

St Mary's College Anti-Harassment and Anti-Bullying Guidelines

Preface

As a Catholic school, using Presentation Values (School Wide Positive Behaviour Framework) and operating within the Presentation charism, we see St Mary's College providing a dynamic environment in which students can fulfil their spiritual, academic and personal potential.

Our Anti-harassment and Anti-bullying Guidelines reflect the way we stand for the Gospel values of love, justice, truth, hope, compassion, acceptance, faith, forgiveness and integrity in the tradition of Nano Nagle.

Guideline

St Mary's College aims to create a supportive, secure learning environment, and to break down the code of secrecy that surrounds harassment and bullying. Harassment and bullying are considered serious matters and consequences will follow when they occurs.

Harassment refers to any repeated behaviour from one person to another that offends, humiliates, intimidates or in any other way causes distress.

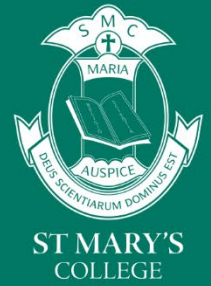
Bullying refers to the use of force, threat, or coercion, to intimidate or aggressively dominate others. The objective when dealing with harassment and bullying is resolution. It is important that the situation is resolved and that the offender makes a real commitment to stop the harassing behaviour.

Rationale

St Mary's College is committed to providing a work environment that is safe, fair and free from harassment for all members of the school community: one that fosters standards of ethical behaviour and conduct.

The aims of the Guidelines are to:

- provide a whole school commitment to social justice
- counter the view that harassment and bullying are an inevitable part of school life
- encourage a preventative approach to harassment
- create a supportive climate where communication is open and honest



All members of the St Mary's College Community engage in resolving harassment and bullying issues, are bound by the Privacy Act (2002) and are expected to participate in this process in good faith.

Complaints of harassment should be treated seriously, promptly, fairly and in a sensitive manner. No member of the St Mary's College Community should instigate complaints that are frivolous or malicious.

Types of Harassment and Bullying (not limited to these examples)

1. PHYSICAL eg

Fighting, punching, pushing, shoving, tripping, negative gestures, invasion of personal space and threats of a physical nature.

2. VERBAL eg

Name-calling; offensive language; slander; put-downs, targeting people because of their race, sex, religion or ability; malicious rumours, threats and sarcasm.

3. VISUAL eg

Offensive notes or offensive material; defacing others' possessions; inappropriate use of technology such as email, cameras, text messages, mobile phones, web sites and social networking sites.

4. BEHAVIOURAL eg

Demanding money, standover tactics, threatening gestures, taking or interfering with another person's possessions or property, repeated exclusion, setting up humiliating experiences, deliberately baiting a student to produce a reaction, group intimidation and stalking.

5. SEXUAL eg

Sexually orientated jokes, drawing or commenting on someone's body; touching or brushing against someone in a sexual manner; unwanted behaviours of a sexual nature; and asking questions prying into someone's private life.

Types of Harassment and Bullying

1. **EMOTIONAL** - (sometimes called relational) – This is behaviour intended to hurt somebody's reputation or social standing which can also link in with the techniques included in physical and verbal bullying.
2. **VERBAL**- This is any harassment or bullying that is conducted by speaking.
3. **PHYSICAL** - This relates to any harassment or bullying that hurts someone's body or damages their possessions.
4. **CYBER**- Cyber-bullying is the use of technology to harass, threaten, embarrass, or target another person.

Strategies

1. Involve and inform the whole school community of the guidelines and procedures: in class for the Junior Years; and in Homerooms for the Years 7-12.
2. Provide self-esteem building activities, and teach skills dealing with assertiveness and non-violent methods of conflict resolution.
3. Provide anti-harassment and anti-bullying education.
4. Provide counselling and/or support for College members who experience harassment or bullying.
5. Provide the College Community with a set of guidelines for recognising and dealing with harassment and bullying.
6. Make the guidelines readily accessible, either in pamphlet form or in the Diary and on the College website.
7. Make provision for incidents to be reported confidentially.
8. Alert the College Community to educative resources available through the Counsellor, eg videos, books, professional learning
9. Monitor incidents and reports of harassment and bullying; conduct Year surveys.

Staff Guidelines

All Staff should know and understand the College Anti-harassment and Anti-bullying Guidelines.

1. Watch for early signs of distress in students, eg
 - Emotional outbursts/tears
 - Complaints of illness
 - Avoidance of the playground
 - Frequent requests to go home sick
 - Absence from school
 - Drop in performance
 - Change in behaviour
 - Solitary behaviours
2. Create a positive environment in which 'put down' statements are not tolerated and be aware of any continual verbal harassment or bullying of particular students in class.
3. Treat complaints seriously
 - Provide an opportunity for students to express their concerns to a trusted teacher, in privacy and ensuring confidentiality.
 - Provide public reminders to students to articulate problems to a teacher
 - Report concerns regarding harassment or bullying to the Director of Junior School /House Coordinators.
4. Listen to students
 - Allow students to speak freely and question them with concern without judging
5. Offer appropriate support and help
6. Use students as a positive resource in countering harassment and bullying and if appropriate, take time to discuss harassment and bullying scenarios in a class.
7. Provide reasonable staff supervision on site.

Parents / Carers Guidelines

Possible Indicators of Harassment and Bullying

- Unwillingness to attend school
- Frequent complaints of headaches or stomach aches
- Missing equipment

- Requests for extra money
- Damaged clothing or bruising
- A decline in the standard of school work
- Emotional outbursts/tears
- Inability to rest
- Change in appetite
- Aggressive behaviour and rudeness at home
- Change in pattern of communication
- Bringing home others' belongings

Course of Action:

Remember that early intervention is crucial. Take an interest in your child's life.

If you suspect that your child is involved in or the victim of harassment or bullying behaviours, discuss the situation with your child and inform a member of the College staff, especially the Class Room or Homeroom Teacher. It is important to maintain the child's confidentiality.

Advise your child to speak to a trusted teacher who will provide strategies to halt the harassment immediately and if needed, speak to a Class Teacher, Homeroom Teacher or House Coordinator to file a written complaint. Parents will need to enact anti-harassment processes in the Junior School.

Monitor online or electronic activity.

Keep a written record if the harassment or bullying persists - who, what, when, where, why. Reassure your child that there is support. Encourage your child not to respond aggressively.

Parents/Carers of the students may be asked to participate in a session with a Counsellor or other appropriate staff member to attempt to resolve the situation.

Parents/Carers can be assisted by a College Counsellor to devise strategies to help the child, whether they are the harassed or the harasser.

Parents/Carers and the students may be asked to participate in a Restorative Justice Practitioner to resolve the situation.

