BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

The school will help you stop bullying.
The school will work very hard to help anyone who is experiencing bullying. All students have the right to be safe, happy and treated with respect while attending Kiama High School.
Our attitude to bullies is not to hate them and judge them as bad people; we believe they are making poor choices, and need to be responsible for fixing up their mistakes and learning how to respect others.
We encourage students being bullied to work with us to learn to be more assertive.

What is bullying?
It includes being nasty and aggressive to a person who is weaker and less powerful than the bully or bullies. It can be anything that makes a person feel hurt, frightened or uncomfortable.

Bullying can be:
Physical: pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching and any other form of violence
Verbal: name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, threats
Emotional: excluding tormenting, making fun of or humiliating someone.
Racist: insulting someone because of their race, using words, graffiti or gestures.
Sexual: unwanted physical contact; abusive or uncomfortable comments; making fun of people because they are homosexual
Internet/cyber: sending upsetting or abusive text messages or emails, setting up ‘hate websites’, making abusive phone calls.

What should you do about bullying?
1. You shouldn’t put up with it or ignore it. You must tell a person who has the power to stop it happening. Bullies like to keep what they do a secret from teachers. Don’t be frightened that the bullying will get worse if you tell; we know how to deal effectively with this.
2. When being bullied, don’t react by being angry or upset – that’s what the bully wants you to do. Stay calm and move away from the bully if possible. If it happens in class, tell the teacher quickly.
3. Don’t insult or touch the bully – you’ll just end up getting into trouble yourself. Write down what happened as soon as you can, including the date it happened.
4. Tell a teacher what happened, giving them the note you wrote about it. Tell one of the following people: Ms McGregor (co-ordinator of the anti-bullying program); the Deputy responsible for your Year Group; your Year Adviser or a School Counsellor.
5. Telling teachers about being bullied is a smart thing to do. Bullies call this ‘dobbing’ so you will be afraid to tell – this makes sure that the bully keeps going, and you help them do if you don’t ‘dob’.
6. Tell the school the first time you are bullied. Don’t wait until it has been going on for a long time. Why be bullied for a month when you can stop it after one incident?

Guidelines for Parents
1. Don’t let your child put up with bullying. Tell the school what is happening; see the people to contact listed above. Calmly tell your child that it is more effective to tell than to do nothing. Be confident that the school will take action.
2. Watch for possible signs of bullying:- not wanting to go to school, complains of sickness; bruises or scratches they are reluctant to talk about; withdrawal, moodiness or temper tantrums; distinct personality changes and disturbed sleep
3. Be prepared to tell the school about any further bullying; bullies will sometimes test their target to see if they will tell again. The bully must know that they can’t get away with it anymore and that the school will know about what they do – it is like the person being bullied becomes a ‘camera’, recording every incident.
If your child has been bullying others, discuss with them that all people need to respect the rights of others, even if they don’t like the other person. Everyone needs to respect differences and not interfere with others. Respect is a concept worth discussing repeatedly.