

**Melba Copland
Secondary School
Support for Students**

**A Guide for
Parents and Carers
Senior Campus**

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Frequently Asked Questions

At Melba Copland Secondary School there are no 'wrong doors'. You can explain what you need to any staff member, and they will find the right person for you to speak with. If you feel your need is urgent, please make that clear in your contact. In most circumstances we will get back to you quite quickly but please be aware that our commitment for normal communications is to reply within 24-48 hours.

My student seems to be struggling to make friends. Who should I talk to? What can be done?

Please email your student's Connect (Pastoral Care) Teacher in the first instance. If you are unsure who their Connect Teacher is, you can phone the front office on 61420300 and they will look it up for you.

The Connect Teacher can then discuss this with the Year Coordinator and other relevant staff who can collaborate to find support solutions. They may identify that there are a few students who need extra support to make friendship connections and determine a strategy for this. This may include establishing some lunchtime activities, developing some small activity groups or other options.

My student has reported they feel they are being bullied or harassed. Who should I contact? What will be done?

Please email your student's Connect Teacher in the first instance. If you are unsure who their Connect Teacher is, you can phone the front office and they will look it up for you.

We will then work directly with your student to determine what has been happening from their perspective. We follow a restorative process approach which encourages students to appreciate the consequences of their actions and make amends where their actions have harmed others. Our restorative approach requires students to be accountable for their actions and promotes respect for all involved. We may also provide support to develop the confidence and skills to become empowered to be able to respond to problems, or report to staff when feeling concerned.

My student is feeling unsafe, but they don't want to report it or for me to report it. What should I do?

It is important you let us know what is happening for your student. Often students believe that there will be 'repercussions' if they 'tell'. We work very hard to mitigate against this happening and have found that the restorative process we use leads to huge improvements and very positive outcomes. We cannot help if we don't know something is wrong! We have multiple ways that you can let us know that your student does not feel safe. We strongly encourage you to contact the Connect Teacher, Year Coordinator, Student Services Team or just ring the front office and they will put you through to the most appropriate person.

I am concerned about my student's academic progress. Who should I contact? What are the options?

If your concerns are related to a particular subject area, then please contact the classroom teacher for that subject. The Faculty Executive is another contact if you feel it is necessary. If your concerns are more general, then please contact your Student's Connect Teacher. The options are fully based on the needs of the individual Student.

My student is sick or away. What do I need to do?

Email – MCSS.StudentServices@ed.act.edu.au

I need to contact a teacher but am still unsure of their email address or which teachers my student has! What should I do?

Contact the front office phone 61420300. Our staff can access the timetables and give you the names and email contact details of our teachers.

My student has an appointment during the day, or I am collecting them early. What do I need to do?

You can email MCSS.StudentServices@ed.act.edu.au or phone 61420300 to advise the school.

I have emailed my student's teacher. How long should I expect to wait to hear back from them?

If your matter is urgent, phone the front office and explain the matter so they can work to get a response as quickly as possible. If it is a non-urgent matter, we all try to respond as soon as we can, but you can expect a response within two-three working days. If you have not heard back within this time frame, please contact the front office or forward a copy of your original email to the Executive Teacher of the faculty.

I am concerned about something which is happening in a class or have concerns about the conduct of one of my student's teachers. What should I do?

If you feel you are unable to contact the classroom teacher about the matter, then please contact the Executive Teacher of the faculty and they will discuss your concerns with you.

I am unsure of what the school's policy is for mobile phones and I am concerned about my student's mobile phone use. What should I do?

The use of mobile phones, social media and communication apps is a complex area. Our teachers make decisions about whether they allow the use of mobile phones to support learning in their classrooms. Some staff may ask students to hand in their mobile phones at the start of each lesson and return them at the end.

As a community we ask that parents and carers support us as we try to educate and support our kids.

My student has told me that some students receive different consequences for what seems to be the same negative behaviours. Is this fair?

We utilise an individualised and restorative approach to supporting students to make positive choices. Most often, fellow students are unaware of the details of any incident (despite thinking that they do know all the ins and outs!) and very often, the information that students hear is not a full representation of any incident. Our policy is that we DO NOT share what the 'consequences' for other students are broadly with the community.

