

St Columban's College

Anti-Bullying Policy



Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedures

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St Columban's College

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1. Mission Statement

At St Columban's College, it is acknowledged that a diverse range of personal, social, cultural, family and religious influences can impact on the relational and behavioural responses of students at any given point in time. In light of these influences, we seek to develop throughout the school community **right behaviours and respectful relationships that are infused with gospel values**. The following common features are integrated into our existing curriculum programs and classroom practices with a proactive learning and teaching focus for all students.

- *Quality relationships and partnerships* – the fostering of respectful interpersonal relationships among and between all community members
- *A commitment to justice and service* - identifying and eliminating barriers that hinder students' participation and achievement

These principles are reflected in our College **Mission Statement**.

The St Columban's College Mission includes six key components:

- Foster growth in the awareness of the Christian message within the Catholic tradition
- Cultivate the intellectual, physical and creative abilities of each person
- Encourage the practice of informed and unprejudiced thinking
- Prepare students for life through proper emphasis on vocational and recreational pathways
- Actively involve parents in the life of the College with staff and students in developing positive relationships and an inclusive community
- Foster global skills needed for the 21st century

St Columban's and Blessed Edmund Rice

St Columban's College has the Charism of Blessed Edmund Rice at the heart of its daily life. We, as a community, embrace Edmund's teachings of Justice and Solidarity. The College is a member of Edmund Rice Education Australia. This has strong implications in the way that we understand our Catholic identity at the College, in particular in the way that we build relationships. To quote from 'A Charter for Catholic Schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition':
'Our community is accepting and welcoming, fostering right relationships and committed to the common good.'

This Student Behaviour Support Plan is designed to facilitate high standards of behaviour so that the learning and teaching in our school and during related off campus activities can be effective and students can participate positively within our school community. Through our school plan shared expectations for student behaviour are clear for everyone, assisting St Columban's College to create and maintain a safe and orderly learning and teaching environment.

2. Preventing and Responding to Bullying at St Columban's College

"All Australian schools are safe, supportive and respectful learning and teaching communities that promote student wellbeing" NSSF (Revised 2011)

A safe and supportive school is described in the following way:

"In a safe and supportive school.....diversity is valued and all members of the school community feel respected and included and can be confident that they will receive support in the face of any threats to their safety and wellbeing" (NSSF).

St Columban's College promotes and aims to provide a safe and supportive learning environment for all students. We strive to ensure a culture where all acknowledge and understand that student safety and wellbeing is the responsibility of everybody.

The College addresses all hurtful behaviour, irrespective of whether or not it meets the definition of bullying. Any behaviour that results in harm or is likely to result in harm to a student is reported to the House Leaders and/or Senior Leadership Team and responded to in line with BCE Student Protection Processes.

St Columban's College takes the issue of bullying and cyber safety very seriously. Providing safe and supportive environments for learning is essential to achieving school improvement, raising student achievement and attendance levels, promoting equality and diversity, and ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all members of the school community – **Every Student, Every Success.**

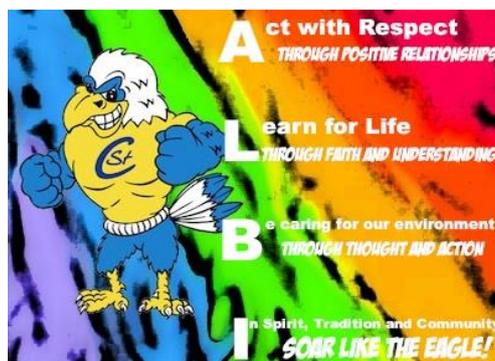
3. Universal Behaviour Support (proactive/ preventative strategies)

Our anti-bullying policy is supported through our School Wide 'Positive Behaviour 4 Learning' Program that underpins our behaviour management policy.

At St Columban's College, we believe that preventing inappropriate behaviour through the promotion of appropriate behaviour is a more positive and successful method of managing student behaviour than intervening reactively after behaviour incidents occur. In this spirit, the College has adopted the **Positive Behaviour 4 Learning (PB4L)** framework (SWPBS), which is based on actively promoting, and supporting positive behaviours in the school community.

St Columban's College: SWPBS Core Rules

- ✓ *Act with respect through positive relationships*
- ✓ *Learn for life through faith and understanding*
- ✓ *Be caring for our environment through thought and action*
- ✓ *In spirit, tradition and community soar high like the eagle*



4. Roles, Rights and Responsibilities of School Community Members

The core business of St Columban's College is teaching. Teachers, in partnership with students and parents, seek to provide an environment where the learning process is promoted and opportunities are maximized. Each of the partners have rights and responsibilities as they exercise their part in building this Christian community according to Gospel values.

All members of the College community are expected to conduct themselves in a lawful, ethical, safe and responsible manner that recognises equity and respects the rights of others.

Students and Parents both sign a "Challenge to Partnership of Excellence" when they enrol in the College, outlining their rights and responsibilities as members of the St Columban's Community. This document ensures that; parents, students and the College act in partnership together to allow every student to reach their rich potential in their life journey – **"Every Student – Every Success"**

5. Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedures

THE AIMS OF THE BULLYING POLICY

Students have a right to feel safe and respected at St Columban's College. Our school community is one where students are encouraged to care for themselves, the school and environment and where bullying is not an acceptable behaviour. Therefore, the Policy aims to:

- Reinforce within the College community that no form of bullying is acceptable.
- Create an atmosphere where through cooperation and guidance students feel happy, appreciated and secure enough to be themselves.
- Allow parents and community to feel confident and comfortable in sharing their thoughts, feelings and experiences.
- Build a support system based on cooperation and trust between staff.
- Foster self-discipline, self-respect, respect for others, and responsible decision-making.
- Allow everyone within the school community to be alert to evidence of bullying and to have a responsibility to report it to staff whether as observer or victim.
- To ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are followed up and that support is given to both victim and perpetrator to seek support and cooperation.

