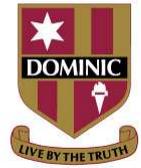


DOMINIC COLLEGE

A Catholic School in the Salesian Tradition



SAFE SCHOOL POLICY

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Related Documents	Pastoral Care Policies and Procedures

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1. OUR PHILOSOPHY

At Dominic College we aim to:

- Create a supportive, secure and safe environment for all students.
- Assist our families in instilling in their children the values of respect, compassion and consideration for others.
- Support the victims of bullying.
- Change the behaviours of those who bully.

The College is committed to providing all staff and students with a working and learning environment free from all forms of harassment and bullying

All students, staff and parents are expected to support this commitment. This includes an expectation that all bystanders will intervene proactively to prevent bullying and harassment.

There is no place for bullying or harassment at Dominic College. It is never acceptable, excusable or appropriate in our school community.

2. DEFINITIONS

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.
- Age.
- Ability or disability.

It offends, humiliates, intimidates or creates a hostile environment.

Harassment may be:

- An ongoing pattern of behaviour or a single act.
- Directed randomly or towards the same person(s).
- Intentional or unintentional.

Harassment can lead to:

- Feeling powerless, afraid, uncomfortable or isolated.
- Finding it hard to concentrate, work or sleep.
- Finding it hard to relate to friends or family.

- Feeling confused or stressed.
- Not wanting to attend school.
- Being excluded from social groups.

VICTIMISATION

A person is victimised if threatened, harassed, harmed, or subjected to any form of injury. In relation to any harassment it is against the law to victimise a person who:

- Has made a complaint.
- Intends to make a complaint.
- Acts as a witness.
- Intends to act as a witness.
- Supports a victim.
- Intends to support a victim

BULLYING

Bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons.

Behaviours that do not constitute bullying include:

- Mutual arguments and disagreements (where there is no power imbalance).
- Not liking someone or a single act of social rejection.
- One-off acts of meanness or spite.
- Isolated incidents of aggression, intimidation or violence.

However, these conflicts still need to be addressed and resolved.

Cyberbullying refers to bullying that is carried out through information and communication technologies

3. TYPES OF BULLYING

Bullying is now considered to come in one of three forms: overt, covert and cyber.

OVERT BULLYING

Overt bullying (sometimes referred to as face-to-face or direct bullying) involves physical actions such as punching or kicking or overt verbal actions such as name-calling and insulting.

COVERT BULLYING

Covert bullying (sometimes referred to as indirect bullying) is a subtle type of non-physical bullying which isn't easily seen by others and is conducted out of sight, and therefore often unacknowledged by teachers.

Covert bullying behaviours mostly inflict harm by damaging another's social reputation, peer relationships and self-esteem.

Covert bullying can include repeatedly:

- Using hand gestures and weird or threatening looks.
- Whispering, excluding, and turning your back on a person.
- Blackmailing, spreading rumours, threatening, isolating from friends.
- Breaking secrets, gossiping, criticising clothes and personalities.

CYBER BULLYING

Cyberbullying can be conducted in many ways, using different media including:

- The sending of abusive texts or emails.
- Taking and sharing unflattering or private images, including naked or sexual images.
- Posting unkind messages or inappropriate images on social networking sites.
- Excluding individuals from online chats or other communication
- Assuming the identity of the victim online and representing them in a negative manner or manner that may damage their relationship with others.
- Repeatedly, and for no strategic reason, attacking players in online gaming.
- 'Liking' offensive posts by others on social networking sites like Facebook.

Like other forms of bullying such as verbal abuse, social exclusion and physical aggression, cyberbullying has the potential to result in the target of bullying experiencing social, psychological and educational difficulties.

While cyberbullying is similar to real life bullying it also differs in the following ways:

- It can be difficult to escape and invasive—it can occur 24/7 and a person can be targeted while at home.
- It can involve harmful material being widely and rapidly disseminated to a large audience, for example, rumours and images can be posted on public forums or sent to many people at once.
- It can provide the bully with a sense of relative anonymity and distance from the victim, so there is a lack of immediate feedback or consequences.

Although Dominic College is not a government school, it is our policy that Dominic College follows the guidance provided in the Act and refers, in general terms where appropriate, to the DET Procedure in relation to student behaviour procedures.

4. ROLES

Creating a Safe School Environment is a challenge for all to take up. To ensure this whole school/community approach it is essential to outline what role the different members of the school community - students, parents, staff and most importantly bystanders - play and clear expectations attached to those roles.

THE ROLE OF STUDENTS

Students:

- Have the responsibility to report any instance of harassment/bullying, whether they are the recipient or a witness.
- Have the responsibility not to support or encourage harassing/bullying behaviour, but to encourage and help the person being harassed to do something about it.
- Should take ownership of their behaviour and correct it by apologising immediately if they have harassed another student unintentionally and it is drawn to their attention.

