

ANTI-BULLYING

Policy Reference/Version – 1003-3

Policy

It is the right of all members of the school community to feel safe and to experience school as a safe, supportive and peaceful place for learning. Bullying behaviours are therefore treated with the utmost seriousness. The policy is designed to create a safe and supportive community based on Christian principles and fair and just treatment for all in the community.

PURPOSE

To provide a framework for our College community to work together to identify and address issues of student bullying in order to build respectful relationships and sensitively respond to the needs of each person. Bullying and cyber bullying conflict against our core Christian values of our Catholic faith which we recognise, can adversely affect the wellbeing of all students and therefore deemed unacceptable.

Our purpose is also inclusive of enabling staff to respond effectively to any incident of bullying and to process student grievances.

To achieving restorative justice and conflict resolution in this Brigidine community.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1. Students and staff are aware of what constitutes bullying behaviours

The following patterns of behaviour may constitute bullying (the list is not exhaustive):

- The deliberate social isolation of a student by another;
- Negative personal comments, especially those made regarding appearance;
- The use of offensive language, so as to intimidate;
- Pushing, hitting or otherwise touching another student with the desire to intimidate;
- Threatening physical attack while at school or travelling to and from school;
- The surrounding of a student by others, so that the individual feels threatened or unsafe;
- Making unwelcome contact with another student through social networking sites, telephone calls, SMS or by email;
- Spreading hurtful and or untrue stories about another person;
- Invading the personal space of another with the intention of intimidation;
- Exhibiting territorial behaviours with regard to use of recreational areas;
- Wilfully hiding the possessions of another student;
- Making derogatory remarks regarding the socio-economic status, cultural or racial background of another student;
- Loud and offensive behaviour on public transport directed at others;
- Denigrating the personal interests of others, whether in academic achievement, sport, music or community activities.

2. Students and staff are aware that bullying behaviours are unacceptable

- Students are aware of the College's policy on Student Behaviour Management Chart as part of their Wellbeing program.
- Staff are aware of the policy through induction programs and the College Policy Handbook.
- Staff encourage those in their care to disclose bullying behaviours which they have witnessed or to which they have been subjected, so that a culture of disclosure is accepted.
- Staff on playground duty are alert to bullying behaviours and intervene if they witness such a situation.

3. Parents are aware that bullying behaviours are unacceptable

- Parents are informed of the policy via the student planner and Brigidine 'Matters'.
- A copy of the policy in full is available to parents on the website.
- Parents encourage their daughters to talk to them about their social life at school.
- Parents are encouraged to report to the Year Coordinator and/or Director of Student Wellbeing any incidences of alleged bullying behaviours to which their daughter may have been subjected.

4. Action will be taken to protect students who are bullied

- Staff will take seriously any reported incident of bullying.
- Year Coordinators and the Director of Student Wellbeing will be made aware of any such reports and will take appropriate action, including counselling, for all involved.
- Students who are reasonably thought to have been involved in an incident of bullying will be interviewed by their Year Coordinator and Director of Student Wellbeing.
- Serious incidents shall be brought to the attention of the Director of Student Wellbeing and Principal.
- After preliminary investigations take place, students who are suspected of bullying can be suspended from the College.
- Parents of students who are thought to be involved in incidents of bullying shall be interviewed at school.
- Repeated episodes of bullying could result in the termination of enrolment for those found to be intimidating others.

5. Students will be given the opportunity to learn behaviours which discourage bullies

- Students who experience social difficulties will be counselled on the types of behaviour which attract bullying.
- Students who have been subjected to bullying will be assisted to develop the skills and resilience to resist such behaviours.
- Students will be encouraged to learn the skills of peer mediation.

From *Student Diary* – Information for all students

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is any act that repeatedly causes another person embarrassment, physical or emotional pain or discomfort. It may be covert as well as overt bullying that is planned or unintentional. It may involve groups or individuals.

THEREFORE:

We will not tolerate:

- physical violence such as hitting, pushing or spitting on others
- interfering with another's property by stealing, hiding, damaging or destroying it
- use of offensive names, teasing, spreading rumours about others or their families
- offensive or harassing messages in electronic, spoken or written form
- the use of the internet to bully, intimidate or harass another student
- belittling the abilities or achievements of others
- degrading comments about another's culture, religious or social background or appearance
- suggestive comments or other forms of sexual abuse
- hurtful exclusion of others from a group or forcing others to act against their will.

These rules apply at College, travelling to and from College, in shopping centres, at weekends and during holiday activities.

IF BULLYING OCCURS:

- DO NOT react aggressively or argue with bullies
- DO NOT ignore the problem
- DO NOT keep the problem secret – this protects the bullies from action.

YOU CAN SPEAK TO:

- your Mentor Teacher
- your Year Coordinator
- any other teacher
- any member of the Leadership Team
- your parents or any other trusted adult
- the College Counsellors.

IF YOU ARE FOUND TO BE BULLYING OTHERS:

- You will be expected to stop immediately
- You will be subject to College disciplinary sanctions
- Your parents will be informed
- You will be assisted to understand your motives and to change your pattern of behaviour
- Your future behaviour will be monitored. The College demands respectful relationships between all members of the staff and student community.

Person Responsible

Director of Student Wellbeing

Approved by: Director of Student Wellbeing
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