

Vista Charter School Bullying and Harassment Policy

Bullying includes any pattern of written or verbal expression, physical or electronic act or gesture, that is intended to coerce, intimidate, or cause any physical, mental, or emotional harm. Bullying is prohibited on school property, at school-sanctioned events, when students are being transported to or from school or a school-sanctioned event, and off-campus when it is reasonably foreseeable that the bullying conduct may cause a substantial disruption in the educational mission of the school or interfere with the ability of other school students to learn or be secure.

All students are encouraged to think of their own behavior in terms of the habits of thought and action that lead to happy, responsible, independent, and productive lives. The school recognizes that there is a range of behaviors that begins with the mean and nasty and extends all the way to felonious. Bullying is a term that can be overused and misapplied to include behavior that is less serious, spontaneous, or otherwise unsystematic, and underapplied when behavior is more serious. Vista Charter School faculty and staff will take this into account when determining the character of any pattern or incident of bullying.

In the case of the modern phenomenon of “cyber-bullying” or online harassment, the school will address it if there are repercussions or manifestations at school, which there likely will be. If one or several students do become abusive in their usage of social media—to the emotional detriment of other students—then the school will be required to discuss the matter with both parents and students. At the same time, those who may be the subject of negative social media must learn not to invest their entire emotional well-being in what is or is not said about them online, and we look to work with parents to teach students to think less of social media than students sometimes do.

Education on Bullying

Students and parents alike will be educated on what bullying is. Bullying, traditionally defined as a larger or stronger person picking on or intimidating a smaller or weaker one, will not be tolerated. That said, parents and teachers must also realize that children can easily get into a scrape over a sports contest or a snowball thrown in jest or other such commonplace occurrences. Therefore, any consequences or punishments for such altercations, if one student is clearly the instigator, will consider whether the episode was a spontaneous tussle or part of a sustained pattern of aggression.

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