

PREVENTION OF BULLYING & HARASSMENT POLICY

Date approved	July 2011	Date amended	September 2018	Date of next review	September 2019
Approved by	St Mary Star of the Sea College Board				
Author	Frank Pitt, Principal				
Responsible body	College Board and Committees College Staff				
Supporting documents, procedures and policies	<p>Australian Human Rights Commission</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Workplace Bullying: Violence, Harassment and Bullying Factsheet ▪ Lawstuff Australia – Bullying at school ▪ Findlaw Australia – Bullying at school ▪ Staff Handbook ▪ Complaints and Grievance Policy ▪ Pastoral Care Policy ▪ Student Welfare (Wellbeing) Policy ▪ Positive Student Behaviours – Living Our Values document ▪ Student Diary 				
Reference and legislation	<p>Commonwealth legislation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Disability Discrimination Act 1992 ▪ Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986 ▪ Racial Discrimination Act 1975 ▪ Racial Hatred Act 1995 ▪ Sex Discrimination Act 1984 NSW State Policies ▪ Student Welfare ▪ Bullying, Preventing and Responding to Student Bullying in Schools ▪ Homophobia in Schools ▪ Anti-Racism <p>Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998 National Safe Schools Framework Implementation Manual</p>				
Audience	Public - accessible to anyone				

CONTENTS

- 1. Purpose of policy3
- 2. Definitions3
- 3. Application and scope4
- 4. Policy statement (Principle)4
- 5. Responsibility of the Board5
- 6. Responsibility of College Administration5
- 7. Responsibility of Staff.....5
- 8. Responsibility of Parents and Caregivers6
- 9. Responsibility of Students6
- 10. Reporting Bullying6
- Version control and change history.....7

1. PURPOSE OF POLICY

St Mary Star of the Sea College recognises its duty to students and staff to provide a safe and positive environment where individual differences and diversity within the College are respected and accepted.

This policy statement outlines the purpose and procedure adopted by St Mary Star of the Sea College in relation to bullying and harassment and provides a general guide on:

- providing a safe, secure and accepting environment for all students and staff
- supporting the right of students and staff to feel safe at school
- enabling students and staff to function in an arena of safety, free from bullying and harassment
- providing students and staff with information to assist them to deal with occurrences of bullying and harassment
- assisting parents by offering strategies to support their daughter/s if they are being bullied or harassed.

2. DEFINITIONS

Bullying

Bullying is the repeated and intentional behaviour of causing fear, distress or harm towards another person that involves an imbalance of power. It can involve humiliation, domination, intimidation, victimisation and harassment. In any bullying incident there are likely to be three parties involved: the bully, the person being bullied, and bystanders.

Bullying can take many forms including:

- Physical bullying which involves physical actions such as hitting, pushing, obstructing or being used to hurt or intimidate someone. Damaging, stealing or hiding personal belongings is also a form of physical bullying.
- Indirect bullying is when deliberate acts of exclusion or spreading of untrue stories are used to hurt or intimidate someone.
- Cyber-bullying is the ongoing abuse of power to threaten or harm another person using technology. Cyber-bullying can occur in chat rooms, on social networking sites, through emails or on mobile phones.

What Bullying is not

There are many situations that cause students to become anxious or distressed. While we will always support students in such times, not all negative experiences can be seen as bullying. For example, situations such as:

- Disagreements where students might have a difference of opinion or an argument is not necessarily bullying. Conflict situations do need to be closely monitored in case they do

evolve into bullying. However, disagreements are a part of life and it is important for students to develop skills to deal with such situations in a safe and caring environment.

- Behaviour such as loss of temper, shouting, swearing or mean behaviour do not normally constitute bullying. However, while they may not be seen as bullying, students should feel free to seek support and advice if such situations cause them distress.

Child	A person under 18 years of age.
Discrimination	Discrimination occurs when people are treated less favourably than others because of race, religion, characteristics or abilities.
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, economic status, age, ability or disability.
Violence	Violence is the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against another person that results in psychological harm, injury or in some cases, death.

3. APPLICATION AND SCOPE

This policy applies to students, parents, all staff, teaching and non-teaching permanent, temporary, or casual, Executive members, the Principal, Board Directors and Committee Members and is to provide the principles to protect the rights of students and staff at St Mary Star of the Sea College. This policy informs and guides the practice and development of all procedures to ensure the College is a safe environment in which to grow and learn or work.

