



POLICY NUMBER AND NAME: 04.10 HARASSMENT AND BULLYING PREVENTION	SECTION: 04 – STUDENT ENROLLMENT AND EDUCATION
	VERSION: 2.0
	LAST REVISION DATE: SEPTEMBER 27, 2021
ADOPTED: DECEMBER 20 16	REVIEW FREQUENCY: EVERY 3 YEARS (AS MANDATED BY THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION)

PREAMBLE

At Richmond Christian School students must be provided a safe, caring and orderly school environment where God's love is expressed through the school community. Richmond Christian School values, honours and respects each student as being created in the image of God and is therefore worthy of the love expressed in John 3:16. Students have a responsibility to respect the rights and dignity of others.

It is expected that students will learn in an atmosphere that fosters success for individuals and the student body as a whole. Students are expected to maintain an attitude that is cooperative, courteous, inclusive and respectful while at school, school events and where their actions affect the school community. The restoration of relationships, forgiveness and restitution are the goals of any discipline proceeding, including those cases involving bullying or harassment. As Micah 6:8 teaches; the Lord requires us “to act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with our God.”

As behaviours and expectations differ from student to student, grade to grade, and campus to campus, the principals are primarily responsible for ensuring that each incident of bullying and/or harassment is dealt with in an age-appropriate and consistent manner. Each campus will incorporate a progressive approach in its procedures per Policy 4.15 Discipline to ensure that students are offered opportunity to correct their behavioural practices.

Although this policy is written primarily about student behaviour, the principles listed below apply to all members of the Richmond Christian School Community. This includes faculty and staff, board and committee members as well as the parent community at large.

REVIEW HISTORY		
DATE	VERSION	CHANGES
SEPTEMBER 27, 2021	2.0	AMENDMENTS ACCEPTED BY BOARD



DEFINITIONS

1. Bullying:
 - a. Bullying is defined as a pattern of repeated aggressive behaviour, with negative intent, directed from one party or a group toward another party or group where there is a power imbalance.
 - b. Bullying may be:
 - i. physical: using physical force or aggression against another person.
 - ii. verbal: using words to verbally attack or hurt someone.
 - iii. social/relational: trying to hurt someone through excluding them, spreading rumours or ignoring them.
 - iv. cyberbullying: using electronic media to threaten, embarrass, intimidate, exclude someone or to damage their reputation.
 - c. All bullying is considered to be poor behaviour. However, not all poor behaviour may be categorized as bullying.
2. Harassment:
 - a. Harassment is the act of systematic and/or continued unwanted and annoying actions of one party or a group toward another party or group. This may include threats and demands. Behaviour that persists after the aggressor has been asked to stop is harassment. The following are some examples of harassment:
 - i. condescending treatment that undermines another's self-respect: name-calling, teasing, disrespectful comments;
 - ii. gossiping, spreading malicious rumours, "dirty" looks, social ridicule, public embarrassment;
 - iii. social isolation, exclusion from a group, threatening to withdraw friendship;
 - iv. repeated unwanted communication;
 - v. unwelcome jokes, innuendoes, insults, or put downs;
 - vi. taunts about a person's body;
 - vii. derogatory comments or discrimination based on one's disability, religion, attire, age, economic status, ethnic or national origin, sexual orientation or gender identity and expression; or
 - viii. unwanted and uninvited sexual attention, particularly when it is intimidating,

hostile or offensive to the recipient.

3. Intimidation:
 - a. Intimidation is the act of instilling fear in someone as a means of controlling that person.
 - b. Any of the following behaviours may be considered intimidation:
 - i. verbal threats, threatening phone calls;
 - ii. physical threats: showing a weapon, jostling, threatening to punch, stalking or following;
 - iii. defacing or stealing a victim's property;
 - iv. daring or coercing a victim to do something dangerous or illegal;
 - v. extortion;
 - vi. inciting hatred toward a victim; or
 - vii. setting up a victim to take the blame for an offence.
4. Threatening or violent behaviour:
 - a. Threatening or violent behaviour can be broadly defined and may include a student expressing a threat of something unpleasant or violent to gain control or power over another person.

PREVENTION

5. RCS community members are expected to promote and encourage positive behaviour and are compelled to bring issues or concerns to the attention of the Administration.
6. In addition to the guidelines outlined in Policy 4.15 Discipline, RCS will continue to state, review and revise behavioural expectations, Codes of Conduct, and discipline procedures that will enable each student to experience:
 - a. physical safety;
 - b. social connectedness;
 - c. inclusiveness; and
 - d. protection from all forms of bullying, regardless of their race, culture, religion, gender, sexual orientation or gender identity and expression whether at school, at a school-related activity or in other circumstances that will have an impact on the school environment.
7. Educational opportunities will be provided throughout the school year and in focused events.

REPORTING AND INVESTIGATING

8. RCS commits to diligently investigate all reported incidents of bullying and harassment. All parties involved in the process will work to resolve the situation in the most expedient manner possible.
 - a. Reports may be made to any RCS staff member and will be directed to the appropriate staff member responsible for investigating reports of bullying or harassment.
 - b. Throughout the reporting and investigation process all those involved, including the aggressor and their family and the victim and their family, will be asked to participate with civility and with a resolution oriented goal in mind.
 - c. As in all cases, the discipline proceedings should be thorough and balanced and should disciplinary action be warranted, consequences must not become demeaning, punitive, or shame-based, as this is a form of bullying and harassment (cf. Policy 04.15 Discipline).
9. RCS commits to taking all reasonable steps to establish accountability to prevent retaliation against any person who made a complaint regarding a breach of conduct as outlined in this policy or other RCS policies and agreements.
10. Privacy and confidentiality will be respected but cannot be guaranteed when addressing incidents identified as harassment and/or bullying. Some situations of bullying and harassment may involve notification of the RCMP, the Ministry of Children and Families and/or the involvement of counseling services.
 - a. Students involved in a bullying or harassment situation may be required to attend counselling to facilitate a healthy resolution for all parties involved. RCS may offer counselling support to both the victim and the aggressor per the RCS counseling contract.

REFERENCES

1. Focus On Bullying: A Prevention Program for Elementary School
2. Safe, Caring and Orderly Schools: A Guide (BC Ministry of Education)
3. ERASE Bullying