It is important that we do what we can to have a safe and supportive school community and that we seek to understand a behaviour and put strategies in place so that students can learn from what has happened and be equipped to make better choices in the future.

Supporting Student Learning at Melba Copland Secondary School

Our Philosophy and Approach

Melba Copland Secondary School strives to meet the needs of our students by implementing leading practices based on evidence and research. A multi-tiered system of supports that we call our Response to Intervention Model (RTI), is an approach for redesigning and establishing teaching and learning environments that are effective and supportive for all students, families, and educators.

Our approach involves an education process that matches research/evidence-based instructional and intervention strategies. We work consistently to increase our knowledge through professional learning which is accredited through the Teacher Quality Institute. Our approach supports student needs in an informed, ongoing approach for planning, implementing, and evaluating the effectiveness of instruction, curricular supports, and interventions. We also use this to focus on and provide high-quality instruction and interventions to students who may be struggling with learning.

Our RTI has three important parts:

1. A multi-tiered system of curriculum, teaching practices, assessment, social and community engagement strategies and interventions.
2. Using a collaborative and shared problem solving approach for decision making at each tier; and
3. Using data and evidence to inform practices at each tier.

We work to ensure resources are allocated in accordance with students' needs. The RTI model is usually shown as a pyramid demonstrating that the majority of students require Tier 1 support with only a very small proportion ever requiring Tier 3 interventions.

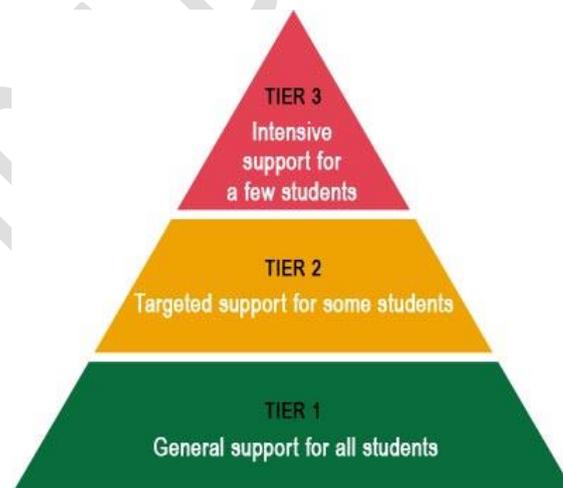


Figure 1 <https://www.monash.edu/education/teachspace/articles/five-ways-to-use-positive-behaviour-support-strategies-in-your-classroom>

How do we use the RTI Model at MCSS?

We aim to ensure that students receive the types and levels of interventions needed in a timely manner. We do this through:

Our Staff – working to ensure our staff have the supports they need to deliver high quality teaching and learning in every classroom every day.

This includes:

- Clear strategic and operational plans
- Clear expectations of practice
- Support through coaching and professional learning to improve practice
- Support of a collaborative, respectful and professional culture of high expectations and ongoing learning

Our Policies and Processes (in accordance with Safe Schools Framework, Gifted and Talented, Disability)

- School wide level agreement system
- Individual case management - ILPs, PBSPs
- Interagency referral
- Targeted programs

Our Students

- Social and Emotional Learning program delivered through Connect
- Student programs – Youth Support Workers (YSW)
- Student Leadership and Voice – Student Leadership Group, The Rainbow Group

Our Families and Community

- Engagement in case management - ILPs, PBSPs
- Family engagement - events, celebrations, P&C and Board Representation
- Community engagement - referrals, shared programs, presentations

Our Shared Values and Beliefs

- Connect
- Learn
- Thrive

If you believe your student requires additional targeted support, please speak to the Targeted Support Executive.

Student Support Suite

As outlined in the RTI model, MCSS has a range of expertise and programs in place to support students to achieve wellbeing and engagement at school. This includes teaching and other expert staff who work individually or in small groups to support students with particular needs or interests. The school prides itself on a student-centred approach so programs are developed over the course of each year based on the current needs of the students rather than 'fitting' students into pre-existing programs.

This team includes executive staff, a school psychologist, youth workers, year coordinators; and works with the broader staff to support all students. Connect and classroom teachers, year coordinators and executive staff refer students through to the most appropriate student support team member. If your student would benefit from additional support, please contact your student's connect teacher in the first instance.

