Woodend
Harrassment Policy

Introduction
This harassment policy is based upon the premise that each individual has the right to decide what happens to his or her person and that this decision will vary from person to person.

The Grievance Procedure is first and foremost a means to enable someone who feels uncomfortable in a situation to communicate that to the other person or persons involved and to receive support from the school in so doing. In this context the use of the Grievance Procedure does not by any means involve an imputation of “evil intent” or deliberate harassment on the part of the other person or persons involved.

Should someone continue with an action once they have been made aware that it causes discomfort and/or distress to another person, then the issue becomes more properly one of harassment and more serious action as described in the grievance procedure will need to be taken.

This grievance procedure has been based on the following:
that it should be readily accessible to complainants
that at all times the wishes of the complainant should be respected in terms of confidentiality and action taken
that it should be consistent with existing communication methods within the school
that disciplinary procedures should be administered within the structures already available.

The Nature of Sexual Harassment
Sexual harassment refers to behaviour that is not welcome, which is personally offensive, which erodes individual rights, debilitates morale, and interferes with the work-effectiveness and learning ability of those who are sexually harassed. It communicates to people that they are seen as sexual objects, are not taken seriously as workers or students, and are not given the personal respect that people should expect from others.

It refers to any verbal or physical behaviour of a sexual nature which is unsolicited and unwelcome, and which may be offensive. It is found in deliberate or repeated comments, gestures and physical conduct which are perceived to be embarrassing, demeaning or compromising.

When sexual harassment occurs, it not only causes distress to the person harassed, but it causes tensions and unhappiness in the workplace and school.

The Nature of Racist Harassment
Racist harassment refers to behaviour, attitudes, words and actions that are negative and offensive towards individuals or groups of different cultural backgrounds.

It refers to the power, control or dominance of one group over another using cultural, racial or religious differences as an excuse to victimise others and to rationalise one’s own power position.

It can be systematic, deliberate, multi-layered, subtle or explicit. Examples may include joke telling, name calling, patronising, generalising,
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stereotyping, victimising, intimidating, ignoring or excluding behaviours.
When racist harassment occurs, it causes tensions and distress in the workplace
and undermines morale. It most importantly denies the rights of individuals to
achieve their full potential in an environment which affirms their cultural
identity.

Racist discrimination takes many forms including verbal abuse, graffiti, physical
attack on people or their property, exclusion from certain activities and their
underestimation of a person’s ability and potential. The exact form which such
behaviour takes is influenced by many factors such as the age, gender and
socio-economic background of those involved. Amongst these factors, gender is
particularly significant since racist and sexist prejudice are often interwoven.
Racist harassment is an aspect of racist discrimination. It involves offensive,
demeaning, humiliating or intimidating physical or verbal behaviour. As with
racist discrimination in general, racist harassment is often compounded by
sexual harassment. This policy therefore acknowledges the significance of the
interaction between racism and sexism and the importance of taking this into
account in programmes aimed a eliminating discrimination in employment and
education.

Sexual and racist harassment may take place between:
  staff - staff
  staff - student
  student - staff
  student - student
  parent - staff
  staff - parent
  student - parent
  parent - student
  parent - parent

Grievance Procedures

Complaints may be received from staff members, students and/or parents. If a
person feels that harassment has taken place and is unable to negotiate with
the harasser then the following options are available:
  discuss the matter with the staff’s selected representative or
  the OHSW representative
  discuss the matter with the principal or deputy principal
  report and discuss the matter with someone outside the school eg
  District Superintendent, Equal Opportunity officer, Education of
  Girls unit, union officer (SAIT, PSA, AWU)
should the person feel uncomfortable with the above options then
he/she can report to and consult with the Commission for Equal
Opportunity, Wakefield House, 30 Wakefield Street, Adelaide (08)
227 0944.
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When A Complaint Is Received
It is important to take the complainant seriously and to establish whether the complainant wants the matter dealt with internally or externally whilst protecting the interests of all parties and maintaining confidentiality.

The Contact Person’s Role
- listening sympathetically maintaining confidentiality
- counselling the complainant about the need to maintain confidentiality
- understand DECS policy and the Sex/Race Discrimination Act without assuming that you are an expert or expected to be an expert
- ensuring both privacy and time are given to the complainant
- listening without being judgemental or offering advice too early assuming the person is telling the truth
- empowering the complainant to have the complaint dealt with without victimisation
- supporting both the complainant and the person complained about referring the complainant to “Guidelines for Sexual Harassment Grievance Procedures” Supplement 88/8 Volume 16, Number 19, week ending 29 July 1988
- ensuring that positive changes result through the education process.

