



**ST MARK'S  
COLLEGE**

# **Positive Behaviour Interventions and Supports: Bullying and Harassment Prevention and Response Procedure**

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# 1 Purpose

This Bullying and Harassment Procedure sits within the CESA Building Respectful Relationships: Behaviour Education and Student Behaviour Support Policy and aligns with our Positive Behaviour Intervention Supports Framework (PBIS). It provides an outline of responses and supports in situations of bullying and harassment. It aims to ensure a safe and supportive environment for all individuals in the St Mark's College community with the intent to prevent and address any instances of bullying and harassment promptly and effectively. These procedures reinforce our commitment to respect, dignity and positive relationships as outlined in the Building Respectful Relationships: Behaviour Education and Student Behaviour Support Policy.

In implementing these procedures, St Mark's College aims to:

- Explicitly communicate through words and actions that bullying, harassment and discrimination are unacceptable.
- Familiarise all members of the College community with the procedures to be followed in cases of bullying and harassment.
- Promote respectful behaviours, community building and the anti-bullying/anti-harassment expectations of the College.
- Use procedures and practices which will support the victim and assist the perpetrator to change their behaviour.
- Use procedures and practices to empower bystanders to be upstanders.
- Provide education to build resilience and self-esteem of students.
- Provide education to build the capacity of staff to teach programs which build student resilience and self-esteem.

## 2 Scope of Procedures

The scope of the Bullying and Harassment Procedures encompasses all students, staff, and community members. It applies to all interactions within the school environment, including classrooms, playgrounds, and extracurricular activities, as well as digital communications. The procedures also extend to off-campus events and school-related activities, ensuring a comprehensive approach to maintaining a safe and respectful community. These procedures apply to any circumstance involving Bullying and Harassment of or between students, staff and parents and members of the wider College community (school related incidents).

## 3 Definitions

**Harassment** is defined as behaviour which makes a person feel embarrassed or afraid. It is often repeated and always unwanted and unreasonable.

**Bullying** is defined as behaviour through which the perpetrator seeks power over another and often involves intimidation.

Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate action reflecting an imbalance 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 asserting their

power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening. Bullying 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 are not defined as bullying.

Bullying has three main features:

- It involves asserting power over another in a relationship
- It is ongoing and repeated, and
- It involves behaviours that can cause harm.

**Discrimination** is defined as unjust and unequal behaviour based on race, religion, age, sexuality, disability or difference.

## Forms of Bullying, Harassment and Discrimination

Bullying and harassment and discrimination may take a variety of forms including:

- Physical (e.g. fighting, pushing, hitting, pinching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting)
- Verbal (e.g. name calling, offensive language, teasing, sarcasm, insults, threats)
- Social (e.g. ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating, making inappropriate gestures)
- Psychological (e.g. threatening behaviour, belittling comments, spreading rumours, damaging/hiding possessions)
- Victimisation (e.g. intimidating tactics, coercive control, hiding or damaging property)
- Racial (e.g. can include comments about a person's physical appearance, cultural and family background)
- Sexual (e.g. using inappropriate names, sexually orientated jokes, drawings, unwanted physical contact, transmission of sexually explicit images, crude comments about sexual orientation or behaviour)
- Technological (e.g. using the internet, social media platforms, mobile phones or email to cause harm)

### Mutual Conflict:

In mutual conflict situations, there is an argument or disagreement between individuals but not an imbalance of power. Both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution to the problem. However, unresolved mutual conflict sometimes develops into a bullying situation with one person becoming targeted repeatedly for 'retaliation' in a one-sided way.

### Social Rejection or Dislike:

Unless the social rejection is directed towards someone specific and involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others, it is not bullying.

**Single-episode acts of nastiness or meanness, or random acts of aggression or intimidation:** Single episode acts are not the same as repeated bullying. If a student is verbally abused or pushed on one occasion they are not being bullied. Single incidents will be documented in case a pattern emerges and followed through in accordance with Respectful Relationships: Behaviour Education and Student Behaviour Support Policy.

### **Abbreviations**

CESA – Catholic Education South Australia

SAPOL – South Australian Police

PBIS – Positive Behaviour Intervention Supports. PBIS is a three-tiered framework for creating positive, safe, supportive school climates where students can grow and learn

## **4 Prevention and Education**

Education to support building positive relationships is integrated into the curriculum from Reception to Year 12. Age-appropriate teaching and learning is promoted through:

- Keeping Safe: Child Protection Curriculum
- Explicit teaching of Positive Behaviour Intervention and Support expectations and procedures
- Our weekly WRAP Program (Wellbeing, Relationships, Agency and Personal Responsibility)
- Use of Wellbeing Program materials e.g. Wellio, PBIS,
- Guest speakers

## **5 Procedure**

All acts of bullying and harassment reported will be recorded and an appropriate response determined. Incident report forms will be available for students, staff, parents/caregivers and community members. Incident report forms are available from the following locations: College Administration Offices, Home Group Teachers, the Pastoral Care Team and via the College Website.

