



St Joseph's College  
Gregory Terrace

# Bullying and Harassment *Position Statement*



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# Bullying and Harassment

## INTRODUCTION

The St Joseph's College Mission Statement affirms that the Terrace Family strive to seek excellence in learning whilst instilling a spirit of service and Catholic values. The operating principles of this statement asks members of the Terrace Family to challenge those negative values that erode the dignity of the person. As such, bullying in any form has no place at the College.

Students are entitled to enjoy their education free from humiliation, intimidation, oppression and abuse. Bullying affects everyone – not just the perpetrators and the targeted student. It also affects others who may witness violence, intimidation and the distress of the victim. It can materially affect the families of the students affected too.

The following document provides useful information about behaviours that can be considered bullying, other key definitions in this area and the procedural steps taken when the College responds to a complaint of bullying.

## GUIDING EDMUND RICE EDUCATION AUSTRALIA PRINCIPLES

- The best interests of the student are always paramount.
- Each student is entitled to be treated in a way that supports the principles of privacy whilst ensuring confidentiality, respect and dignity.
- Each student is entitled to be cared for in a way that protects them from being bullied and protects their wellbeing.
- Each person working within Edmund Rice Education Australia (EREA) schools has a responsibility to provide a safe and caring environment that enables each student to develop their spirituality, personality, talents, mental and physical abilities to their full potential.
- The fundamental principles are that those making decisions are not biased and each person who has a complaint made against them is given a fair opportunity to be heard in response to the specifics of the complaint.
- Each student has a right to a safe and supportive environment free from the fear of bullying/harassment. All suspected or alleged bullying of students will be handled by procedures that provide an immediate response and comply with the requirements. EREA (through St Joseph's Gregory Terrace) are committed to providing students with an atmosphere that is safe and based on mutual respect and dignity.

# What is bullying?

*Any form of bullying is unworthy of a Terrace Gentleman and against all that Gregory Terrace stands for. It will not be tolerated.*

Bullying goes against what makes Terrace special – a friendly, family environment. Intimidation and violence have no place in the community and will not be accepted under any circumstances.

The hallmark of a safe school is that all members of that school community feel a sense of belonging, are valued, respected and free from intimidation, discrimination and harassment, and that all members feel protected, respected and connected. This is particularly important in a Catholic school such as Terrace, which prides itself on cultivating an atmosphere of care in which each individual is welcomed and valued. Terrace strives to be an inclusive community founded on Gospel Spirituality in which compassion, justice and peace are a lived reality for students, staff and their families.

Research illustrates that student outcomes are enhanced when a student learns in a safe school environment. Such outcomes include:

- Better student social skills;
- Improved behaviour;
- Greater engagement in schoolwork;
- Greater sense of personal competence and learning ability;
- Stronger belief in the importance of education;
- A strong sense of connection and belonging.

Bullying can take many forms, but may be identified by the following types of behaviour:

**Verbal bullying** includes name calling or insulting someone about physical characteristics such as their weight or height or other attributes including race, sexuality, culture, religion, or perceived intellectual or co-curricular abilities.

**Physical bullying** includes hitting or otherwise hurting someone, shoving or intimidating another person or damaging or stealing their belongings.

**Social bullying** includes consistently excluding or publicly ridiculing another person or sharing information or images that will have a harmful effect on the targeted student.

**Cyber bullying** is causing hurt via modern technologies such as the internet and other forms of social media and through the use of smartphones and other electronic devices.

**Image-based abuse** such as when intimate, nude or sexual images are distributed without the consent of those pictured. This includes real, altered (e.g. photoshopped) and drawn pictures and videos. Image-based abuse also includes threatening to send nude pictures of someone unless a demand is met by the targeted student.

## WHAT IS NOT BULLYING?

There are also some behaviours, which although they might be unpleasant or distressing, are not bullying. These include:

**Mutual arguments** which involve a disagreement but not an imbalance of power. However, an unresolved mutual conflict can develop into bullying if one of the parties targets the other repeatedly in retaliation.