4. POLICY STATEMENT (PRINCIPLES)

The principles based on Gospel values, and the Benedictine Tradition provide for the protection of the rights of students and staff. In the Catholic tradition we believe we are made in the image and likeness of God. This does not mean we are all the same but rather different so as to reflect the infinite attributes of a loving God. These principles reflect a respect for the dignity and value of each person. Procedures have been enacted to protect the rights of students and staff. These procedures are available in the Staff Handbook.

Students, staff and families have a right:

- To have their individual human worth, dignity and privacy respected
- To feel proud of their culture, religion and heritage
- To feel safe and live life free from abuse, neglect and/or exploitation
- To experience a sense of hope for the future
- To participate fully in the life of the community ie St Mary Star of the Sea College
- To have access to quality services, support, guidance and collegiality
- To religious freedom and practice.

5. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE BOARD

The Board will provide good governance and leadership by supporting the Principal in his responsibility to provide sound processes that take their origin in the Gospels, Benedictine tradition and Catholic social teaching, recognising that, "Each person is created in the image and likeness of God and has a God given dignity."

6. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE COLLEGE ADMINISTRATION

Where possible the Principal and leadership team utilise the principle of subsidiarity to ensure the processes developed are appropriate to maintaining the rights and protecting the rights of staff and students at St Mary Star of the Sea College.

The Principal and the leadership team will model the values upon which the rights of others are based, among these values are:

- Justice
- Respect
- Collaboration
- Compassion

The basic tenant is a belief in the value of each person and that each person is to be treated with dignity and respect, and working together to resolve the issue will be the strategy used.

7. RESPONSIBILITY OF STAFF

The staff has a responsibility to be respectful and inclusive of each other and the students. Further, the staff is to develop an understanding and appreciation of the students and their families and be sensitive to their individual differences and needs.

It is the responsibility of the College to educate students about bullying and harassment at the College and how to both report and seek support should they be victims of bullying or observe bullying of others. Each staff member has a responsibility to:

- Model appropriate behaviour at all times
- Deal with all reported and observed incidents of bullying in accordance with this policy
- Ensure that any incident of bullying that they observe or is reported to them, is recorded appropriately
- Be vigilant in monitoring students who have been identified as either persistent bullies or victims
- Acknowledge the right of parents/carers to speak with College authorities if they believe their child is being bullied.

Staff should be aware of how to address complaints through the College grievance procedure. Should the need be such that further information is required it may be necessary to make contact with:

- Work, Health and Safety Authority
- Australian Human Rights Commission

- The Union ie Independent Education Union
- Lawstuff for legal information especially for young people.

8. RESPONSIBILITY OF PARENTS AND CARERS

Parents should listen to their daughter/s to find out what has happened and who is involved. They need to provide the College with accurate information. Their daughter/s need/s to know the course of actions that parents are taking.

Contact with the College should be as prompt as possible. Feedback to the parent should also be prompt. The College's course of action should be made clear to parents and students. Contact with the College should continue to ensure problems do not continue.

9. RESPONSIBILITY OF STUDENTS

The responsibility of each student is to communicate with parents and teachers and to actively support structures put in place to ensure the rights of the individual.

10. REPORTING BULLYING

Students and their parents/carers are sometimes reluctant to pursue bullying incidents for fear that it will only make matters worse.

A key part of St Mary Star of the Sea College's bullying prevention and intervention strategy is to encourage reporting of bullying incidents as well as providing an assurance to students who experience bullying (and parents/carers) that:

- Bullying is not tolerated within the College
- Their concerns will be taken seriously
- The College has a clear strategy for dealing with bullying issues.

Bullying incidents can be advised to the College verbally or in writing through any of the following avenues:

- Informing a trusted teacher
- Informing the College Counsellor
- Informing a student's House Coordinator
- Informing the Assistant Principal, Dean of Pastoral Care or the Principal.

VERSION CONTROL AND CHANGE HISTORY

Version control	Date effective	Approved by	Amendment
1.0		Board	Initial adoption
2.0	June 2014	Board	Updated with reference to Australian Human Rights Commission documents
3.0	February 2015	Board	Reference and Legislation added. Rewording in Application and Scope. Addition to basic tenant in Point 6.
4.0	February 2017	Board	Review of policy
5.0	October 2018	Board	Review of policy