### **STUDENTS**

A student who is bullied, observes bullying or is made aware of an act of bullying may:

- complete an incident report form and submit it to their Home Group/Class teacher or Pastoral Care and Wellbeing Leader
- report the matter directly to a staff member
- report the matter to a trusted adult– parent/caregiver, family member or friend.

## PARENTS/CAREGIVERS

A parent/caregiver or community member who is made aware of or witnesses an act of bullying or harassment may:

- contact the school on 08 86338800 and request a time to speak with the Home Group/Class Teacher or email details of the alleged incident
- complete an incident report form and submit to Home Group/Class Teacher or Pastoral Care and Wellbeing Leader
- report the incident to SAPOL in the case of sexual or physical assault or threats of harm

## STAFF

A staff member who is made aware of or witnesses an act of bullying or harassment should:

- in the instance of an immediate risk to safety, seek assistance and take action if safe and appropriate to do so
- complete an incident report form with the person involved in the matter and/or family member and upload the report on SEQTA
- record any ongoing communication from students or families regarding bullying and harassment on SEQTA
- take action to improve the situation and provide support for all individuals involved. This may include restorative conversations, behavioural agreements or referral to school counselling
- for serious and ongoing incidents of bullying and harassment refer to the middle and senior leaders for further follow up
- communicate responses and actions in accordance with confidentiality requirements to all parties
- where applicable inform the family lodging the incident report form of their right to make a formal complaint to SAPOL.

## LEADERS

Upon receiving an incident report form or communication, the relevant leader will:

- offer support through advocacy, counselling, restorative practices or communication with the family
- meet with all parties including the alleged victim, bully and known bystanders to collect and record information regarding the incident/s and ongoing behaviours

- contact parents/caregivers of key people involved
- determine appropriate responses in line with the current CESA Building Respectful Relationships: Behaviour Education and Student Behaviour Support Policy and PBIS - Positive Behaviour Interventions and Supports
- where applicable inform the family lodging the incident report form of their right to make a formal complaint to SAPOL.

## 6 Appropriate Response and Support

Bullying and harassment causes harm. A priority is to support the wellbeing of those involved. Students are encouraged to access support through:

- Pastoral Care/Homegroup teacher
- The School Counsellors
- Wellbeing and Engagement Officer
- Leaders of Wellbeing
- Referral to external allied health agencies if appropriate

### RESPONSE to Reports or Allegations of Bullying and Harassment

Any reports of bullying and harassment will be considered a major breach of the College expectations and will be investigated. The following flowchart outlines steps taken to follow up incidents of bullying and harassment in communication with all involved.

When an investigation about bullying is required, the following process will be followed:

### Bullying Incident Response and Consequences Flowcharts:

#### 1. Incident

- An incident occurs, is witnessed or reported that is alleged to be discrimination, bullying or harassment

#### 2. Incident Report

- Witness or affected person makes a report and provides sufficient explicit information regarding the nature of bullying and harassment including persons involved to enable the College to take action

#### 3. Initial Assessment

- Immediate Danger: If there's an immediate threat, ensure student safety and involve law enforcement if necessary
- Non-Immediate Danger: Proceed with investigation

- Communicate reported incident/allegations to families of students involved

#### 4. Investigation

- Gather Information: Collect statements from all parties who may have information.
- Document Evidence: Save texts, emails, or other evidence of cyberbullying

#### 5. Action

- Determine appropriate action, communicate and document in consultation with Senior Leaders.
- Provide support for all parties involved. Respect the dignity of all involved maintaining confidentiality and sensitivity

Upon an outcome of investigation where bullying and harassment is determined, depending on the seriousness of the behaviour responses may include:

- Facilitating pastoral support or counselling services.
- Meeting with students and families regarding outcomes.
- Facilitating restorative conversations/meetings between parties involved.
- Implementing a behaviour plan to replace the bullying and harassment behaviours.
- Make any necessary or mandated reports – Child Abuse Report Line and SAPOL.
- Internal Withdrawal from classes or non-preferred times for re-education supports and programs.
- Suspension aligned with the CESA Building Respectful Relationships Procedures for Suspension and Cancelling Enrolment Procedures.

#### 9. Follow-Up

- Monitor the Situation: Regular check-ins with all parties to ensure the bullying has ceased and all parties are supported.
- Adjust Responses: Modify any supports or actions as needed based on follow-up.

#### 10. Documentation

- Record Keeping: Maintain detailed records of the incident and actions taken.

## 7 Related Documents and links

### Resources

### Supporting Documents

Reporting Bullying & Harassment Form

- [Bullying. No Way!](#)



- [Kids Helpline](#)
- [Office of the eSafety Commissioner](#)
- [Report cyberbullying](#)

## 8 Revision Record

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