

Bullying and Harassment Prevention Policy

Audience: School Community

Rationale

Members of the St Paul's Anglican Grammar School community have the right to an environment in which they feel safe, happy and respected and which promotes learning, personal growth and positive self-esteem.

St Paul's Anglican Grammar School rejects all forms of bullying and harassment. It is not acceptable for any members of the school community (students, teaching and non-teaching staff, parents and visitors) to experience bullying or harassment, no matter their background, race, ethnicity, gender, physical and intellectual attributes, within the learning and social environments of the school.

In rejecting bullying and harassment, the school is committed to the development and reinforcement of a culture of positive behaviour, respect and tolerance.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- explain the definition of bullying and harassment so that there is a shared understanding amongst all members of the school community
- make clear that no form of bullying or harassment at St Paul's Anglican Grammar School will be tolerated
- ask that everyone in our school community be alert to signs and evidence of bullying or harassment and accept responsibility to report it to staff, whether as an observer or victim
- ensure that all reported incidents of bullying or harassment are appropriately investigated and addressed
- ensure that support is provided to students who may be affected by bullying or harassment (including victims, bystanders and students engaging in bullying or harassment)
- seek parental and peer-group support in addressing and preventing bullying or harassment
- comply with the requirements of the *Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017* and the *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (Vic.), to implement anti-bullying (including cyberbullying) and harassment strategies and procedures as part of the school's responsibility to provide an environment which is safe, where the risks of harm are minimised and where students feel emotionally and physically secure.

St Paul's Anglican Grammar School, in discharging its duty of care, understands that it has a responsibility to enable students to flourish in relation to their emotional, mental and physical health and will take reasonable steps to reduce the risk of reasonably foreseeable harm, which can include harm that may be caused by bullying or harassment.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the School's Code of Conduct, Student Behaviour Management Guidelines, Student Mobile Electronic Devices Policy, Internet and Social Media Policy, Secondary School Student Acceptable Use of Digital Technologies Agreement and Junior School Cybersafety Guidelines.

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions.

Definitions

Bullying – In 2018 the Education Council of the Council of Australian Governments endorsed the following definition of bullying for use by all Australian schools:

Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening.

Bullying can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time (for example, through sharing of digital records).

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have immediate, medium and 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.

Bullying has three main features:

- It involves a misuse of power in a relationship
- It is ongoing and repeated
- It involves behaviours that can cause harm.

Bullying can be (but not limited to):

- **Physical bullying** – hitting, tripping, pushing, shoving or intimidating or otherwise physically hurting another person, damaging or stealing their belongings. It includes threats of violence.
- **Verbal bullying** – name calling, insults, teasing or making fun of someone because of their actions, appearance, physical characteristics or cultural background, verbal abuse.
- **Indirect bullying** – hand gestures and threatening looks, whispering, playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate, mimicking, restricting where a person can sit and who they can talk with, encouraging others to deliberately exclude a person, spreading rumours, sharing information that will have a harmful effect and/or damaging a person's social reputation or social acceptance.

Cyberbullying – Is any form of bullying behaviour using digital technology. For example via a mobile device, computers, chat rooms, email, social media, etc. It can be verbal or written and include threats of violence as well as images, video and/or audio.

Harassment – Is unwelcome behaviour that intimidates, offends, or humiliates a student because of a particular personal characteristic. Harassment is similar to bullying because someone hurts another person through cruel, offensive and insulting behaviours. Harassment is different from bullying in that it is a form of discrimination and is unlawful where the basis for harassment relates to a personal characteristic which is protected by law, such as:

- sex and gender identity or sexuality and sexual orientation
- race, religion, ethnic background
- disability.

Harassment can be (but not limited to):

- Sexual harassment – unwanted physical contact, persistent jokes or innuendos of a sexual nature, intrusive enquiries into another student's private life, sexual propositions, displaying offensive photos, stalking
- Racial harassment – abusive, threatening or insulting words and behaviour, deliberate exclusion from conversations, displaying abusive writing and pictures, insensitive jokes or pranks related to race

- Disability harassment – humiliating comments or insults about a student’s disability, disparaging remarks to students with learning adjustments, comments or actions which create a hostile environment for a student with a disability, deliberately excluding a student where the disability is not an issue.

Roles and Responsibilities

School staff have a responsibility to:

- Respect and support students
- Model and promote appropriate behaviour
- Have knowledge of the school policy relating to bullying and harassment behaviour
- Educate and make students aware of their obligations under this Policy and the law
- Promote a supportive environment that encourages the development of positive relationships and communication between staff, students and parents/carer
- Respond in a timely manner to incidents of bullying and harassment, according to the School’s Bullying and Harassment Processes, outlined in this policy
- Ensure students who raise an issue or make a complaint are not victimised
- Be vigilant in monitoring students that have been identified as either persistent bullies or victims
- Provide curriculum and pedagogy that supports students to develop an understanding of bullying and its impact on individuals and the broader community.

