



ANTI-BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY: **STUDENTS**

1.0 Rationale

The mission of St Patrick's College is to provide an environment of learning, faith, respect and service for students, staff and families in the Catholic tradition. College staff, in partnership with parents, work together to provide for the growth of each individual student by building mutual respect and responsibility within a secure and supportive structure. This draws on fundamental Gospel values regarding the intrinsic worth and dignity of each person and is a living example of the command, "*Love one another as I have loved you*" (Jn 13:34).

At St Patrick's College we are committed to providing a safe and supportive environment for all of our students. Bullying has a negative impact on relationships and the learning environment. We do not accept bullying at the College and work actively to eliminate and reduce all types of bullying and harassment by educating, informing and following up consistently on all occurrences of bullying or harassment which are witnessed or reported to us. We support current research findings that indicate that a consistent group response to bullying is required for effective intervention.

Each member of the St Patrick's College community shares the collective responsibility to ensure students feel safe, supported and valued at all times. When individuals share healthy relationships with one another, personal growth is enhanced and aiming high for levels of achievement in all areas is encouraged.

This policy is directed specifically towards students at the College, although it is important to acknowledge the broader scope and context for safe and respectful relationships for all members of the community within the rationale. The Tasmanian Catholic Education Office Code of Conduct and School Grievance Policies provide further information and reference regarding instances of bullying and harassment for staff, parents and families, and with regard to concerns from staff to student or student to staff member.

2.0 Guiding Principles

At St Patrick's College we are committed to:

- Providing a safe, secure learning environment for all.
- Raising awareness of the issues involved with bullying and harassment, providing information to students, staff and parents.
- Supporting and empowering students to report, intervene and take measures appropriate to the situation.

- Helping young people become aware of the impact of their behaviour on others through personal accountability and being open to learn from conflict situations.
- Implementing procedures to address bullying behaviour and so develop in those involved respect for others.
- Providing appropriate action, follow up and support, with a focus on the processes of reconciliation and restorative practice, where appropriate.
- Working in partnership with parents, families and the broader community to inform, educate and address the broader issues of bullying and harassment within society.

3.0 DEFINITIONS

3.1 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.

3.2 Harassment

Harassment is behaviour that targets an individual or group due to their identity, race, culture or ethnic origin; religion; physical characteristics; gender; sexual orientation; marital, parenting or economic status; age; ability or disability and that offends, humiliates, intimidates or creates a hostile environment.

Harassment may be an ongoing pattern of behaviour, or it may be a single act. It may be intentional or unintentional (i.e. words or actions that offend and distress one person may be genuinely regarded by the person doing them as minor or harmless).

St Patrick's College uses the National Definition of Bullying and Harassment for Australian Schools Definition-sourced from the National Safe Schools Framework and can be found on the Australian Government's Safe Schools Hub at <http://safeschoolshub.edu.au/>

3.3 Restorative Practices

Restorative: to give back; to repair the harm and rebuild; to reintegrate the person(s) who did the harm; restore a sense of wellbeing and connection.

Restorative Practices in schools encourage the reparation of relationships, and promote resilience and reconciliation, allowing young people to learn from conflict situations, repair relationships and take personal responsibility for their actions.

The use of Restorative Practice emphasises responsibility, accountability and the opportunity to restore relationships, learn from experiences and develop empathy and compassion amongst adolescents.

Please note: In cases where the situation is complicated, extremely sensitive or involves sexual harassment or repeated ongoing severe cases of bullying, Restorative Practice may not be suitable.

4.0 TYPES OF BULLYING

4.1 Physical

Involves any harmful actions against a person's body including hitting, kicking, pushing, choking. It also includes interference with another person's property such as stealing or damaging. Physical harassment relates also to sexual harassment in the form of unwanted touching, making suggestive comments or gestures.

4.2 Verbal

Involves speaking to or about a person in a way that shows disrespect e.g. using offensive or abusive names, teasing, spreading rumours, making hurtful comments and using putdowns. This includes use of homophobic, racist and sexist language e.g. "That is so gay".

4.3 Cyber

Involves the misuse of technology such as social networking sites, email etc to communicate aggressive, sexual, degrading or defamatory information about someone or to start rumours.

4.4 Psychological

Includes behaviours that upset, exclude or embarrass another person e.g. exclusion, rude gesture, unpleasant looks and silent treatment.