THE ROLE OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Parents/Guardians should:

- Watch for signs of distress in their children.
- Encourage their children to report harassing or bullying behaviour to a staff member.
- Contact the College if their children are unwilling to report the behaviour.
- Feel free to report to the College any suspected harassment/bullying: even if their own children are not involved.
- Actively keep an interest in their children's social life.
- Keep a written record and offer immediate reassurance.
- NOT encourage their children to fight back.

THE ROLE OF STAFF

Staff:

- Have a duty to ensure that any harassment brought to their attention is reported immediately to a member of the Pastoral Care Team.
- Will watch for and identify early signs of bullying behaviour and/or distress in students.
- Will model appropriate behaviour at all times.
- Will offer the target immediate reassurance and support.

- Will develop strategies to help the offender stop their hurtful behaviour and develop in increased sense of empathy.

THE ROLE OF BYSTANDERS

Students who witness incidents of bullying/harassment should respond in the following ways:

- Comfort and support the person who has been bullied.
- Indicate to the offender that the behaviour was unacceptable.
- Persuade the person to report the behaviour or be prepared to report the behaviour themselves.

Students who stand by and support the bullying/harassment can also be seen as offenders. This behaviour includes:

- Laughing at others being bullied.
- Filming any bullying/harassment.
- 'Liking' offensive posts on social networking sites like Facebook.

By doing nothing, you are supporting the bully!

5. REPORTING AND PROCESS

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU ARE HARASSED OR BULLIED?

- Speak to the person harassing you and ask them to stop.
- Be assertive and look them in the eye. Tell them their comments, behaviour or contact is unwelcome and offensive.
- Stay calm and walk away.
- If the harassment/bullying continues then tell someone and report it.

HOW DO YOU REPORT BULLYING?

All students are reminded that DOB stands for Don't Obey Bullies. It is your responsibility to report bullying. If you don't then you allow it to keep happening.

You can report bullying or harassing behaviour at any time.

- Tell your teacher.
- Tell your parents/guardians.
- Report it to your House Coordinator/Pastoral Care Coordinator
- Call 6274 6088 and leave your complaint and a member of the Pastoral Care Team will get back to you as soon as possible.
- Email: SafeSchoolReporting@dominic.tas.edu.au

WHAT HAPPENS AFTER A REPORT IS MADE?

- An experienced member of the Pastoral Care Team will immediately begin an investigation. They will talk to everyone involved and any witnesses.
- They will record summaries of all interviews and record all statements.
- They will then speak with the Director of Pastoral Care and a finding will be made whether bullying or harassment has taken place.
- If it is found that a student has intentionally and falsely accused another student of bullying then the accusing student will undergo the same process as an offending student.
- Students can be placed on one of three levels depending on the seriousness of the incident. A student may be placed on an Initial Warning for a first time offence that was dealt with quickly and the student apologised for. This is designed to be preventative and educational.

6. COLLEGE'S RESPONSE

INITIAL WARNING

- Student is issued a lunchtime detention.
- A written letter is sent home to their parents to inform them they have received an Initial Warning.
- The offender will formally apologise to the student in question.

LEVEL ONE

- A formal written warning is given to the offender and their parents. Note marked in diary. Parents contacted and are required to come in for a mandatory meeting immediately.
- Afterschool Detention given where offender will begin a compulsory education program designed to increase awareness, understanding and empathy.
- Mediation between the students occurs under supervision.
- The College will offer resilience strategies to the student who is the target.
- The incident is recorded on the College's Safe School Register.

LEVEL TWO

- A formal warning to stop and a written warning of the possibility of forfeiting a place in the College Community is given to the student.
- The student is externally suspended until a meeting is held with parents/guardians, the College Principal, the Coordinator of Pastoral Care K-6/7-10 and/or House Coordinator.
- Upon returning to school the offender will continue to attend an educational program designed to increase awareness, understanding and empathy.
- Compulsory Counselling attended by offender.
- Counselling offered to the student who is the target.

- The incident is recorded on the College's Safe School Register.

LEVEL THREE – REPEAT OR SERIOUS INSTANCE

- The offender is immediately externally suspended from the College.
- Meeting with parents/guardians, Director of Pastoral Care and the Principal.
- Student enrolment is reviewed.

7. COMMITMENT

At Dominic College we commit to:

- Reviewing our Safe School Policy regularly.
- Annually surveying our school population to monitor success and search for improvement.
- Proactively teaching awareness of bullying and harassment issues and methods of reporting.
- Proactively teaching respect, responsibility, empathy and tolerance through our EMPOWER programs and assisting our students to develop effective resilience strategies.