Students have a responsibility to:

- Treat all students, staff and any other person at the School professionally and with respect
- Behave appropriately, respecting individual differences and diversity
- Behave as responsible digital citizens
- Follow the School’s Bullying and Harassment Prevention Policy and Student Code of Conduct
- Behave as responsible bystanders
- Report incidents of bullying, in line with the School’s Bullying and Harassment Prevention Policy.

Parents and caregivers have a responsibility to:

- Support their children to become responsible citizens and to develop responsible on-line behaviour
- Be aware of the School’s Bullying and Harassment Prevention Policy and assist their children in understanding bullying or harassment behaviour
- Support their children in developing positive responses to incidents of bullying consistent with the School’s Bullying and Harassment Prevention Policy
- Report incidents of school-related bullying and harassment behaviour to the School
- Work collaboratively with the School to resolve incidents of bullying and harassment when they occur.

All members of the school community have a responsibility to:

- Model and promote positive relationships that respect and accept individual differences and diversity within the school community
- Support the School’s Bullying and Harassment Prevention Policy through words and actions
- Work collaboratively with the School to resolve incidents of bullying and harassment when they occur.

The School’s policy recognises and supports the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006*, which outlines the basic human rights of all Victorians, including the right to recognition and equality, freedom from discrimination, cultural rights and right to protection of families and children.

Bullying and Harassment Prevention

St Paul's Anglican Grammar School aims to create and maintain a community where all students are free to learn and achieve at the highest level, without interference from others, and where they are comfortable to be individuals and to be themselves.

Bullying and harassment prevention at St Paul's Anglican Grammar School is proactive and supported by a whole school approach to prevent and address bullying and harassment. This is achieved in the following ways:

- We strive to build strong partnerships between the School, families and the broader community and encourage open communication
- We encourage all school community members to recognise and respond appropriately when bullying or harassment occurs
- Students are encouraged to look out for each other and to talk to teachers and older peers about any bullying or harassment they have experienced or witnessed
- The School's Pastoral Care program raises awareness about bullying and harassment and its impacts, it teaches students what constitutes bullying and harassment and how to respond to bullying or harassment behaviour assertively. This promotes resilience, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving
- Anti-bullying and harassment posters are located strategically in the School to promote appropriate behaviour and encourage students to respect individual differences and diversity
- We seek to empower students to be confident communicators and to resolve conflict in a non-aggressive and constructive way.
- Feedback from students is sought regularly in order to monitor the School's culture with regard to bullying and harassment
- Offending individuals are assisted to see value in changing their behaviour and asked to consider ways in which they could make restitution
- Individuals who continue to offend undergo further education and are disciplined according to the Student Behaviour Management Guidelines
- Providing professional development for staff relating to bullying, harassment and the strategies that counter-act them.

Junior School

Additional initiatives are implemented in Junior School to give younger students a better understanding of bullying and harassment behaviours and their prevention. Initiatives include:

- Restorative practices
- Circle time/Play is the way
- Educating students as to what bullying is and isn't
- Presentations for positive behaviour in Assembly
- An orientation program that includes an emphasis on the School's Code of Conduct
- Specific cybersafety sessions including signing of guidelines regarding school expectations
- Buddy systems
- Lunchtime clubs
- Trust mapping and the subsequent follow up of potential issues regarding students with relevant staff and the School Chaplain
- An e-Smart button on MyStPaul's for students to report bullying.

Secondary School

Secondary campuses undertake a number of additional measures in an attempt to prevent bullying and harassment behaviours. Initiatives are as follows:

- Each student is known by their:
 - Mentor Teacher
 - Head of Year
 - Head of School
 - Classroom Teachers

- Classroom teachers are required to report any incidents or unusual behaviour to Mentor teachers or Head of Year immediately via email, phone or conversation
- Mentor teachers meet weekly with their Head of Year
- Heads of Year meet fortnightly with the Head of School
- Head of Year and Head of School consult Trust Mapping Data in an attempt to identify students at risk early and intervene discreetly to ensure the wellbeing of each child
- Students are encouraged to seek assistance immediately if they feel unhappy at school and they are aware of those to whom they can report this unhappiness. A number of staff members are available for each year level so students have some choice in those to whom they feel comfortable speaking
- Head of School identifies trends or data patterns provided in the LEAD Surveys in order to respond to areas of concern
- The eSmart Program focuses on educating the whole school community on technological and cyber issues. Students also have access to an eSmart reporting button on My St Paul's where they can report their feelings electronically if they are not comfortable with face-to-face contact
- Chaplains, Counsellors and Psychologists are available casually and by appointment to support students in both a one-on-one and group setting, as required
- Structured activities are available to students during lunch breaks
- Guest speakers are used to engage and educate students on issues of bullying, harassment and victimisation
- The Pastoral Care Curriculum addresses issues of bullying and harassment and promotes social inclusion
- The Student Representative Council is an initiative where students can speak with student and school leaders and highlight issues so the school can respond to them.