The contact person may be able to:
- provide confidential advice on strategies for dealing directly with the person whose behaviour is causing the complainant distress
- inform the complainant of the range of possible options available
- provide confidential counselling and on-going support over the period of time during which the formal complaint is made.

The Principal is responsible for:
- ensuring that the 2 sexual harassment contact persons are elected annually by the staff
- ensuring that the sexual harassment contact person(s) are fully inserviced
- supporting the sexual harassment contact person(s) (ie to attend a situation of sexual harassment, inservice, maintain/upgrade skills)
- seeking regular advice with regard to the nature and extent of enquiries
- ensuring that the school community understands the role of the sexual harassment contact person is as a source of advice, support and information, not of investigation and resolution
- being aware of the effect of the responsibilities of the contact person.
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Student Information on Harassment

What will happen if you go to one of the teachers?

   If harassment continues despite your efforts don’t give up! Teachers are there
to help you do something about it:

♦ They will listen to you, keep what you tell them private and ask what you want to do.

♦ Together you will work out the best way to handle the situation and what action to
take.

♦ If you decide not to go any further that is OK.

♦ If, after a while, you want nothing more to be done, that is OK too.

♦ If you decide to continue with your complaint, you may need to fill out a student
grievance form.

   You are in control of what happens!

What about victimisation?

Victimisation is when you are ignored or treated badly by the person causing problems
or their friends, after you make a complaint.
Action will be taken to stop victimisation.

What are the consequences for the harasser?

Harassment is not acceptable behaviour and will not be tolerated. Those
who harass are breaking the school rules.
In the classroom and in the yard, harassment will be treated seriously, with
the same consequences as other inappropriate behaviour. If someone
continues to behave inappropriately then the consequences naturally
become much more serious.
We all know enough about harassment to do something positive about it.
There are no excuses.
The School Behaviour Management Policy will be implemented in conjunction
with counselling (with the harasser) to help sort out the problem.

Remember this!

♦ It’s up to us all to do something about harassment.
♦ If we all work together we will have a better, happier school.

   Everyone has the right to work and play in a safe and
caring school environment.
   You can be kind and thoughtful to others
by greeting people with a smile
saying thoughtful things to others
including people in your games and activities being aware of how your behaviour
affects others
changing your behaviour when it is upsetting someone getting to know
new people and making them feel welcome.
Being harassed

Sometimes we are hassled by people in a variety of ways. This is called harassment.

Harassment is when someone treats you in a way that makes you feel embarrassed, uncomfortable, upset or unsafe, because of who you are or what you do. Harassment is unfair and unacceptable.

It is your right to be free of harassment of any kind.

It is your responsibility to ensure you never harass anyone else.

Kinds of harassment

You or your friends might have been bullied, teased, picked on or excluded; these are all kinds of harassment. Here are some examples:

Physical harassment

♦ hitting, kicking, pushing
♦ getting a gang or group of people together to frighten or hurt you
♦ writing rude or unpleasant notes or graffiti about you
♦ hiding or destroying your property
♦ patting, pinching or touching when you don’t want to be touched.

Verbal harassment

♦ calling you names, using put downs
♦ threatening you
♦ making rude jokes, gestures, noises, or saying suggestive things about you
♦ spreading rumours

Intellectual harassment

♦ hassling you because you are good at your work
♦ hassling you because you are having problems with your school work.

Racial harassment

♦ doing any of the above just because of your racial background or customs.

Sexual harassment

♦ doing any of the above because you are a girl or a boy.
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What can you do when you are being harassed?
You have to decide what you want to do. Here is what you can do at Woodend Primary School. It is not always necessary to go through every step.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step 1. Self Management</th>
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<td>ignore it, walk away, laugh it off</td>
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<td>OR</td>
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<tr>
<td>confront the person who is harassing</td>
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<td>you tell them how you feel</td>
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<tr>
<td>tell them you don’t like what they are doing and you want it to stop</td>
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<td>tell them they are breaking the school rules.</td>
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If Step 1 doesn’t work.
PERSIST!

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<th>Step 2. Take a friend.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ask a friend or older brother or sister to go with you to tell them to stop.</td>
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If Step 2 doesn’t work.
PERSIST!

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<tr>
<th>Step 3. Seek teacher’s help.</th>
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<td>Tell them you will talk to a teacher.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Talk it over with your classroom teacher or the teacher on duty &amp; decide with them what you will do.</td>
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<tr>
<td>If teachers need to take further action they will do so.</td>
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If Step 3 doesn’t work.
PERSIST!

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<th>Step 4. Seek further adult help.</th>
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<td>Talk it over with the anti-harassment contact teacher.</td>
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<td>Talk with Principal.</td>
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<td>Talk it over with a parent or an adult you can trust.</td>
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