



# STUDENT SAFETY - BULLYING, HARRASSMENT & CYBER BULLYING POLICY

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## 2. Vision Statement

St Brigid's College commits our community to being a child-safe, nurturing and learning environment within the Catholic and Brigidine traditions, where each of us grows to a personal fullness of faith and life.

## 3. Preamble

Our community of St Brigid's College believes in providing quality education based on the dignity of the human person, who is created in the image of God. St Brigid's College aims to contribute to the development and growth of young people, through education and their formation in Christian values. Each person is recognised as a unique individual, capable of having special qualities and gifts to share and so we all have a right to be respected and a responsibility to respect each other.

## **4. Policy Statement**

Bullying or Harassment is not tolerated in any form at St Brigid's College. All members of our community are committed to ensuring a safe and supportive environment, which promotes personal growth and fosters positive self-esteem.

## **5. Definition**

What is Bullying/Harassment?

Bullying is any repeated, unjustifiable behavior intended to cause fear, distress or harm to another person/s. It may be physical, verbal and/or indirect or relational. Harassment is any unwanted, unwelcome or uninvited repeated behavior which makes a person feel humiliated or offended.

Bullying/harassment includes but is not limited to the following:

- Physical: hitting, slapping, punching, kicking, pushing, strangling, spitting, biting, pinching, scratching and throwing things. It is also bullying if you get someone else to do these things on your behalf.
- Non-physical: name calling, teasing, demanding money or possessions, vandalising or intentionally damaging another's possessions, forcing another to do homework or steal something, spreading rumours or trying to get other students to not like someone. This includes the use of mobile phones or the Internet, sending inappropriate emails, text messages, and inappropriate use of chat lines for any of the above.
- Non-verbal: threatening or obscene gestures, removing and/or hiding another's possessions, deliberate and unwarranted exclusion from a group or activity.
- Bullying/harassment can take a number of forms including physical, verbal, extortion, visual, exclusion, sexual, racial, emotional, social and cyber. It is an imbalance of power or strength. It can be planned and organised or unintentional.
- Standing-by and watching or encouraging bullying by others is also unacceptable. Such action indicates that you accept bullying.

## **6. Procedures**

If you are bullied or harassed:

- Don't put up with it!
- Don't react. Just walk away with your head held high.
- Use a strong confident voice. Be assertive; don't let yourself be put down.
- Remind yourself that you have the right to feel safe and happy.
- Report the bullying/harassment to an adult that you trust. This could be a member of school staff, a parent or family friend or counselor.

Once an incident has been reported:

- Each incident will be thoroughly investigated and assessed. Action in accordance with the St Brigid's College Discipline Policy and Criminal Law. This might include the use of restorative Practices, the method of shared concern, the No Blame approach, counseling, interviews with parents and if necessary, suspension from school, and involvement of the Police.

## **7. Responsibilities**

All members of the St Brigid's community are responsible for the implementation of this Policy

## **8. Legal References**

Federal and relevant State laws bind the School and its employees. A breach of this policy may result in the School and/or its employees breaching any one of the following pieces of legislation:

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth);     | Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth);           |
| Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth); | Equal Opportunity Act 1995 (Vic)             |
| Privacy Act 1988 (Cth)                    | Child Safe Standards (Ministerial Order 870) |
| Education and Training Reform Act 2006    |  |

Note: This is not an exhaustive list of the relevant legislation.

## **9. Related Policies**

- Child Safety Policy
- Computer Internet & Email Acceptable Use Policy
- Information Communication & Technology (ICT) Policy
- Mandatory Reporting of Child Physical & Sexual Abuse Policy
- Mobile Phone Policy
- Pastoral Care Policy

## **10. Appendices**

1. When to use various Bullying Interventions
2. eSmart/Student Wellbeing Guidelines

## **11. Document Review**

|                           |                    |                             |
|---------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Prepared: Jan 2010</b> | <b><u>Date</u></b> | <b><u>Comment</u></b>       |
| Updated:                  | <b>March 2014</b>  |                             |
| Updated:                  | <b>April 2017</b>  | <b>Layout updated, etc.</b> |
| Updated:                  |                    |                             |
| Due for Review:           | <b>March 2021</b>  |                             |