Connect Teachers

The Connect Teacher is the **first line of communication between students, parents and other school staff**, as well as the first point of contact in the triage process of identifying and monitoring the wellbeing and progress of students in the school.

Connect Teachers are a pivotal part of the **pastoral care process** at MCSS where they schedule one-on-one interviews with students each semester to help with transition, subject selections and package monitoring and progress.

Year Coordinators

Year Coordinators take on a leadership role and support Connect Teachers and students within their year cohort. They support the attendance, academic progress and social development of students within their year group.

Year 10	Loidee Santos
Year 11	Zoe Rothfield
Year 12	Kyle Mitchell

Student Services Executive

Our Student Services Executive lead a team to promote positive school culture by supporting staff working with whole school, year groups and small groups to facilitate a positive school climate and wellbeing. They develop policies and processes to allow clear expectations of behaviour and engagement across the school and lead a range of other expert staff to deliver programs and initiatives. They also work directly with students who require case management. If you have concerns about the wellbeing or engagement of your student, please speak with their Connect Teacher in the first instance or the Year Coordinator if you feel escalation is needed. The Year Coordinators work closely with the Student Services Executive and will refer students to them if further support is needed.

Student Services Executive

Years 10-12	Yasmin Noonan
DECO and Targeted Support	Barbara Drummond

Principal and Deputy Principal

Our Principal and Deputy Principals work collaboratively to lead all teams across the school to ensure create an environment in which our students can connect, learn and thrive.

Additional Wellbeing Staff

School Psychologist

Our School Psychologist works two days per week and facilitates referrals to outside agencies, works with students who require support with mental health and/or students who require appraisals for support. The School Psychologist also works with families and staff to support students with mental health needs.

School Youth Health Nurse (SYHN)

Our SYHN is a specialised adolescent health Registered Nurse that are in ACT Public Secondary Schools. SYHNs focus is on early intervention, and when concerns are identified they work with families, then schools and referral services to provide the necessary supports for the young person. Young people can access the SYHN through self-referral or through teacher or parent/guardian referral.

The Legal Liaison Officer

Our Legal Liaison officer is a lawyer from Legal Aid ACT who can provide free and confidential legal advice across a range of legal areas to students and their families. Legal Aid is on the senior campus every fortnight and students / families can self-refer at any time.

Youth Support Workers (YSW)

Our youth workers facilitate programs for small groups of students.

International Student Coordinator

Our International Student Coordinator facilitates programs for small groups of students (e.g. Wellbeing, volunteering, transition), and supports students with academic and social and emotional issues.

Classroom Teachers

Your student will have a number of classroom teachers whom they will see each day. Our teachers seek to develop engaging lessons and to differentiate and scaffold learning so that each student can engage effectively in their learning. The names of your student's teachers can be found on their timetable. If you have a query or comment about your student's learning in a particular learning area, please email the teacher directly.

Faculty Executives

Faculty Executives lead the teachers and support staff in their area including overseeing the development of curriculum and assessment, staff development and student learning. If you are unable to contact your student's teacher or need additional assistance regarding your student's learning in a faculty area, please email the appropriate faculty executive.

Executive Teachers in charge of Faculties:

English, Humanities and Language

Mathematics, Science and AST

Technology, PE and VET

The Arts

Lisette Robey

Alice Wann

Adriano Di Crescenzo

Joni Wood

Our Restorative Approach

MCSS provides a positive and inclusive educational environment rich in quality teaching and learning. Quality teaching requires quality pedagogy, quality curriculum, and quality assessment. MCSS uses a restorative approach which encourages students to appreciate the consequences of their actions for others and make amends where their actions have harmed others. It requires students to be accountable for their actions and promotes respect for all involved. Behaviour management procedures at MCSS are a partnership between students, teachers, parents and the community based on a mutual regard for our school values of Connect, Learn and Thrive. The purpose of this document is to describe the philosophy of student management as well as the processes and procedures which all staff are expected to use.

Proactive is Always Better than Reactive

We work to implement strategies to avoid undesirable or inappropriate behaviour rather than to spend time addressing the behaviour once it has happened. The following are some ways in which we work to support students to learn at MCSS.

