



ST MARY'S Catholic College

Date issued	March 2023
Replaces	
Review date	June 2024

Bullying / Harassment Guidelines

STATEMENT OF GUIDELINES

St Mary's Catholic College is committed to developing a harmonious, safe and just College environment that is free from bullying and/or harassment. We promote a safe school environment where students, parents and staff will be free from bullying and/or harassment. The College accepts responsibility to take direct action to prevent bullying/harassment behaviour and restore relationships where and when possible.

OBJECTIVE

The aim is to send a clear message to our community that bullying and/or harassment is not tolerated in our community. This guideline aims to deliver a clear and consistent message regarding the implications of bullying and harassment and achieve a safe and supportive environment for students, families, staff, volunteers and visitors.

DEFINITIONS

Bullying is the repetitive, intentional harm of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. Bullying can be physical, verbal, sexual, electronic or emotional. Bullying can occur face-to-face, by exclusion or online.

Examples of bullying behaviour can include, but are not limited to the following:

- Verbal bullying – Name-calling; 'put-downs'; teasing comments about another person's appearance, or another's social, cultural or religious beliefs; threats; offensive acronyms; spreading malicious rumours; belittling others' abilities and achievements; negative references to family or ethnic background.
- Physical bullying – Hitting; poking; pushing; punching; kicking; tripping; spitting; invading personal space; stand over tactics; taking, hiding or damaging belongings; circulating offensive notes; offensive graffiti; non-verbal signs and gestures of intimidation.
- Emotional bullying – Ignoring; excluding; ostracizing; alienating; influencing others not like to associate with them; controlling or dominating someone by withdrawing or threatening to withdraw friendship; pressuring others against their will – such as giving up possessions, money or requesting homework for copying or selling.
- Offensive electronic/text messages or emails; putting or posting offensive material on the internet or social media platforms (e.g. Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram); using a person's screen name to pretend to be them (setting up a fake account); sharing of inappropriate images, sexting; intentionally excluding others from an online group.
- Sexual bullying – Taunts about body parts and development; teasing about sexual orientation; unwanted/unsolicited sexual attention from another, notes or pictures depicting sexual content.

GUIDELINES

All members of the school community have a responsibility to respond to incidents of bullying and/or harassment:

The school commits to:

- Provide a supportive environment that encourages positive relationships between students, staff and parents
- Provide curriculum material that will help students in the development of social skills, positive relationships and resilience
- Provide counselling to students dealing with conflict resolution; to those both involved in the bullying behaviour
- Work in partnership with families and the wider community around positive relationships

PREVENTION MEASURES

The methods used by the College to discourage bullying will vary from time to time with new initiatives being introduced when appropriate. These include but are not limited to:

- Engaging students across all levels in anti-bullying programs with specific emphasis on bystander and responsible reporting programs
- Including anti-bullying messages in the Wellbeing & Health curriculum
- Promoting a bully-free environment in assemblies, pastoral groups, social-emotional learning lessons, year-level meetings and house assemblies
- Printing Anti-Bullying and Student Protection Posters for accessibility in the College classrooms and College website
- Work with our College Counsellors who have specialist skills in helping both targets and perpetrators of bullying
- Ensuring effective pastoral support of students through appointments of Head of Year and Assistant Principals' Junior and Senior Wellbeing
- Having a school email address for students to report bullying to staff – "Bullymail" - bullymail@smcc.qld.edu.au
- Encourage students to "speak up" when they see bullying/harassment behaviour with a presentation to all students
- Using an appropriate range of interventions and sanctions applicable to the age group and the situation to deal with and discourage bullying behaviour
- Providing consequences to students who continue to repeatedly use racial, homophobic, misogynistic and discriminatory language and gestures even if it's meant to be in a friendly or jovial manner
- Monitoring staff and parent use of language whilst engaged in School activities to ensure that racial, homophobic, misogynistic and discriminatory language is not used
- Educating Parents and Staff on the differences between anti-social or negative behaviours and bullying
- Encouraging staff to adopt classroom management techniques that discourage opportunities of bullying behaviour
- Training staff to detect bullying behaviours
- Encouraging staff to actively supervise whilst on duty so that there is a pervasive sense of staff presence
- Emphasising anti-bullying guidelines during new staff inductions
- Reviewing the College's *Anti-Bullying Guidelines* periodically, in order to ensure it remains effective and relevant

RESPONSE

An incident of bullying reported by a student, parent, visitor or member of staff will require intervention. Bullying/harassment consequences can include bystanders, perpetrators or association.

Guidelines:

1. Bullying/harassment is alleged and reported to a staff member.
2. Information is gathered regarding the report
3. Parents or Carers are informed
4. Response to the bullying will be based on the Behaviour Management Support Continuum
5. Restorative Practice
 - a. Reflection of behaviour
 - b. Depending on the nature and severity consequences could include detentions or suspensions from the College
6. Counselling and other supports will be utilised to support student/s
7. Repeated and ongoing bullying/harassment will result in consultation with the College Principal and/or Catholic Education Services

Appendix A: Incident Record Proforma

References

Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 (Qld)
Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Commonwealth)
Workplace Gender Equity Act (Commonwealth)
Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Commonwealth)
Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Commonwealth)
Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Commonwealth)

Anti-Bullying Alliance, (2023), Anti-Bullying Definitions, Accessed on March 29, 2023. <https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk/tools-information/all-about-bullying/understanding-bullying/definition>

Bullying. No Way! (2023), National Day Against Bullying, Accessed on March 29, 2023. <https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/>

Bully Zero. (2023), National Bullying Prevention Week, Accessed March 29, 2023. <https://www.bullyzero.org.au/>

Numerous state and non-government Australian school policies were also accessed.

Appendix A – incident Record Proforma



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INCIDENT REPORT/STATEMENT FORM

Name of person giving Statement:		Pastoral Group:	
Name of Interviewer:		Date today:	
Location of Incident:		Date of Incident:	
Witnesses:		Time of Incident:	
Students involved:			
Teachers present:			

Outlines details of the incident. What happened?

The above statement is information about the incident to the best of my knowledge.

Signature: _____