## When to use the various bullying interventions

| Intervention                           | Most suited to:   | Not suitable  |
|--|---|---|
| Restorative chat                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minor incidents that can be sorted out in a short space of time.</li> <li>When participants are both aggressors and targets.</li> <li>When the aggressor admits fault.</li> </ul>  | <b>Not suitable</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When the aggressor does not admit fault and there is no <u>reliable</u> evidence of their involvement.</li> <li>If one of the main aggressors or targets is too vulnerable, such as depressed or fragile state of mind.</li> </ul> |
| No Blame approach / Peer Support Group | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If there is one target involved</li> <li>Where the extent of the bullying is difficult to prove</li> <li>Where it would be harmful to the target to be confronted by their aggressors and/or onlookers</li> </ul>  | <b>Not suitable</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For serious or criminal type bullying</li> <li>For multiple targets</li> </ul>   |
| No Blame Classroom Conference          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When there are multiple targets and aggressors</li> <li>When there has been work done with the class on building relationships and trust. For example, Circle Time</li> <li>Ongoing annoying behaviours within a classroom which interfere with teaching and learning</li> <li>Behaviour is characterised by a lack of respect</li> <li>When bullying is covert (hidden) or overt (obvious)</li> <li>When the facilitator is trained in this intervention</li> </ul> | <b>Not suitable</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When there is only one target or aggressor</li> <li>If one of the main aggressors or targets is too vulnerable.</li> </ul>   |
| Method of Shared Concern               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Very effective when there are a number of aggressors from a peer group involved</li> <li>When there is clear evidence of bullying</li> <li>When staff are initially aware of who some of the aggressors are</li> <li>For more serious incidents of bullying</li> <li>Where the teacher has been trained, or has experience in this intervention</li> <li>Especially relevant with provocative victims</li> </ul>   | <b>Not suitable</b> when very severe or criminal type bullying is involved.   |

| Intervention                                | Most suited to:   | Not suitable   |
|---|---|--|
| Mediation                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For minor instances of bullying rather than prolonged bullying over time.</li> <li>Where the staff member has been trained, or has experience in this intervention</li> <li>Where both parties are keen to resolve the issue.</li> </ul>   | <b>Not suitable</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When one party is reluctant to seek resolution.</li> <li>Where multiple parties are involved</li> <li>Where there is a notable power imbalance between the two parties.</li> <li>If one of the main aggressors or targets is too vulnerable, such as depressed or fragile state of mind.</li> </ul>                           |
| Coaching / Support to target & or aggressor | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where there is a willingness of both the coach and target or aggressor to build a relationship.</li> <li>To support a target or aggressor to resolve issues more effectively</li> <li>Where sufficient time exists for ongoing meetings.</li> <li>Where realistic goals and outcomes can be agreed upon between the coach and target or aggressor.</li> <li>Where there is a clear understanding of the nature of the engagement.</li> <li>Where genuine respect, trust and empathy exist in the relationship.</li> <li>The coach is resourced and supported in their role.</li> </ul> | <b>Not suitable</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Where multiple people are involved due to the ongoing time commitment required.</li> <li>Where the coach does not believe in the person.</li> <li>Where the coach believes in punishment rather than the ability of individuals to learn and change their thinking, how they feel and their consequent behaviours.</li> </ul> |
| Community Conference                        | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Major serious incidents, including criminal cases.</li> <li>When participants are both aggressors and targets but not limited to this.</li> <li>When the aggressor admits fault.</li> <li>Where there is a skilled and trained facilitator in this intervention.</li> <li>Where supporters of either target/s or aggressor/s can be induced to play an appropriate part.</li> </ul>  | <b>Not suitable</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When the aggressor does not admit fault and there is no reliable evidence of their involvement.</li> <li>If one of the main aggressors or targets is too vulnerable, such as depressed or fragile state of mind.</li> <li>For minor bullying incidents.</li> </ul>  |



## **eSMART 'ALANNAH & MADELEINE FOUNDATION'**

### **eSmart/Student Wellbeing Guidelines**

#### **Preamble:**

Our community of St Brigid's College believes in providing quality education based on the dignity of the human person, who is created in the image of God. Each person is recognised as a unique individual capable of having special qualities and gifts to share and so we all have a right to be respected and a responsibility to respect each other. St Brigid's College is committed to providing a safe, secure and caring learning environment for all students and staff.

St Brigid's College maintains a 'zero' tolerance policy to the bullying of students and staff. Cybersafety is a major area that requires a high level of support from a whole school approach. While the Internet and Digital technologies are very much a part of life and education, it is a valuable resource if used for educational purposes, however there are times when these mediums act as risk factors.

Fundamentally, cybersafety is an area that requires a high level of community cooperation. Internet and digital technologies are now very much a part of life and learning. As an increasingly interactive medium, it brings with it exciting educational opportunities, however at the same time it also carries risks.

