaviour. However, perpetrators will also be provided with psychosocial support in order that they can better understand their behaviour so that it can be prevented from recurring. In other words, individuals will be held accountable for their actions within a system of support.