**Single episode acts** of meanness, rudeness, spite or physical aggression unless it becomes a pattern of behaviour.

**Social rejection** unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress or to exclude, especially when an individual or group actively seek to influence others to develop a negative impression of or exclude a targeted individual.

**Random acts of aggression or intimidation** between equals and single incidents. Conflict is a disagreement, argument or dispute between people where no one has a significant power advantage, and both feel equally aggrieved. Conflict is different to bullying because there is always an imbalance of power in bullying. However, poorly resolved conflict situations especially those involving friendship break-ups sometimes can lead to either aggression or bullying.

**A student deciding** that he doesn't want to be friends.

The use of an **appropriate reprimand** by a staff member is not seen as bullying.

These terms are often referred to at Gregory Terrace by way of education:

**Rude** - inadvertently saying or doing something that hurts someone else.

**Mean** - purposefully saying or doing something to hurt someone once (or maybe twice).

## How does Terrace discourage bullying?

The College is committed to providing an educational environment in which students feel valued and secure. To achieve this, the College seeks to create a school-wide culture that:

- allows students to flourish free from intimidation, discrimination, harassment or any form of bullying;
- does not tolerate, condone or trivialise bullying behaviours;
- is aware of what constitutes bullying behaviour;
- teaches and supports students to be effective bystanders/upstanders;
- provides support to the targeted student of bullying; and
- deals firmly yet fairly with perpetrators to assist them with modifying behaviour.

The methods used by the College to discourage bullying will vary from time-to-time with new initiatives being introduced when appropriate. The College recognises that a 'one size fits all' approach will not work in responding to bullying. Accordingly, the College uses a multi-faceted approach. These measures include, but are not limited to:

- Engaging a suitable range of responses to deal with and discourage bullies. These responses may include detentions, withdrawal from the playground and/or co-curricular activities, suspension and expulsion. It may also involve ineligibility for immersions, co-curricular tours, student awards or future student leadership positions.
- Ensuring that bullying investigations are appropriately investigated and recorded on the College database.
- Displaying signage around the College to promote a bully-free environment.
- Publishing the Bullying and Harassment Position Statement on the College website.
- Providing a link to this Position Statement in the student orientation package when accepted for enrolment to the College.
- Promoting a bully-free environment through College assemblies, masses, liturgies, formation classes, year level meetings and House meetings.
- Creating and promoting an anonymous and confidential online bullying incident form that is easily accessible by students, parents and members of the public.
- Promoting a bully-free environment in the Staff Handbook, in College policy documents and in occasional articles in publications (such as the College newsletter).
- Undertaking confidential year level surveys of student wellbeing and bullying behaviour and following up on identified bullies and victims.
- Conducting exit interviews and surveys.
- Ensuring effective pastoral support for students through the appointment of Pastoral Care Mentors and House Deans.
- Employing College personal counsellors who have specialist skills in helping both targeted students of bullying and identified perpetrators.
- Reminding students that the College Bullying and Harassment Position Statement applies to all College sanctioned events including co-curricular activities, camps and school tours, both domestic and international.
- Providing staff with training on classroom management techniques that will assist in reducing opportunities for bullying behaviours.
- Focusing on National Bullying No Way Day, and Child Protection Week.
- Encourage staff to model tolerance, empathy and acceptance of individual differences.
- Promoting the proactive modelling of right relationships through the College retreat program including facilitated opportunities for student led reconciliation.
- Reviewing the College's Bullying and Harassment Position Statement annually to ensure it remains effective and relevant.
- Ensuring all members of the College community understand that they each have a responsible role to play in implementing these strategies.
- Supervision by staff throughout the school-day and on school excursions so there is a persuasive sense of staff presence during these times.

# How does Terrace manage bullying?

For cases defined as bullying, Terrace uses a four-staged process in managing incidents. The reasons for this are:

- to ensure the prompt and professional resolution of complaints made in relation to bullying between students.
- to ensure the College meets its obligations in providing a safe and supportive environment for students.
- to use information gathered about bullying to drive continuous improvement of the College's policies, systems and staff skills.
- to ensure that there is fairness and all students are supported.