Incident Response

Bullying and harassment complaints will be taken seriously and responded to sensitively at St Paul's Anglican Grammar School. The School's ability to effectively reduce and eliminate bullying and harassment behaviour is greatly affected by students and/or parents and carers reporting concerning behaviour as soon as possible, so that the responses implemented by the School are timely and appropriate in the circumstances.

All bullying and harassment claims will be managed by the School in an effort to ensure the welfare of the victim. Complainants cannot remain anonymous, if the School is to be able to act effectively to manage a complaint.

Junior School Process

If an incidence of bullying or harassment is identified, or brought to the School's attention by other members of the community, the following action will be taken.

Initially, the classroom teacher will endeavour to deal with the situation. If necessary, the relevant Team Leader will then become involved and the Deputy and Head of School will be advised and involved as necessary. The relevant staff will:

1. Talk to the alleged bully and the victim separately to gather further information and ascertain the circumstances. Staff should take clear notes regarding the information gleaned. If more than one student is involved in bullying or harassment behaviour, staff are advised to speak to each student separately, in quick succession
2. Remind the alleged bully about school and classroom rules, reiterate what behaviour is expected, and discuss sanctions that may be imposed for future bullying or harassment behaviour
3. Reassure the victim that everything possible will be done to prevent a recurrence
4. Follow the Restorative Practice model of resolution

5. Make other students aware of the consequences of bullying and harassment behaviour. Reiterate the school's policy of zero tolerance toward bullying
6. Phone the parents of both the bully and the victim. Design a plan of action and keep relevant staff and parents informed
7. Continue to closely monitor the situation
8. Follow up with phone calls to parents regarding the situation.

Where an incident of bullying or harassment is being investigated the classroom teacher should:

- Formally document the incident/s in a Pastoral Care Record (PCR)
- Refer the incident to the appropriate Team Leader or Deputy Head of Junior School if required
- Refer more serious matters directly to the Head of Junior School (The Principal will be briefed on serious incidents – as required).

Secondary School Process

If an incidence of bullying or harassment is identified, or brought to the School's attention by other members of the community, the following action will be taken.

1. The Head of Year / Mentor lead the investigation and initial consultation
2. The victim is addressed and given the opportunity to speak about their experience. Counselling / support is offered
3. The victim is given an opportunity to indicate how the staff member can raise the matter with the alleged bully
4. The victim's parents are contacted to note the discussion and the planned course of action
5. The alleged bully is addressed and a series of guiding questions are asked to clarify interactions with the other student and have them consider how certain actions/comments might impact the other student. The alleged bully is offered counselling / support
 - a. If the alleged bully remains adamant that no bullying or harassment is taking place, the staff member notes that the alleged victim will be consulted now and in the future to make sure that all interactions are positive between the students
6. The alleged bully is guided towards a resolution or action to restore the relationship. The restoration may include a mediated discussion between victim and bully, if the victim feels it could be effective
7. The alleged bully's parents are called – before the student returns home – to give an outline of how events unfolded and to offer an opportunity to discuss matters further the next day, after they have consulted their son/daughter
8. Consequences will be determined by the Head of Year often in consultation with the Head of School with reference to the Student Behaviour Management Guidelines. In serious cases, parents will be asked to join staff for a meeting
9. Repeat incidents will result in meetings with parents, internal suspension or external suspension, in consultation with the Deputy Principal and Principal.

Any matters referred to the Principal are considered serious either in nature or due to their repeated occurrence. The Principal is the final point of reference for disciplinary matters.

The School reserves the right to assess each incident on its merits and to refer any incident to the most appropriate level.

Communication

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our MyStPauls parent portal
- Discussed at staff briefings/meetings as required
- Discussed at student forums/through communication tools
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

Implementation

This Policy is implemented by:

- Staff education/training and supervision
- Student and parent/carer education and information
- Effective incident reporting and recording procedures
- Effective management of bullying or harassment incidents when reported
- Communicating this policy to the school community
- Monitoring the effectiveness of the policy
- Reviewing and evaluating the policy as required or every 2 years

Policy History and Schedule

Version 5

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