Engaging Lessons, Engaging Curriculum: We work to develop learning opportunities which help our students to feel engaged, want to go to lessons on time, come prepared, meet the identified expectations and contribute positively to all aspects of their learning experience.

Relationships: A student's academic and social success is supported when there is a healthy relationship between school, family and the community. Building effective relationships can be challenging at times but the more effort it requires the more rewarding it becomes. We encourage our families to let us know if there are issues outside of school which may be impacting on our students and to work in partnership for every student. We have the most success in supporting young people when families communicate openly and quickly if issues arise.

No One is a Blank Slate: We all come to school with past experiences, ideas and expectations which shape who we are and how we behave. The impact of domestic, school, friendship or peer related issues for students cannot be underestimated and may not always be apparent. While these dilemmas are usually beyond our control, we aim to be sensitive and respectful to the concerns of students because we believe that learning occurs best when the learner is emotionally open to learning.

Our Structured Approach to Supporting Positive Behaviours

We believe that behaviour is a component of learning for our young people and that sometimes they make mistakes. Our aim is to help them to learn from these mistakes, take responsibility for their behaviour and find ways to avoid negative behaviours into the future.

We utilise a structured approach to monitoring student behaviour when necessary. This allows us to put clear, structured supports in place that are appropriate to the needs of each student and appropriate to the behaviours being displayed. We are always committed to ensuring our school is a safe community for learning and violence and abuse are unacceptable at MCSS.

Incident Reports

An incident report completed by a student means an incident or unacceptable behaviour has occurred. Every incident report needs to be followed up and recorded to ensure that staff and students feel supported in dealing with incidents. Students can obtain an incident report form from the Student Services Suite or may they be asked to fill one in by a staff member. All parties involved in an incident will be asked to complete the form. This allows students time to think through incidents, consider how they have been affected, reflect on their own actions and the actions of others and gain clarity on the events.

If the incident occurs in the classroom, it is the responsibility of the classroom teacher to follow up with the support of the faculty SLC. If the incident occurs on the playground, then it is the responsibility of the playground supervisor to follow up. If the behaviour is of a serious nature, then the Executives of Student Services will follow up.

Student Incident Report Form
Melba Copland Secondary School

Name: _____ Year Group: _____ Date: _____

Time of Incident: _____ Place: _____

Staff Member/s on duty or first to respond: _____

Students involved?

What happened?

What were you thinking/feeling at the time?

Who has been harmed or affected?

Which MCSS value/s have been broken? (Circle your response)

Connect	Learn	Thrive
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What do you think needs to happen to make things right?

Student Signature: _____

Recording Staff Member: _____

**** Thank you. Please return this form to your teacher ****

INCIDENT FOLLOW – UP

Classroom Teacher _____

Date: _____

Action Taken (please tick action/s taken):

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Met with student | <input type="checkbox"/> Parent contact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Restorative meeting with all parties | <input type="checkbox"/> Issue not able to be resolved – matter referred to Faculty Executive Teacher |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White Card | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Detention/Community Service | |

Other:

Year Coordinator: _____

Date: _____

Action Taken (please tick action/s taken):

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Met with student | <input type="checkbox"/> Parent contact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Restorative meeting with all parties | <input type="checkbox"/> Issue not able to be resolved – matter referred to Faculty Executive Teacher |
| <input type="checkbox"/> White Card | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Restraint from Harassment | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Detention/Community Service | |

Other:

SLC Student Services _____

Date: _____

Action Taken (please tick action/s taken):

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Met with student | <input type="checkbox"/> Parent contact |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Met with student and staff member | <input type="checkbox"/> Parent Meeting: _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Restorative meeting with all parties | <input type="checkbox"/> Blue Card |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pink Card | <input type="checkbox"/> Internal Suspension |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Restraint from Harassment | <input type="checkbox"/> External Suspension |

Other: _____

**** Please place this form in the student's file in Student Services ****

Supervision Guidelines

Year 10 students need to always remain on the school grounds during the school day.

There are areas of the school that students may only access with teacher supervision, including the theatre, hospitality kitchen and workshops. These areas are clearly defined.

During break times, staff will actively supervise allocated areas; outdoor areas, café, library and internal corridors. This involves ensuring that students are positively engaged during break times.