**Identify**

**Gather Information**

**Respond**

**Support**

All phases of the College's process are based around the implicit understanding of the need for ongoing support of the students involved and the recognition of the potential trauma associated with reporting, recounting and resolving an instance of bullying.

This support will continue at all stages throughout the investigation process and may include intermittent 'check-ins' after the matter has been resolved. A detailed flowchart of these process can be found in Appendix A.

## **STAGE 1: IDENTIFY BULLYING**

The College may receive information about alleged bullying from a range of sources including the targeted student, other students, staff, family or members of the public.

Information received about alleged bullying must be referred to the appropriate person within the College pastoral care structure; in most instances, the most appropriate person will be the House Dean, Dean of Waterford Place (Year 10) or the Program Leader for Years 5 and 6. However, matters may be reported directly to the Principal, Dean of Students or members of the counselling team as necessary. The College will nominate a key person to lead the investigation of the complaint.

## **STAGE 2: GATHER INFORMATION**

In sensitively investigating the matter, the appropriate person will gather information about the alleged incident from the targeted student, the student alleged to be responsible for the bullying behaviour and any other persons considered appropriate.

When gathering information about the incident, the appropriate person should:

- Record the details of the bullying incident or incidences on the Bullying and Harassment Investigation form, which is then uploaded to TASS.
- Confer with the Dean of Students about how to deal with the issue.
- Inform the targeted student about how the matter will be dealt with and by whom on staff (their contact details will be provided) and provide likely timeframes.
- Inform the parents of the affected student that a complaint has been received that their son has been bullied by another student/s at the College.
- Inform the targeted student that at any point during the process, he may invite an individual of his choice to support and advocate on his behalf.
- Take necessary steps to ensure the immediate safety of the targeted student and other witnesses after making an assessment about the seriousness of the alleged bullying behaviour.

Considerations for the investigation may include:

- **Single or group bullying** - strategies have been designed for working with students whose bullying behaviour is being supported by a group of students. For example, the support group method is most effective when a group of students are brought together and the responsibility for improving the situation is shared amongst the group. Whereas, the traditional approach generally involves punishment of the student who is considered responsible for the bullying behaviour.
- **Provocation on the part of a 'target'** - at times, it may be necessary to consider whether the target may have contributed to the situation. For example, the bullying may be a disproportionate response to an initial action by the target, but which needs to be addressed as part of the intervention. This may require an approach that involves negotiated and agreed changes in the behaviour of both sides.
- **Degree of remorse** - is the perpetrator feeling remorseful after the bullying incident? It is important to consider this as methods such as mediation, restorative practice and shared concern rely on some level of genuine remorse or empathy from the bully.
- **Mediation willingness** - are both the perpetrator and targeted student ready to accept help from a mediator? Mediation is considered practicable when both the perpetrator and the targeted student voluntarily agree to seek mediation and the mediator can remain 'neutral'. If this is possible, then discussing the dispute and finding a solution to the conflict may be effective in the form of a Restorative Justice conference.
- **Target support** - are there other students who are willing to support the targeted student? If the answer is yes, then there may be opportunity to encourage the students to actively cooperate and provide support for the targeted student and encourage the perpetrator to do likewise. This may promote empathy and change the attitudes of the perpetrator towards the targeted student.
- **Student age** - how old are the students involved? Some methods require a higher level of understanding of the psychology of interpersonal relationships than others; for example, a Year 5 student who bullies someone may benefit from a different approach than that taken with a senior school student.
- **Capacity of the targeted student** - will the target be able to learn the skills required to resist bullying behaviours? The College will need to make judgements based on the targeted child's capacity to learn how to respond effectively to bullying behaviours in each situation.

***The parents/carers of the targeted student and the perpetrator/s involved in the investigation will receive communication from the school with information relevant to the progress of the report.***

### STAGE 3: RESPOND

The College's response will be influenced by the details of the actual incident and whether a pattern of similar behaviour is associated with the student's previous conduct at the College.

One or more of the following approaches may be utilised depending upon information obtained:

- Traditional approach (disciplinary).
- Strengthening of victim with strategies.
- Restorative justice.

