



Bullying Prevention and Action Plan

Pine Cobble provides a safe environment free from bullying. Through close contact with teachers, advisors, and staff, a commitment to character education, modeling appropriate behaviors and problem-solving methods, and maintaining close connections between the school, students, and home, we first prevent acts of bullying and secondly react quickly, clearly, and appropriately if such an action occurs.

Prior to an incident of bullying occurring, all discipline steps, rules, and procedures will be followed. When there is an incident labeled as bullying, the following plan will be enacted.

Pine Cobble prohibits in all its programs discrimination against, harassment, or bullying of any individual or group based on gender, race, color, sexual orientation, religion, appearance, academic standing, socioeconomic status, mental, physical, developmental, or sensory disability, association, or any other type of real or perceived difference.

Through our advisor system, close contact between campus and home life, and the integration of our character pillars throughout the school, vulnerable students are supported and all students provided with the skills, knowledge, and strategies needed to prevent or respond to bullying or harassment.

Definitions:

The following definitions are used by Pine Cobble to better understand the terminology in the plan.

Aggressor is a student who engages in bullying, cyber bullying, or retaliation.

Bullying, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 37O, is the repeated use by one or more students of a written, verbal, or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that:

- i. causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property;
- ii. places the target in reasonable fear of harm to himself or herself or of damage to his or her property;
- iii. creates a hostile environment at school for the target;
- iv. infringes on the rights of the target at school; or
- v. materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of a school.



Cyber bullying, is bullying through the use of technology or electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the Internet. It includes, but is not limited to, email, instant messages, text messages, and Internet postings.

Hostile environment, as defined in M.G.L. c. 71, § 370, is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of a student's education.

Retaliation is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

Target is a student against whom bullying, cyber bullying, or retaliation has been perpetrated.

Implementation of the plan:

If a member of the faculty, staff, administration, student body, parent, or general member of the community believes a bullying incident has taken place, the Head of School or the Assistant Head of School is to be contacted immediately, and a Bullying Incident Form is to be filled out. Reports may be filled out anonymously. Forms are available in the front office and every classroom. Completed forms are best returned directly to the Head of School or the Assistant Head of School. If that is not possible, they can be returned to any faculty or staff member who will deliver it to the Head of School or the Assistant Head of School. As a last resort, forms can be placed in the box located in the dining room. Upon receiving the report, the first step is for the Head of School or the Assistant Head of School to determine if bullying has occurred. If not, the incident report will remain on file. If it is determined that bullying has occurred, two parallel paths will be followed; one to hold the bully accountable and educate him or her about ways to prevent future occurrences. The second path will outline steps to provide support and a safe environment to the target.

The Assistant Head of School or the Head of School will ensure that the alleged target, aggressor, witnesses, and/or reporter understand that retaliation is prohibited and will result in disciplinary action.

The Aggressor

Upon finding that bullying has occurred, parents or guardians of both the aggressor and the target will be notified about the report, the investigation, and the steps being taken to ensure further acts of bullying or retaliation will not take place. Consequences for students are considered confidential and are shared only with that child's parent/guardian and not the target.



The discipline steps taken should an act of bullying occur are outlined under the discipline section of this handbook. These steps are a guide; depending on the severity of the incident discipline steps might be accelerated leading to notification of the local law enforcement and expulsion.

The Target

From the initial report through the end of the process, Pine Cobble will take steps to ensure the safety of the target and prevent further acts of bullying from occurring. An individual safety plan will be created that fits each unique situation, and will be evaluated on a regular and ongoing basis to ensure the target feels safe in the Pine Cobble environment.

Summary of plan steps

1. A Bullying Incident Form is completed and returned to the Head of School or the Assistant Head of School. Anonymous reports are investigated, but will not be the sole reason to act.
2. An investigation is conducted to determine if a bullying act has occurred.
3. Steps are taken to ensure the safety of the target.
4. Steps are taken to ensure there is no retaliation.
5. Disciplinary consequences are determined.
6. If necessary, local law enforcement is notified.

Professional Development

Prior to the Student-Parent Handbook being sent home, the bullying prevention plan will be reviewed by all staff members. During this review, Pine Cobble will present an overview of the steps we take in an ongoing manner to prevent acts of bullying from occurring. These steps include:

- A review of the Pillars including ways we teach and discuss them in both formal (for example, at assemblies) and informal (in a class) settings
- The importance of frequent student and home contact
 - In beginners through fifth grade this is best served by the classroom teacher
 - In sixth – ninth grade this falls to the advisor
- Opportunities for older students to model appropriate behaviors to younger students on the playground, sports fields, reading buddies, as volunteers in the classrooms.
- Faculty and staff modeling appropriate and respectful language and problem-solving skills and techniques.



- Faculty and staff using constructive techniques with students to maintain positive environments and demonstrating appropriate intervention techniques and strategies to prevent small issues from growing.
- Maintaining a safe and supportive environment for all.

In addition, at the start of each year, and throughout the year as needed, the Administration will determine the best ways to keep the faculty and staff current on ways to prevent, identify, and respond to bullying.

Bullying Curriculum

Each spring the Pine Cobble faculty conducts an annual review of the curriculum. Part of that review will include ways that we incorporate bullying prevention into the classroom. We specifically look for ways that the curriculum draws students to identify and discuss issues around respectful communication, balance of power, and their role in creating and maintaining a community that is safe for all.

Bullying Incidents of Visitors

If there is a report of bullying by a non-Pine Cobble student on the Pine Cobble campus, steps will be taken to ensure the safety of all. In addition, Pine Cobble will report the incident to the bully's school or district and will cooperate with the investigation. Pine Cobble will investigate any reports of Pine Cobble students bullying others, even if the report comes from another school.

Annual Review

Each year the Head of School and the Assistant Head of School will conduct an annual review of the plan which will include a review of any bullying reports, the process followed, steps taken to ensure safety, and steps taken to prevent further bullying incidents. The plan will be modified accordingly depending on the findings.

Bullying Prevention and Intervention Incident Reporting Form

Name _____

(Note: Reports may be made anonymously but disciplinary action will not be made solely on the basis of an anonymous report.)



I am the Target Reporter who is not the target

Contact information/phone number _____

Information about the incident

Name of target _____

Name of aggressor _____

Date(s) of incident _____

Time(s) of incident _____

Location(s) of incident _____

Witnesses – people who saw the incident and/or have specific information about it

Name _____ Contact info _____



Name _____	Contact info _____
Name _____	Contact info _____

Describe the incident in detail. Be sure to use names of the people involved and cite specific words and actions. Use the back as needed.

Signature _____ Date _____

(Note: Reports may be made anonymously but disciplinary action will not be made solely on the basis of an anonymous report.)

Form given to _____ Date _____