4.5 Signs which may indicate a student is being bullied:

- The student reports that they are being bullied
- Change in attendance at the College
- Change in achievement levels
- Unexplained injuries
- Change in sleeping or eating patterns
- Withdrawal from activities / groups
- Mood changes
- Bullying is observed by others

5.0 IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 Tackling bullying and harassment is everyone's responsibility.

Proactive measures established to prevent and reduce bullying include:

- The formulation and communication of College-wide positive behaviour expectations
- College-wide supervision and effective, consistent behaviour management by all staff
- College curriculum and pastoral initiatives which address discrimination and harassment
- Opportunities and structures for students to report bullying and discuss concerns

5.2 The College will:

- Take all allegations of bullying seriously
- Refuse to accept that bullying is inevitable

5.3 Programs conducted at the College seek to:

- Increase our awareness of this social issue and develop our awareness of the impact of bullying on others
- Provide support for all involved
- Aim to restore damaged relationships
- Implement school disciplinary consequences as deemed appropriate

5.4 We strongly encourage all students to report any incidents of bullying or harassment they experience personally to a member of the College staff and/or parents or guardians. Students may wish to report to or discuss their concerns with any of the following people at the College:

- Tutor
- Class room teacher
- House Head
- Pastoral Coordinator
- Head of School
- Counsellor or support teacher or aide
- School officer (reception or administration)
- Sports coach
- Trusted peer or older student.

5.5 Students are expected to:

- Respect the rights of all community members and recognise and accept their differences
- Report any incident, or suspected incident
- Refuse to take part in any form of bullying
- Support the targeted student if possible
- Take some form of preventative action if appropriate

5.6 Staff are expected to:

- Promote an ethos of respect for self and others
- Model appropriate behaviour consistently
- Be observant for signs of suspected bullying or distress
- Provide information to students about the types and nature of bullying and incorporate these principles into their learning program
- Explicitly teach appropriate and positive behavioural rights and responsibilities
- Inform and challenge students when their behaviour is offensive
- Be receptive and supportive to targets of bullying
- Be vigilant in supervision to reduce opportunities for bullying
- Respond appropriately to suspected incidents (see recommended action) and then report to the relevant staff member
- Recognise that bullying is often a complex issue and initiate further discussion with key staff about ongoing strategies as required
- Contribute to a process of ongoing monitoring, evaluation and review of policies and procedures

5.7 Parents are encouraged to:

- Promote an ethos of respect for self and others
- Encourage their son / daughter to have confidence to speak up / report concerns
- Be aware of the College's policy and support processes of reconciliation and restorative practice (where appropriate)
- Watch for signs of distress or suspected instances of bullying
- Treat student's fears seriously
- Support students emotionally by letting them know the situation is unacceptable (it is not a normal part of school life) and will change
- Encourage students not to retaliate
- Inform the College if bullying is suspected, or encourage the student to tell a teacher

6.0 CONSEQUENCES FOR THOSE WHO BULLY

Students found to be bullying face a range of consequences from a formal interview with a staff member to losing their place at St Patrick's College. A note of incidents will be recorded in the Student Pastoral Records. Retaliation against someone who reports bullying will be dealt with very seriously.

6.1 Consequences include:

- Formal interview with key staff
- Recording of incident on College Pastoral Care Management files
- Parent notification and involvement
- Mediation and processes of reconciliation and restorative practice
- Restitution for damage to property
- Detention
- Counselling and/or formal referrals
- Suspension (for serious offences or persistent inappropriate behaviour)
- In cases of persistent and severe incidents of bullying and/or harassment, transfer to an alternative school or method of education may be negotiated

POLICY RESPONSIBILITY

The person responsible for the implementation of this policy is the St Patrick's College Principal.

POLICY REVIEW

The policy shall be reviewed every three years, or in the event of any information, incident, injury, or illness that would demonstrate the need for a review, or resulting from any legislative or organisational change that would warrant a review.

POLICY DATES			
Formulated	Principal / Board / Leadership Team 2013	Adopted	Principal / Board / Leadership Team 2013
Implemented	2013	Reviewed	October 2016 Deputy Principal- Pastoral Care / Leadership Team. Ratified by the Board - 23.02.17
Next Review Date	October 2019		
POLICY AUTHORISATION			
Principal Name	Tony Daley	Signature	