Each bullying investigation will be treated separately, and each stage of the investigation and substantiation process will occur.

The College has a range of responses that may be used to reinforce the message that bullying of another student is not acceptable in our community. These responses include after school detentions, withdrawal from co-curricular programs (including immersions, sport and cultural tours), removal from eligibility for a position of student leadership, student awards, suspensions and expulsion.

There are several appropriate considerations that form part of this response assessment:

- **Severity** – deciding the level of severity can be complex because some students are more vulnerable than others. The more serious the hurtfulness of the bullying, the more justified is the use of a stronger response.
- **Illegality of the bullying behaviour** - is the behaviour potentially criminal? The College may be bound by procedures deemed essential in dealing with prescribed or criminal behaviour that involves bullying.
- **Persistent or repeated behaviour patterns** – the level of response will escalate if a student persists with a pattern of behaviour after repeated interventions by the College.

*If any party is not satisfied with the school's handling of the issue, they are encouraged to refer to the College's Grievances Policy for Parents, Carers and Volunteers found on the College website.*

However, if the College's attempts to remediate the actions of those who bully others are not successful, then the following will likely occur:

- An enrolment review meeting may be conducted as outlined in the Suspension and Exclusion Policy and Guidelines for Students EREA (Northern) Policy.
- These instances of bullying may lead to expulsion.

AND/OR

- A targeted student can at any stage decide to take a matter to the police

AND/OR

- Matters that are deemed to be reportable offences under the Child Protection Act 1999 and Education (General Provisions) Act 2006 will be referred to the Director of Northern Region Support (EREA), National Director of Safeguarding (EREA), Department of Child Safety, Youth and Women and the Brisbane Central District Child Protection & Investigation Unit (CPIU).

### STAGE 4: SUPPORT

A support plan will be used for both students – targeted student and perpetrator. The support plan is a school-based process (found in the Bullying and Harassment Report) designed to assist individual students who have experienced harm, are at risk of harm, or have caused harm to others.

As part of the support plan, both the targeted student and the perpetrator will receive regular check-ins. The focus is the wellbeing and education of all parties. If the bullying behaviour persists, the College will determine further measures.

# What should you do if you feel that you are being bullied?

***If you are being bullied, tell someone. It takes courage to challenge the bully as a bystander or as a victim, but please speak up. We want to eradicate all forms of bullying from Terrace.***

If you are being bullied it is important to talk to an adult who can help you. You might feel reluctant to report the bullying because you are scared or feel it might only make matters worse, but teachers are trained to help you deal with the bullying in a manner that keeps you protected.

**Remember the bullying will probably continue if those responsible think that they can get away with their behaviour.** Here are some strategies that you might find helpful:

- Try not to show that you are upset – often bullies feel happy if they have upset you.
- Try to be assertive but not aggressive when you find yourself in a difficult position - look and sound confident.
- If a student has been calling you names or teasing, reassure yourself that you're okay and that it is the bullying student who has the problem.
- Talk to a friend.
- Avoid 'risk' situations where possible or stay close to adults or friends.
- Consider whether you have been bullying yourself e.g. have you been name calling, annoying, threatening, showing off, etc.? If you have, change what you are doing.
- If you feel or think you are different in any way, be proud of it - individuality and diversity are important and are what make you special.

- Consider talking with a PC Mentor, House Dean or Counsellor who can help you to develop skills which can be useful in bullying situations. There are approachable, qualified and experienced counsellors who work at Gregory Terrace and many others who work outside the school who are trained in helping to equip you with these skills.
- If the bullying continues, report it again - the bullying can be stopped. The more informed the College is, the better we can manage the situation.

***Seek help - remember, nobody deserves to be bullied. If you know of anyone being bullied, report it.***

## **WHAT YOU CAN DO IF YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO IS BEING BULLIED?**

- The person being bullied may be too scared or upset to tell anyone. Show the perpetrator that you and your friends strongly disapprove of their actions.
- Befriend the person being bullied and encourage them to speak with someone. You might even go with them as a support person.
- Be careful about teasing people or making personal remarks as you never know what they may be going through each day and night.
- If you think that a student may not find your comments funny, then don't say it to them.
- People will always remember how you made them feel long after the words have been spoken, written or published.