#### **Purpose/Aim:**

- For St Brigid's College to develop and implement a 'whole school' approach to ensure that students and staff are protected from bullying and cyberbullying during school hours. For students to be educated about Cybersafety to ensure that they are safe within their own home environments.
- The eSmart/Wellbeing Guidelines should be read in conjunction with the:
  - Computer, Internet and Email Acceptable Use Policy
  - Student Safety and Wellbeing Policy
  - Electronic Device Usage Policy
- To explicitly teach students safe and responsible behaviours and respectful online behaviours.
- To achieve accreditation as an eSmart school, meeting all criteria as outlined in the eSmart System Tools.

## **Implementation:**

- All staff members will be familiar with the eSmart strategies and will be provided with information required for Cybersafety education across all areas of the school.
- Cybersafety will be explicitly taught across all areas of the curriculum.
- There will be expectations that parents/guardians reinforce positive behaviours online at home.
- At the beginning of each school year and throughout the year, staff will be expected to familiarise students with the policies in place for using digital technologies both at school and in their home environment.
- Staff will update students and make students aware of any issues such as online privacy and intellectual property. Informing students that some online activities are illegal and will be reported to the police.
- Students and their families will be made aware that all students will be supervised when using their digital technology device and a filtered Internet service will be in place during school hours. Full protection from inappropriate content cannot be fully guaranteed, however sites, social sites such as Facebook, SnapChat, Instagram, Kick are blocked on the school server. Inappropriate content is filtered through the school server and is monitored at all times.
- All students and Parents/Guardians will sign the 'Computer, Internet and Email Acceptable Use Policy' at the beginning of each year, as will any student who commences St Brigid's College throughout the year. Students will not be permitted to use digital devices during school hours unless they have read and signed this policy documentation.
- Students are encouraged to report any incidents of cyberbullying or inappropriate use of technology that they become aware of.
- Parents/Guardians are encouraged to report any incidents of cyberbullying or unsafe, inappropriate behaviour that they become aware of to the school.
- All incidents of Cyberbullying must be referred to the TA's, Year Level Coordinators, ICT Coordinator, Student Wellbeing Coordinator, Deputy Principal and the Principal.
- Students are advised to report an incident to their teacher immediately if:
  - They have experienced an incident of Cyberbullying
  - They feel the welfare of other students at the school are being threatened.
  - They come across sites that they feel are not appropriate for our school.
  - Someone writes something they do not like, makes them or their peers feel uncomfortable, or asks them to provide private information.
- Parents/Guardians will be notified and expected to meet with the appropriate school staff, if students (their child) are involved in any incidents of cyberbullying/bullying.
- Any student who does not follow the guidelines of the eSmart & Student Wellbeing Guidelines, the Computer, Internet and Email Acceptable Use Policy, the Electronic Device Usage Policy and the Student Safety and Wellbeing Policy, will lose their ICT privileges for a length of time as deemed appropriate by the Principal, Deputy Principal or ICT, Year Level Coordinators. Students will also be required to complete additional Cybersafety sessions before their privileges are returned.
- All policies and guidelines apply to school excursions, camps and extra curricular activities.

St Brigid's College does not tolerate any form of 'Bullying'. 'Cyberbullying' is no exception. The Staff of St Brigid's College will ensure the safety of each student within the school community. If any staff member is made aware of any form of Cyberbullying, the Parents/Guardians of the students involved will be notified and a meeting will be requested to discuss the issue. Cyberbullying poses unique challenges because, while it is more likely to occur outside the school environment, staff may observe the impact on students during school hours. Staff observe students and their peers and may identify changes in behaviour while at school. St Brigid's College considers all incidents of Cyberbullying as important; it is an illegal act and may become a police matter.

Cyberbullying includes, but is not limited to:

- Sending or posting nasty or threatening messages which may be anonymous.
- Misusing personal information gained by pretending to be someone's 'friend' to spread rumours, secrets and to gain power over others.
- Sending nasty or threatening messages or emails.
- Forwarding offensive content including jokes, videos, images and sound.
- Sending computer viruses.
- Accessing someone else's account to forward personal emails or delete them.
- Constantly calling or texting a person and making derogatory and/or rude remarks and/or threatening and hostile remarks.
- Taking and sharing unflattering images with other mobiles or uploading onto the internet.
- Using text or voice chats to harass or scare someone.
- Sending a hostile attachment.
- Using someone else's account to forward rude or unpleasant messages via their contacts list.
- 'Ganging up'—a group deciding to pick on or exclude someone from a network.
- Making and sending inappropriate pictures and content.
- Persuading or threatening young people to act in inappropriate ways.
- Using inappropriate recordings to manipulate young people.
- Posting nasty and abusive comments.
- Posting images, videos or sound that may embarrass or frighten a person.
- Creating a fake profile to bully, harass or create trouble for a person.
- Accessing another person's account details and using their page to post negative materials, send unpleasant messages or make private information public.
- Posting embarrassing or humiliating video clips.