

## Student Harassment and Bullying Procedure

Consistent with the mission of the College — to provide Christ-centred schooling in an atmosphere of love, respect, peace and discipline — we aim to have a supportive environment where bullying and harassment does not exist. While this is the goal, we acknowledge that we live in a world that is marred by sin so that God’s original good plan for human relationships is not always followed by human beings (Genesis 1 - 4). Despite our combined efforts to build a safe and happy community, hurtful choices are made, and situations will arise where students mistreat others; sometimes this can escalate to cases of harassment and bullying.

Every person in the College community has the right to feel safe, be treated with respect, and to enjoy a learning environment free from intimidation. Every person in the College community has the responsibility to act fairly, treat others with respect, and behave in safe ways. Everyone has the right and responsibility to report situations where this is not the case, to the College Leadership Team.

### Definitions

**Harassment** covers a wide range of behaviours of an offensive nature. It is commonly understood as behaviour intended to disturb or upset, and it is characteristically repetitive. In the legal sense, it is intentional behaviour which is found to be threatening or disturbing.

**Bullying** is an ongoing misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that can cause physical, psychological or reputational harm. It can involve an individual or a group impacting one or more other people; it may be overt or covert.

Bullying is different from ordinary teasing, rough and tumble or school yard disagreements. What makes it different is that the incidents are ongoing, and there is usually an imbalance of size, strength and power between the students involved in the bullying incident.

Bullying type behaviours can be considered in terms of the following broad categories:

- Direct physical harassment and abuse: Including pushing, shoving, hitting, punching, kicking, poking, tripping people up, gestures or invasions of personal space; it may also take the form of serious physical assault.
- Direct verbal harassment and abuse: Including name calling, offensive language, putting people down; picking on people because of their ethnicity, gender, religious creed, physical appearance or academic ability.

- **Indirect bullying:** This form of bullying is harder to recognise and often carried out behind the bullied student's back. It is designed to harm someone's social reputation and/or cause humiliation. Indirect bullying includes:
  - lying and spreading rumours
  - playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate
  - provoking a food-allergic reaction
  - mimicking
  - encouraging others to socially exclude someone
  - damaging someone's social reputation and social acceptance
- **Sexual harassment and abuse:** Including unwanted touching or brushing against someone's body, sexually orientated jokes, writings, or drawings, using rude names, unwanted invasions of a sexual nature.
- **Cyber bullying:** Includes situations where people use electronic communication (social media, text messaging, e-mail, social networking or other websites, etc.) to communicate in a verbally bullying way. This may happen in or out of school time. It includes creating false profiles, impersonating other students, or creating fake pages to bully someone. If the bullying is of a serious and threatening nature, then it may become a legal issue about which students and parents or caregivers should seek advice by reporting the matter to the police.
- **Other forms:** Including offensive notes or material, graffiti, damaging or hiding someone else's possessions, picking on others, threats, intimidation, extortion, repeated exclusion or isolation.

If harassment and/or bullying amounts to harm, as referred to in the College Child Protection Policy, then the matter must be dealt with under the Child Protection Policy.

## Response to Bullying — Procedural Flowchart