Only Year 11 and 12 students may leave the school when not in timetabled classes or activities.

Carparks: Access to the student carpark is for Year 11 and 12 designated drivers for the purpose of arrivals and departures only. Year 10 students can be dropped off and collected from the carpark closest to the gym at the start and finish of the school day.

Shared Expectations and Policies

These shared expectations and policies and procedures will continue to evolve and improve. Others may be added over time.

They include:

- Parent-Carer –Staff Communications
- Dress Standards and Year 10 Uniform
- Attendance
- Electronic Device Policy
- Bullying and Harassment Policy

Parent/Carer-School Staff Communications: Our Shared Commitment to Working Together

At MCSS we seek to work in partnership with parents and carers to support every student to have the best possible learning outcomes.

We consult regularly with our families regarding future directions and current issues and work closely with our School Board on many key issues. We regularly have rich conversations in which feed directly into our school-based decision making so encourage you to attend whenever you can.

We are very fortunate to have such an engaged and supportive parent/carers community and encourage you to email our team with your queries and feedback. Our team regularly goes well outside of expectations to provide a rich, inclusive learning environment for our students, many spending multiple weekends and evenings away from their families to ensure our students can access incredible opportunities. We are therefore particularly delighted when parents and carers email to say thank you or to notice something positive that our staff have done and strongly encourage you to do so.

At times parents and carers can feel concerned or anxious about the learning, safety or wellbeing of their student. Again, we encourage you to contact us so that we can work together to find a resolution. You should expect respectful and timely communications from our staff about all matters. For non-urgent matters we aim to respond within three working days. If the matter is urgent, we ask that you let our front office know so they can put you in touch with the right person to help. As part of our 'No Wrong Door' philosophy, if a staff member cannot help you, you can expect that they will find the person who can. If you believe that this has not happened, please contact a staff member you know well or the Deputy Principal or the Principal.

Similarly, I require that all communications to my staff will also be respectful. At times we can all feel emotional, angry or upset about something that has, or we believe has happened and this can lead to individuals writing emails or making phone calls which are threatening, intimidating or otherwise inappropriate (noting that in extreme circumstances this may be an offence under section 474.17 of the Criminal Code Act 1995 (Cth)). If my staff receives such communications, I have asked that they do not reply (or continue the conversation). All staff are entitled to feel safe in their workplace and to be treated as professionals and I will support them in this matter.

We will do all we can to work together to resolve any matters and clarify any issues. We will always take your concerns seriously and work hard to follow the appropriate processes to investigate and find solutions to issues. We accept that any member of our community can make an error and we will seek to rectify that where possible. We always find the best outcomes when we work with a shared belief that we can achieve this together and with a shared respect.

Again, I am grateful to have such a supportive community with whom we can work to find the very best outcomes for our students.



MCSS Principal

Dress Standards and Year 10 Uniform

Why MCSS Year 10 has a uniform

As a school with a long and proud tradition of delivering quality education, MCSS has always placed a strong emphasis on acceptable dress standards. Our Year 10 uniform policy promotes a sense of pride in the school in line with the school's mission and values. It is practical and smart, engenders a sense of community and belonging in our school and is designed with health and safety in mind.

MCSS Dress Standards and Year 10 Uniform	
Shirt	School polo shirt - MCSS Logo
Pants	Tracksuit pants Blue jeans Plain navy blue shorts Denim shorts Shorts
Skirts	Tartan skirt
Jumpers	School hoodie - MCSS Logo School jumper or jacket
Shoes	Enclosed footwear

School Dress Standards and Uniform Expectations

Year 10 students attending MCSS will be expected to attend school wearing correct school uniform, which is neat and in good repair. Uniform will be monitored by all members of the school community. School uniform will be expected for Year 10 students attending public events such as excursions (where applicable), performances, school photographs and interschool competitions.

Year 11 and 12 students are expected to wear smart casual clothing appropriate for a workplace. Some subjects such as PE or Technology have specific clothing requirements for WHS reasons.

Health and Safety

The MCSS Year 10 uniform is designed to meet the standards of health and safety for our students. The school shirt is designed with a collar and short sleeves to protect the neck and shoulders from sun.