## How parents can help

The most important support a parent can provide in this situation to help their son who is being bullied is to provide love, reassurance and support.

Sometimes, a son can be reluctant to tell his parents that he is being bullied. There are several things parents can do to help their son who is being bullied. These include:

**Watch** for signs that your son might be being bullied or having difficulties for another reason:

- Few or no friends or unexpected changes in friendship groups.
- Wanting to miss school or not participate in College activities.
- A pattern of headaches, stomach aches or nausea.
- Changes in his method or route to school or he is frightened of walking to school.
- Drop in academic performance.
- Becoming withdrawn from family and/or friends or taking it out on others.
- Changes in sleep patterns and/or eating patterns.
- Tension or unhappiness - has frequent tears, anger, anxiety or mood swings.
- The disappearance of property or brings home damaged belongings and/or clothing.
- Personality changes or lowering of self-esteem and seeming more lonely or distressed.

**Listen to your son.** Create a culture of open dialogue within the home - solutions can be as simple as having a meal together without the distraction of the television and enquire how your son is feeling. If you think that your son is being bullied, **inform the College** immediately with a staff member who can help. Don't be swayed by your son's pleas not to interfere because of his fear of retaliation. For your son's sake, bullying needs to be addressed by the College promptly and this will be most effective with the College and your family working together.

### TO REDUCE THE CHANCES OF YOUR SON BEING BULLIED?

- Encourage your son to develop a variety of friendships. A student who has a diverse range of friendship groups is less likely to be bullied.
- Work on improving your son's self-esteem - encourage your son to do what he loves.

- Support your son in developing his talents, participating in sports or other activities that will build confidence in a safe, supervised environment.
- Keep the lines of communication 'open'. Sometimes spending as little as 15 minutes per day talking to your son about his daily life can reassure him that he can talk to you if he has a problem.

### IF YOUR SON IS BULLYING A STUDENT

It can be upsetting to find out that your son has bullied another student. Your son will need help and support to understand the effects of his behaviour, how to take responsibility for his actions and to learn better ways of relating to others. It is important to stay calm and learn more about your son's behaviour so that you can respond appropriately. Focus on positive solutions:

- Think about why your son is bullying. Consider whether he is being bullied elsewhere, as your son may be bullying to compensate for some feeling of inadequacy, or whether there is some other factor causing anger etc.
- Ask your son about what he thinks is going on and why he is bullying someone else. Ask him what he thinks might help him to stop bullying.
- Explain why bullying is unacceptable - talk about the other person's feelings and help him to understand what it is like for the person being bullied. Ask him how he would feel if he was being bullied.
- Apply your family rules and consequences for his behaviour. Explain that the consequences are linked to his behaviour.
- Keep a balanced approach - try to find ways to reward appropriate behaviour or accomplishments. Talk with a counsellor at the College or externally.
- It is important not to use aggressive tactics. The use of physical or verbal aggression only reinforces the idea that this is alright. Talk about the fact that we all have a right to be and feel safe. Point out that bullying or teasing breaks that right. Using a sensitive approach, ensure that your son knows the effect that his behaviour is having on the bullied student.
- Work with College staff to help your son and prevent more bullying. Make it clear to your son that you take the bullying seriously and that bullying others is unacceptable.

# Contacts and Resources

## COLLEGE CONTACTS

### Dean of Students

Mr Damien Cuddihy  
P: 3214 5227  
E: damiencuddihy@terrace.qld.edu.au

### Dean of Waterford Place

Mr Luke Gribble  
P: 3214 5401  
E: lukegribble@terrace.qld.edu.au

### Barrett House Dean

Mr Glenn Cameron  
P: 3214 5229  
E: glenncameron@terrace.qld.edu.au

### Buckley House Dean

Mr Anthony Baruksopulo  
P: 3214 5410  
E: anthonybaruksopulo@terrace.qld.edu.au

### Kearney House Dean

Mr John Hinch  
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E: johnhinch@terrace.qld.edu.au