Definition

- Not all conflict between people constitutes bullying.
- Bullying is usually repeated behaviour and usually involves an imbalance of power between the individuals. The imbalance of power could arise from difference in age, ability, physical strength, social status or some other attribute.
- A particular single incident could be considered bullying behaviour if it involves a gross imbalance of power between the aggressor and the victim.
- Bullying is usually done with the intent to disrupt physically or emotionally, but it can also be an unintentional process, where people are insensitive to the feeling of others and the effects of their actions. It is "recipient defined", i.e., "it was only a joke" or "S/He doesn't mind" is never an acceptable excuse for bullying behaviour.

Bullying may include:

- Physical: hitting, kicking, any form of violence, threat or intimidation that could cause physical harm
- Verbal: name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing, intimidation, lying about someone
- Emotional: excluding, tormenting, ridicule, humiliation, intimidation
- Racist: taunts, graffiti, gestures, intimidation
- Sexual: unwanted physical contact, abusive comments, intimidation
- Cyber: unwanted text messages, emails, inappropriate use of information technology, intimidation

A Bystander is a person who witnesses a bullying incident as an onlooker. At St Columban's College, we agree that if you are a bystander who encourages bullying behaviours or you witness bullying and do not report the incident, your behaviour is condoning the bullying. A bystander should provide assistance by alerting an adult and where possible, supporting the target.

Prevention and Intervention Strategies

St Columban's College promotes a school culture where bullying is unacceptable, disclosure is encouraged and prompt intervention is taken by staff. Preventative practices are linked to the College's Positive Behaviour 4 Learning program and aims to embed an anti-bullying message across the whole school, through: curriculum, cocurricular activities, targeted programs and strategies designed to prevent bullying behaviours. Examples of these programs at St Columban's College include:

Primary prevention programs:

- Mentoring programs
- Buddy system across pastoral care
- Induction and transition programs
- Camps and retreats across each year level
- Peer networking and friendship building programs such as 'Positive Friends' and 'Peer Mentoring'

Early Intervention Strategies:

- Promotion of anti-bullying strategies and messages via: year level assemblies, retreat days, guest speakers and outside support agencies
- Targeted programs across year levels to promote care and respect for each other
- Targeted behaviour support strategies are implemented for students who are at risk and may include intervention programs involving support and specialist staff, communication between parents/ caregivers and staff will take place before, during, and after additional supports are implemented. Some of these interventions may include: Restorative Justice processes, Guidance Counselling, Social Skills programs and arranging, where appropriate, work experience opportunities.

Intervention Procedures:

When an investigation about bullying is required, the following procedures may be followed:

- a) At St Columban's College: Those involved will be interviewed and made aware of the suspected bullying and the school's anti-bullying position. The best intervention methods will then be used to address the issue.

Some consequences may include being referred back to the House leader/classroom teacher, so the incident can be addressed and/or monitored

b) If bullying is substantiated, leadership team members may choose to use the following methods with the students involved:

- Mediation
- Restorative Justice
- Individual counselling
- Continuing Monitoring of the situation
- Withdrawal from the College community for a specified period of time

Parents of both the perpetrator (the student exhibiting the bullying behaviour), and the target, will be notified of the level and severity of the incident and its consequences. A record of the incident is kept on file.

c) Continued bullying would result in a further action plan being devised, appropriate consequences for the student, and further dialogue between parents/carers and The College. The Guidance Counsellor and /or Learning Support may be involved in formulating this action plan.

Should it be required the Principal or their delegate may be required to notify the police of other civil authority.

6. Support for the target and perpetrator

We support the target in the following ways:

- Offering them an immediate opportunity to talk about the experience with their House Coordinator or another teacher or member of administration, to ensure their wellbeing and ongoing protection.
- Informing the student's parents/carers.
- Suggesting appropriate, positive anti-bullying behaviours with the student.
- Offering continuing support when they feel they need it and encouraging immediate reporting of incidents.
- Taking necessary actions to prevent more bullying. e.g. buddy system

We support the perpetrator in the following ways:

- Talking immediately with their House Leader/teacher or member of administration about what has happened and the behaviours the student has been displaying.
- Informing the student's parents/carers.
- Assisting in the development of the student's behaviour through appropriate support that assists in not only change, but acceptance of responsibility for their actions e.g. counselling, anger management.
- Enforcing appropriate consequences that are directly linked to the student's bullying behaviour.

7. Links to related BCE policies

- Student Behaviour Support Policy
- Student Behaviour Support Regulations and Guidelines

8. Related Resources

- Positive Behaviour 4 Learning (PB4L) (www.pbis.org)
- Laptop Guidelines & Policy (includes Acceptable Use of Personal Devices Policy)
- Uniform & Grooming Policy
- Restorative Justice Framework
- Anti Bullying Policy
- St Columban's College Partnership of Excellence