

The effects of harassment and/or bullying

Individuals can be affected physically and emotionally by harassment and bullying in a number of ways. Typical symptoms include feeling frightened, embarrassed or unsafe; decreased self-esteem; disturbed sleep patterns; difficulty concentrating and reduced work ethic; social isolation and withdrawal from activities; increased anxiety; somatic complaints; school refusal.



The College approach to the management of harassment or bullying

Overnewton utilises a multi-level restorative approach to the management of reported incidents of harassment and bullying. In all instances, our focus is on the student taking responsibility for their actions to help them understand the seriousness of the incident and to appreciate the feelings of the other person/s involved.

■ **Level 1** – for the least serious forms of harassment or bullying. Research indicates that reflection activities, counselling, and Support Group approach are most effective over the long term.

■ **Level 2** – for more serious forms of harassment and bullying, an interview process would take place and Method of Shared Concern utilised. Expectations for future behaviour would be clearly agreed to through this process and written agreements or contracts may be drawn up.

■ **Level 3** – for the most serious situations such as sexual or physical assault or repeated instances of bullying. At the Principal's discretion, a behavioural contract would be negotiated outlining the behavioural expectations and consequences should a breach arise. A community conference would be convened involving parents and an agreement formed. In serious cases, a student's position at the College may be forfeited.

As well as appropriate and consistent consequences and support for the person reported of bullying, the College also aims to provide guidance and appropriate support for the recipient that will aim to develop conflict resolution skills and positive wellbeing.

