

Policy

Bullying and Harassment - Student

CONTEXT

St Michael's College is a Catholic School in the Lasallian tradition which is committed to the human and Christian education of the young, especially the poor through;

Community: The College is an inclusive and respectful community where each individual is known, valued and cared for, enabling them to feel confident to explore their curiosities, flourish and fully realise their potential.

Challenge: Individual growth is achieved through engagement, opportunity and recognition, underpinned by a positive learning culture that is authentic, challenging and supportive.

Choice: Through a quality Lasallian education, inspired by the Gospel and a concern for social justice, students are empowered to better choose who they become as people, learners and leaders in the world.

St Michael's College contributes to the development of young people through our Mission and Vision. The College aspires for each person to be "known, valued and cared for." St Michael's College is also dedicated to the Church's commitment to the individual's dignity to enable them to feel confident to explore their curiosities, flourish and fully realise their potential.

The College makes every effort to ensure students are safe while they are in its care. Each person has the overarching responsibility to show respect, care and kindness for themselves and others. As a result, students are empowered to choose better who they become as people, learners, and leaders in the world.

STATEMENT

St Michael's College recognises its duty to students to provide a safe and positive learning environment where individual differences and diversity are respected and accepted. Everyone has the fundamental right to be treated with dignity and respect, free from discrimination of any kind, including but not limited to race, colour, gender, language, religion, political or other opinions, national or social origin, property, birth, or another status.

POLICY OBJECTIVES

The Bullying and Harassment Policy supports the College Mission and Vision, Lasallian values, and the College community's culture and aims to facilitate an environment and community where bullying and harassment are not tolerated, and students have instilled values and practice of respecting the dignity and well-being of all other individuals. Specifically, the Policy aims to prevent, reduce, and manage bullying and harassment by or of students.

These initiatives are given explicit focus throughout the College at various times of the year via Pastoral Care, guest speakers, presentations, and classroom conversations.

Additionally, St Michael's College:

- provides ongoing staff development sessions, including opportunities for staff to undertake further training as per the Staff Professional Development Policy.
- offers a range of opportunities for parents/caregivers to be aware of the key focus areas for each year level as outlined in the Primary and Secondary College Pastoral Care Booklets.



SCOPE

This Policy applies to students and staff of the College and parents/caregivers of students attending the College. All students, staff and parents/caregivers are required to comply with the policy, although it does not form part of a student's enrolment contract with the College.

This Policy is to be read in conjunction with the St Michael's College Sexual Harassment Policy and St Michael's College Suspension and Exclusion Policy.

DEFINITIONS

Bullying

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 can take many forms, including:

- **Physical bullying** - involves physical actions such as hitting, pushing, obstructing or intimidating or otherwise physically hurting another person. Damaging, stealing, or hiding personal belongings is also a form of physical bullying, as are threats of violence.
- **Verbal/written** – examples include: name-calling or insulting someone about an attribute, quality or personal characteristic.
- **Social** examples include: deliberately excluding someone, spreading rumours, sharing information that will have a harmful effect on the other person and/or damaging a person's social reputation or social acceptance. This often includes covert bullying, which can be very difficult for someone outside of the interaction to identify. It can include hand gestures and threatening looks, whispering, excluding or turning your back on a person, restricting where a person can sit and who they can talk with.
- **Cyberbullying** - any form of bullying behaviour that occurs online, via a mobile device or social media. It can be verbal or written, and can include threats of violence as well as images, videos and/or audio.
- **Homophobic and transphobic bullying** - bullying on the basis of sexuality or gender expression. It can include physical violence, cyberbullying, name calling, exclusion, 'jokes' and/or sexual harassment.
- **Racist bullying** - belittling, mocking, intimidating or shaming someone because of their physical appearance, ethnic background, religious or cultural practices and/or the way they dress or talk.



Harassment

Harassment is:

- Language or actions that are demeaning, offensive, humiliating or intimidating to a person because of a characteristic they have. It can take many forms, including sexual harassment, disability harassment and racial discrimination.
- Conduct or behaviour that constitutes bullying or harassment is a breach of the St Michael's College Mission and Vision.

RESPONSIBILITIES

To provide a fair, safe, and supportive learning environment free from all forms of harassment and bullying where dignity and respect are accorded to ensure student physical and emotional safety.