### Magee House Dean

Mr Anthony O'Shea  
P: 3214 5411  
E: anthonyoshea@terrace.qld.edu.au

### Mahoney House Dean

Mr Steven Hohn  
P: 3214 5211  
E: stevenhohn@terrace.qld.edu.au

### Reidy House Dean

Mr Rob Johnson  
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### Treacy House Dean

Ms Jane Williams  
P: 3214 5209  
E: janewilliams@terrace.qld.edu.au

### Windsor House Dean

Mr Anthony Hayward  
P: 3214 5412  
E: anthonyhayward@terrace.qld.edu.au

### Xavier House Dean

Mr Dom Cacciola  
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### Program Leader: Years 5 and 6

Mr Brendan Ganley  
P: 3214 5214  
E: brendanganley@terrace.qld.edu.au

### Counsellor

Ms Jai-Leigh Beard  
P: 3214 5281  
E: jai-leighbeard@terrace.qld.edu.au

### Counsellor

Mr Paul Antenucci  
P: 3214 5428  
E: paulantenucci@terrace.qld.edu.au

### Counsellor

Ms Natalie Twine  
P: 3214 5204  
E: natalietwine@terrace.qld.edu.au

## EXTERNAL CONTACTS

### Anti-Discrimination Commission of Queensland

P: 1300 130 670 (state-wide)  
W: www.adcq.qld.gov.au

### Police

P: 3364 6464  
W: www.police.qld.gov.au

### Kids Helpline

P: 1800 551 800  
W: www.kidshelpline.com.au

### Lifeline

P: 131 114  
W: www.lifeline.org.au

## RESOURCES

- [Bullying No Way](#) - What can I do?
- [Kids Helpline](#) - Bullying
- [Reachout Australia](#)

# Definitions

National definitions have been developed by the Federal Government's Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) who developed the Safe and Supportive School Communities Management Group and have been used in the National Safe Schools' Framework (2011). It is important to use the correct language when referring to this serious issue.

These following definitions and expressions form part of the St Joseph's College Gregory Terrace Anti-Bullying terminology.

**Perpetrator** is a person who carries out a harmful, illegal or immoral act.

**Aggression** is words or actions (both overt and covert) that are directed towards another and intended to harm, distress, coerce or cause fear.

**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. Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long-term negative effects on the physical and mental health of those involved, including on the person bullied and their family and those who witness the bullying.

**Cyber bullying** is a term used to describe bullying that is carried out through internet or mobile phone technologies. It is often combined with offline bullying. It may include a combination of behaviours such as pranking (i.e. hang-up calls), sending insulting text messages, publishing someone's private information, creating hate sites, or implementing social exclusion campaigns on social networking sites. It is also cyber bullying when a student uses technology to run a multi-step campaign to bully another student (e.g. setting another student up to be assaulted, video recording their humiliation, posting the video recording online and then sending the website address to others).

**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 directed randomly or towards the same person(s). 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). Harassment is unacceptable and needs to be addressed as part of creating a safe school but it would not be considered bullying if any one or more of the following three features are present: it occurred only once and was not part of a repeated pattern; it (genuinely) was not intended to offend, demean, annoy, alarm or abuse; and it was not directed towards the same person(s) each time.

**Violence** is the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against another person(s) that results in psychological harm, injury or in some cases death. Violence may involve provoked or unprovoked acts and can be a single incident, a random act or can occur over time.

## FURTHER USEFUL TERMINOLOGY

**Covert bullying** is a subtle type of non-physical bullying that usually isn't easily seen by others and is conducted out of sight of and often unacknowledged by, adults. Covert bullying behaviours mostly inflict harm by damaging another's social reputation, peer relationships and self-esteem. Covert bullying can be carried out in a range of ways (e.g. spreading rumours, encouraging a third party to engage in bullying behaviour, conducting a malicious social exclusion campaign using internet or mobile phone technologies).

**Cyber safe behaviours** are defined as the safe, respectful and responsible use of internet and mobile phone technology.



**St. Joseph's College**  
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## Bullying and Harassment Incident Flow-chart

