

Epping Boys' High School



SAFE SCHOOLS POLICY

A. Rationale

All students have the right to learn and the whole school population has the right to work in a safe and secure, non-threatening and supportive environment. This environment is one in which each student's individuality and the cultural diversity of the school population is recognised and accepted.

A supportive, non-threatening school environment is one where all members feel safe and are valued, non-violent and non-discriminatory language and practices are defined, modelled and reinforced.

The philosophy of a supportive school environment will become an integral part of the school culture of Epping Boys' High School. It will be reflected in a code of behaviour based on a set of principles that are understood, accepted and practised by all members of the school community.

Harassment is any behaviour, verbal or physical, enacted by groups or individuals, intentionally or unintentionally, that causes a person or a group of people to feel or experience degradation or lack of self-worth.

There are many forms of harassment evident that can affect the well-being of an individual. These can include sexual, racial, religious, personal, physical and emotional.

It is wrong for an individual to stand by and accept, tolerate or suffer any form of harassment in the belief that it will disappear if ignored. It is an individual's right to protest harassment and to expect a supportive and caring response from the authority of the school.

This policy has developed because of a genuine desire to improve the learning environment for all students and staff.

“The right to be left alone is the most comprehensive of rights and the most valued by civilised people.”

This school will provide an effective, caring, non-threatening learning environment.

Epping Boys' High School will promote:

Excellence

Equality

Respect

B. School Rights and Responsibilities

School right	Means the right to:	Responsibilities
To freedom of expression	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> express both unpopular and popular opinions freedom of speech (which <i>does not</i> include slander, defamation, gender or racial abuse, or disturbance of others while they are exercising their rights of expression) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To enable the expression of a range of opinions with due regard for the honour and reputation of others. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Article 19) emphasises that freedom of speech carries with it special duties and responsibilities including a prohibition against the advocacy of racial or religious hatred that would result in incitement to discrimination, hostility or violence. To provide forums for parents', students' and teachers' opinions so that views can be expressed in appropriate and constructive ways. Freedom of expression implies an understanding of the responsibility not to disturb the teaching and learning processes in the school.
To protection of privacy and property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> be protected from the abuse of property confidentiality of academic and personal records 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Of students:</i> to protect their own and others' property, including schoolwork, and the school environment. <i>Of everyone with access to school records:</i> not to divulge contents without permission from the individual/guardian involved.
To protection of person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> work/learn in a safe, non-threatening environment be free from unfair domination of others be free from social or physical harassment be treated with respect, courtesy, kindness and understanding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Of students and teachers:</i> not to humiliate or physically mistreat others. <i>Of students:</i> to be held accountable to agreed-upon rules and policy. <i>Of all members of the school community:</i> to treat and be treated with dignity; to be aware and acknowledge by one's actions, the individuality of the members of the school community.
To grievance procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> justice being seen and done within school rules and Ministry guidelines for staff, parents and students, to have access to grievance procedures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Of the school:</i> to provide grievance procedures <i>Of members of the school community:</i> to co-operate in inquiries. Rules and assessment procedures to be clear, visible and notified in advance. <i>Of each member of the school community:</i> to be accountable for personal actions.

B. Grievance Procedures

- Step 1:** Complaint of harassment made to recognised grievance officer.
- Step 2:** Grievance officer interviews the victim who decides whether he/she will stop at this point or proceed to Step 3.
- Step 3:** Written statement concerning the alleged offence and naming the offenders, made by the victim.
- Step 4:** Grievance officer convenes a meeting with the person/people named in Step 3 and discusses the complaint. If they are agreeable, Step 5 is proceeded to.
- Step 5:** Grievance officer conducts and acts as mediator in conflict resolution sessions between the victim and alleged offenders. The aim of these sessions is to reach a resolution where all people involved are satisfied.

C. Consequences

If harassment continues by a student or students despite attempts at resolution, then the following may need to occur:

1. Isolation of offenders from the playground at Recess and Lunchtime and for 15 minutes after school
plus
2. Parents will be notified and an interview may take place at the school.
3. In extreme or persistent cases of harassment, suspension may occur to provide time-out to prepare an effective response to the situation.