



POLICY

Student Bullying and Harassment Policy

1. PURPOSE

Bullying and harassment are unacceptable and St Paul's College is committed to creating an environment and community wherein bullying and harassment are not tolerated, and where students are taught the values and practice of respecting the dignity and well-being of all other individuals.

2. SCOPE OF POLICY

This Policy applies to all students enrolled at St Paul's College.

3. POLICY

PRINCIPLES

- Bullying and harassment do not accord each individual the dignity inherent in their humanity as being made in the image of God.
- Bullying and harassment is unacceptable and can be illegal.
- Each person at the College has a right to feel safe and be free from bullying and harassment.
- Each person at the College has the responsibility to show respect for themselves and others.
- The College aims to contribute to the development of young people through education and their formation in Christian values.
- The College does not accept bullying and harassment and its response to those involved will be informed by the principles of justice, reconciliation and subsidiarity.
- The College upholds its commitment to 'Our Common Ground' and our values of Faith, Relationships, Excellence, and Diversity.

DEFINITIONS

Bullying

Bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is harmful, and often involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons, leaving them feeling annoyed, uncomfortable, embarrassed or hurt.

Harassment

Harassment can be inferred from a single incident and generally involves unwelcome behaviour that intimidates, offends or humiliates a person because of a particular personal characteristic such as age, race, gender, disability, appearance, religion or sexuality.

Bullying and harassment can take many forms. These include, and are not limited to:

- Physical harm (e.g. punching, kicking, fighting, damaging property, invading someone's personal space),
- Verbal harm (e.g. name-calling, teasing, spreading rumours, demeaning someone, swearing, using offensive language),
- Exclusion (e.g. leaving a person or group out of social or group activities),
- Cyber or online harm: which uses e-technology as a means of victimising others,
- Sexting: when sending sexually explicit messages or photographs via electronic devices,
- Victimisation (e.g. standover tactics, extortion, picking on others and repeated exclusion),

- Sexual harm (e.g. touching or brushing up against another person in a sexual manner, using rude names, or commenting inappropriately about someone's sexuality or morals),
- Making rude or threatening signs, gestures or actions,
- Demanding money, food or other belongings,
- Persistent movement or damage of another person's property.

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have varying long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders. It is not bullying when two students of a similar age, physical and emotional development have a disagreement or conflict.

PREVENTION AND EDUCATION

School leaders provide opportunities for staff and students to grow in understanding, acceptance and to demonstrate respect for the dignity and rights of all individuals. Promoting information about bullying and harassment, educating students about bullying and harassment, providing staff training in the management of bullying and harassment, is a commitment of school leadership.

Based on 'Our Common Ground', the college explicitly educates students to identify and report bullying and harassment. Multiple resources aid the prevention and education of bullying and harassment.

REPORTING AN INCIDENT

If a student feels they have been bullied or harassed they should:

- Ask the person responsible to stop. Students are encouraged to seek the assistance of a staff member if needed at this stage,
- Report the incident to a trusted adult staff member, including a Home Group Teacher, Head of Wellbeing, Leader of House, College Counsellor. A student may also report to a trusted adult at home,
- If a student, parent or other person, witnesses or becomes aware that a student is being harassed or bullied, they should report the incident to a trusted adult staff member, including a Home Group Teacher, Head of Wellbeing, Leader of House, College Counsellor. A student may also report to a trusted adult at home.
- A member of our community can report an incident by:
 - Speaking directly to the trusted adult, in-person or by phone,
 - Sending a message via the College's Learning Management System (i.e. SEQTA),
 - Sending an email,
 - Engaging the College's Grievance Procedures (including the Student Grievance Form).

RESPONDING TO BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

First response

- Once reported, a designated teacher (Class/Home Group Teacher, Head of Wellbeing Primary/Secondary, Head of Primary, Head of Secondary or Leader of House) will investigate the incident.
- Unless extenuating circumstances arise, enrolling parents/guardians will be advised of the incident.
- Attempts will be made to resolve the incident, normally through a mediation process chaired by a designated Teacher between parties involved.
- The incident will be documented on SEQTA, cross referencing the names of all involved on each student's file, to safeguard future incidents.

- A resolution will be sought through restorative conversations between students involved, as facilitated by an appropriate staff member.
- The College may take strict measures as part of this first response, including self-reflection, community service or other more significant responses.

Subsequent response

- If harassment or bullying continues, and once reported, a designated teacher (Class/Home Group Teacher, Head of Wellbeing Primary/Secondary, Head of Primary, Head of Secondary or Leader of House) will investigate the incident(s).
- Unless extenuating circumstances arise, enrolling parents/guardians will be advised of the incident(s).
- A meeting will be held, at which a formal agreement will be negotiated between students and parents.
- After investigation the incident(s), the culpability, frequency and impact of perpetrators and/or bystanders will inform the College's consideration/implementation of any appropriate (and potentially serious) consequence(s).
- Counselling and other avenues will be explored to assist all parties.
- Restorative Practices continues to inform a resolution, as appropriate.
- Failure to comply with College expectations regarding harassment or bullying, after mediations and meetings with all concerned, will result in the perpetrator's enrolment at the College being reviewed.

In line with the College's 'Our Common Ground' document, it is the responsibility of every member of the St Paul's community to create a safe environment free from bullying and harassment. Bullying and harassment can be actively or passively condoned by the presence of bystanders and silent witnesses, who will therefore be subject to the same processes of mediation, counselling or disciplinary response, as the perpetrator/s.

Reporting

All incidents of bullying and harassment will be documented:

- On the College's confidential Learning Management System (SEQTA), notes will be made for each student involved, including any outcomes,
- by copies of any correspondence being added to the relevant students' files.

Parents of all students involved will be notified in the first instance and will be involved more formally in subsequent incidents.

The College will meet its reporting requirements to external agencies where mandated, including the South Australian Police (SAPOL), the Department for Child Protection (DCP), the e-Safety Commissioner, Catholic Education South Australia (CESA), and Edmund Rice Education Australia (EREA), for example.

St Paul's College commits to assisting students and families with knowledge of their rights, as well as providing any resources that may be helpful within and external to our College.

Beyond school

Where bullying or harassment occurs in circumstances in which the school is not directly responsible for the care of the student/s involved, it reserves the right to respond in terms of the above procedures if it judges this appropriate in the interests and wellbeing of the student/s and of the College environment.