Staff at St Michael's College have a responsibility to:

- Be aware and familiar with Policies and Procedures outlined in the Bullying and Harassment Policy.
- Be guided by the In-Class and Out-of-class Levels of Support in their decision making.
- Model safe and responsible use of technology.
- Ensure stakeholders are aware of the prohibition of all forms of bullying and harassment at the College.
- Establish and maintain a culture inside and outside of the classroom in which students feel safe and comfortable reporting instances of bullying and harassment incidents.
- Be alert, vigilant and actively involved in supervision, when on yard duty.
- Be aware of the various forms of bullying and/or harassment and can identify signs of occurrence among students.
- Ensure students are aware of interpersonal skills that contribute to positive relationships and the consequences of bullying and harassment.
- Ensure there are clear Codes of Conduct concerning the use of mobile devices while on the College premises and at home.
- Follow and adhere to the Bullying and Harassment Flowchart Procedures.

Students at St Michael's College have a responsibility to adhere to the Harassment and Bullying Policy by:

Practicing kindness and not engaging in bullying or harassing behaviour.

- Not engaging in bullying or harassing behaviour.
- Practicing kindness, whether in person or online.
- Engaging with technology in ways that are safe, ethical and responsible.
- Being responsible digital citizens when online or using digital platforms.

Not being a bystander:

- Not be a bystander and allow bullying and harassment to take place.
 - Not assisting a bullying by either joining in or reinforcing the bully's behaviour by smiling, laughing or making comments that signal the behaviour is acceptable.
 - Supporting a person who is being bullied or harassed by getting help from a teacher, distracting the students engaged in the bullying behaviour or harassment, support the student who is being bullied or, if appropriate, directly intervene.
 - Reporting incidents of harassment or bullying to a trusted adult on campus.
 - Encouraging any student who is being bullied and/or harassed to seek support from staff.
 - Not remaining passive, be willing to be an advocate or voice for those who cannot speak about what is taking place regarding being bullied and/or harassed.

Telling the person engaging in bullying behaviour or harassment to stop.

- If being bullied or harassed, tell the person who is engaging in bullying and/or harassing behaviour to stop.
- If being bullied, inform a teacher or trusted adult.



Primary campus students can report bullying and/or harassment, to the class teacher, Primary Coordinator, or another trusted staff member.

Secondary campus students can also report any bullying and/or harassment by sending an email to bullying@smc.sa.edu.au, the YLD or a trusted teacher.

Parents/Caregivers have a responsibility to:

- Be aware of the conditions attached to the enrolment contract.
- Be familiar with the Mobile Device Policy and Bullying and Harassment Policy.
- Work in partnership with the College to respect processes in place.
- Work positively and proactively to guide and support their child's safe, ethical, and responsible use of technology.
- Report any incidents of bullying and harassment or cyberbullying to the College or instruct their child to tell a trusted adult of such incidences.
- Be aware and watch for signs that their child may be being bullied or harassed, such as:
 - Refusal to attend school.
 - Fear of going to school.
 - Patterns of feeling unwell - headaches, upset stomach, etc.
 - Noticeable changes in the application to study or behaviour towards school.
 - Other unusual behaviours.

Parents/caregivers should contact a College staff member via phone, email or in-person if they suspect their child is involved in any bullying or harassment.

PROCEDURES IN THE EVENT OF BULLYING OR HARASSMENT

Please refer to the Flowchart – Bullying & Harassment Procedures below.

POST-INCIDENT ACTIONS

COLLEGE RESPONSIBILITIES

- Implement In-class Levels of Support
- Record added to SEQTA—SIP Panel and Counter Bullying section
- Offer counselling support to all parties
- Mediate restorative meetings when required, permitted and agreed by all parties
- Educate and inform students in relation to the Policy and its implications
- Coordinate consequences: Withdrawal from classes or changes to be made to classes, detention, external suspension or expulsion. As appropriate, arrange educational experiences for students to improve their ability to respond in ways that reflect the College Vision and Mission. This may include via Year Level Director, Primary Coordinator, Director, Deputy Principal or Director Student Wellbeing.

RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND SUPPORT DOCUMENTS

This Policy is to be read in conjunction with the following documents:

- College Mission and Vision Statement
- Levels of Support
- Student Duty of Care Policy
- Mobile Device Policy
- St Michael's College Staff Handbooks
- Bullying and Prevention and Intervention; Pastoral care with a focus on positive relationships including National Day of Action against Bullying and Violence
- Enrolment Contract

REVISION RECORD

Approval Authority: Principal & Board ratification

Reviewed: May 2022

Next Review: May 2025

Flowchart—Bullying and Harassment Procedures

KEY

YLD: Year Level Director (Secondary)

EPC: Early Primary Coordinator (R-Year 1, Primary)

PC: Primary Coordinator (Years 2–6, Primary)

