

# Bullying Policy

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## 1.0 Rationale

Bullying is an ongoing misuse of power in relationships; through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behavior that causes physical and/or psychological harm. Bullying can have a detrimental effect on the wellbeing of the person being bullied and the college has a zero tolerance for such behaviour.

## 2.0 Definitions

It is important to note there is a difference between bullying and a conflict, and the interventions for each will vary.

### 2.1 Definition of Bullying

Bullying is the use of deliberate force, threat, or pressure to hurt and harm someone else. To be classified as bullying behaviours the behaviour needs to be repeated and ongoing and there is an imbalance of social or physical power between the bully/bullies and the person being bullied. Bullying behaviours can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). These can include:

- name-calling, put-downs and provoking
- spreading rumours
- supporting bullying behaviours (this includes “liking” inappropriate social media posts)
- throwing things
- hiding, taking or damaging someone’s property
- deliberate exclusion
- setting up humiliating experiences
- physical contact like bumping, hitting or kicking
- physical aggression to others

### 2.2 Definition of Conflict

Conflicts are different to bullying. In a conflict, there is a belief by each side that the other one is, or will, act negatively against them. Mutual arguments/disagreements and single/isolated acts are not cases of bullying. In these instances, Restorative Practices can be used to help and repair the relationship (refer 4.0).

## 3.0 Interventions

The college does not tolerate bullying from any member of the college community and will intervene quickly and effectively, to ensure mutual respect and positive conduct.

### 3.1 Staff roles and responsibilities

- Establish, model and maintain respectful, courteous and safe college environment (refer 2.2 of Positive Behaviour Plan).
- Be vigilant to, and intervene upon, observed bullying behaviours.
- Low key reprimands are used as a first port of call.
- Offer support to the person/s being bullied. This may include involving Student Services where needed.
- Anyone encouraging or supporting bullying behaviours will also be reprimanded.
- Repeated behaviours are classified as direct refusal to follow the college Code of Conduct and consequences such as suspension will be imposed (refer 6.7 of Positive Behaviour Plan).
- The college can only act on information provided and incidents that they are made aware of.

### **3.2 Student roles and responsibilities**

- Display positive College Conduct (refer 3.0 of Positive Behaviour Plan), in particular creating fair and inclusive environments, as well as building trust and mutual respect.
- If a student observes, or is aware of a someone being bullied, they should not just accept it and are expected to do or say something to intervene. Tell the bully/bullies that the behavior is unacceptable, or tell a teacher they trust.
- Do not support, protect or side with the bully. This includes social media posts.
- Students that believe they are being bullied should seek the support of a staff member they trust to stop the negative behaviours. Bullying is not an accepted part of college life.
- Students that believe they are being bullied should not retaliate to the negative behaviours.

### **3.3 Parent/carer roles and responsibilities**

- Support and model respectful, courteous and positive relationships (refer 2.3 of Positive Behaviour Plan).
- Monitor and support their child however the college does not advocate any parent/carer confronts the bully/bullies, nor their parents/carers.
- Inform and work with the college to resolve incidents of conflict and bullying.

## **4.0 Restorative Practice**

- Restorative Practice is an approach to promote and sustain strong and healthy relationships across the college by implementing proactive and responsive programs rather than focusing on reactive strategies.
- Restorative Practice leads to increased social capital, improved individual self-discipline, self-regulation, emotional well-being leading to improved academic outcomes and improved whole school climate.
- These practices range from low level conversations to high level structured conferences to deal with incidents that have caused serious hurt or harm. It can be used to manage day to day disruptions, in resolving or deescalating conflict between persons or in dealing with school-wide problems.

### **4.1 Restorative Mediation**

- In the instance of a wrongdoing where hurt or harm may be caused to a person or persons, a restorative conversation can be used to help and repair the relationship.
- All parties must first want a resolution to the problem.
- A neutral mediator sits with each party individually to establish the correct information of events and determines if they want to resolve things and move forward.
- The mediator ensures all parties feel heard and understood, in a controlled environment.
- The mediator then sits with all involved, establishes what happened and encourages each party to express how they have been impacted and affected.
- Discussion moves on to what individuals need to do to move on and let things go.

## **5.0 Suspensions**

- The Department of Education has a zero tolerance towards violence, aggressive behavior and the support of such behaviour. Any student involved directly with/in a fight will be automatically suspended (refer 5.7 of Positive Behaviour Plan).
- Students are not to initiate, nor physically respond to, and incite aggressive, physical conduct.
- Any student involved with/in inappropriate social media posts can be suspended under the Department of Education's, *Student Behaviour in Public Schools Policy and Procedures*.

## 6.0 Related Documents

Category	Document Title
Related Department Polices	Student Behaviour in Public Schools Policy and Procedures
	Requirements related to the Student Behaviour policy and procedures
	Students Online in Public Schools Policy

## 7.0 History of Changes

Effective	Last Updated	Policy Version	Notes
15/10/19		1	