Shoes are fully enclosed (joggers or black leather shoes). All shoes must meet the safety standards for participation in Science, Technology and PE classes. Students who are not wearing correct shoes may not be able to participate in these classes.

MCSS recommends that all students wear a hat when outside, during short and long break or when undertaking learning activities in outdoor environments. All students are encouraged to carry a water bottle with them throughout the day.

Attendance Policy

School Attendance

Classroom teachers record attendance within the first 10 minutes of each lesson. Parents are notified via SMS of any unexplained absences.

Students at MCSS are expected to:

- attend all their classes
- not leave their class until the teacher has dismissed them
- go to Sick Bay if unwell and planning to go home
- Year 10 - remain on school grounds at recess and lunch
- Year 10 sign out via the Front Office if they are being picked up by their parent/carer.

Achieving a Year 10 and Year 12 Certificate

There are specific requirements for students to complete a Year 10 and Year 12 Certificate. The Board of Senior Secondary Studies (BSSS) requires students to complete assessments and meet attendance compliance.

What is Truancy?

At MCSS truancy is described as not attending class or leaving the school grounds without permission during the school day.

Students who are late to class (less than 30 minutes) - consequences will be managed by classroom teacher e.g. time make up the work and phone call home.

Students who are absent from class (more than 30 minutes) - consequences will be managed by the Faculty SLC.

Ongoing truancy is managed by the Student Services Team.

Electronic Devices Policy

Agreed principles of an effective Electronic Devices policy

1. Learning in the classroom should not be affected by electronic devices such as iPods, mobile phones and cameras/video cameras.
2. Advice to students about the Electronic Devices policy and its consequences is addressed through the Connect program. This is particularly relevant to inappropriate use that impacts on student safety and learning.
3. The school will not be responsible for loss, theft or damage of any electronic device.
4. The school acknowledges that in certain situations, electronic devices such as cameras and mobile phones may be used as educational tools at the discretion of the classroom teacher.

Agreed policy guidelines

1. Electronic devices are not to be used (or seen) during class time except when the teacher gives permission for *educational* use
2. Students may use electronic devices before school, after school and during break times.
3. Students may not film or photograph any person or event without explicit permission.
4. Students that breach the guidelines may have their electronic devices stored and returned in discussion with parents/carers.

Consequences for policy breaches

Before the application of consequences teachers may choose to implement a reasonable warning in line with consistent classroom management.

Mobile technology used inappropriately to contact, film or harass students, staff or community members will be confiscated immediately and parents/carers will be contacted to collect the device.

Bullying and Harassment Policy

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is an ongoing misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that causes physical and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power over one or more persons. Bullying can happen in person or online, and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert).

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders.

Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.

Definition taken from 'Bullying No Way' and was developed by the Safe and Supportive Schools Communities Working Group. <https://bullyingnoway.gov.au>

Verbal bullying:

Includes: name calling, 'put downs', threatening, rumours, and verbal aggression.

Physical bullying:

Includes: fighting, pushing, kicking, spitting, throwing things, vandalism of others property.

Social bullying:

Includes: social exclusion, verbal or physical attacks as part of a group towards individuals or other groups.

Cyber bullying:

Includes: use of the internet, mobile phones, email, social media applications to undertake verbal and social bullying.

Bullying also includes inciting others to bully or encouraging other people who are bullying, by such actions as applauding bullying behaviour or watching it happen and not doing anything about it.

Bullying is violence!

Bullying should not be accepted by anyone!

We all have a duty to stand up to bullying and let bullies know that it is not ok!

Definition of Harassment can be verbal, physical, or written. It is any unwelcome comment or conduct including threats, abuse, and insults towards a person

Racial harassment can be verbal, physical, or written. It is any unwelcome comment or conduct including threats, abuse, and insults towards a person (or persons) based on their culture, nationality or ethnicity or a characteristic belonging to, or generally believed to belong to, a particular group. Racial harassment can be directed towards individuals or groups. If these words or actions are repeatedly directed towards the same person, it is called racial bullying.

Sexual harassment can be verbal, physical, or written, including via social media. It is any unwelcome comment, advance, request, or other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature which makes a person or group feel offended, humiliated or intimidated.