



Topic:	<b>Positive Behaviour Policy</b> <i>Dealing with Bullying, Harassment, Aggression and Violence (Students)</i>
CECWA Policy:	2-D6
Policy Area:	Inter-relationships
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## 1. Rationale

Holy Cross College students and staff have the right to a positive, safe and caring environment that promotes learning, personal growth and positive self-esteem. Each member of the College community has the responsibility of ensuring that Holy Cross College is a safe place for staff, students and visitors at all times.

Our Learning and Inter-relationships Pillars call each of us to value the respect and dignity of each person and to nurture a caring, compassionate and connected community and, therefore, aims to encourage the development of positive relationships between students to reduce all forms of bullying, harassment, aggression, racism and violence.

Learning outcomes, physical health, emotional, psychological and spiritual wellbeing can be adversely affected by bullying, harassment, aggression, racism and violence. Students who are bullied, subject to aggression, racism or harassed tend to have poorer health, lower self-esteem, more interpersonal difficulties, higher levels of loneliness, depression, suicidal ideation and increased anxiety. They are also more likely to have a dislike of and want to avoid school, higher absenteeism and lower academic competence. The effects of bullying can begin early in life and, for some, last a lifetime.

Therefore, no forms of bullying, harassment, aggression, racism or violence will be tolerated at Holy Cross College.

The Australian Government's National Safe Schools Framework (NSSF) adopts a whole school approach to safety and wellbeing. It provides a comprehensive range of evidence-informed practices to guide schools in preventing and responding to incidents of harassment, aggression, violence, racism and bullying and to implement their responsibilities in relation to child protection issues. The National Safe Schools Framework is based on the following overarching vision: *All Australian schools are safe, supportive and respectful teaching and learning communities that promote student wellbeing.*

In the NSSF, a safe and supportive school is described in the following way:

*In a safe and supportive school, the risk from all types of harm is minimised, 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 or wellbeing.*

The Guiding Principles of the National Safe Schools Framework

This Framework is underpinned by the following guiding principles that represent fundamental beliefs about safe, supportive and respectful school communities. These guiding principles

emphasise the importance of student safety and wellbeing as a pre-requisite for effective learning in all school settings.

Australian schools:

- affirm the rights of all members of the school community to feel safe and be safe at school
- acknowledge that being safe and supported at school is essential for student wellbeing and effective learning
- accept responsibility for developing and sustaining safe and supportive learning and teaching communities that also fulfill the school's child protection responsibilities
- encourage the active participation of all school community members in developing and maintaining a safe school community where diversity is valued
- actively support young people to develop understanding and skills to keep themselves and others safe
- commit to developing a safe school community through a whole-school and evidence based approach

The nine key elements that schools need to have in place to implement the NSSF are described in the Framework as:

1. Leadership commitment to a safe school
2. A supportive and connected school culture
3. Policies and procedures
4. Professional learning
5. Positive behaviour management
6. Engagement, skill development and safe school curriculum
7. A focus on student wellbeing and student ownership
8. Early intervention and targeted support
9. Partnerships with families and community

This policy identifies the principles and procedures to guide the College when promoting positive behaviour and when dealing with bullying, harassment, aggression and violence with students.

## **2. Definitions**

### **2.1 Positive Behaviour**

Positive behaviours are those attributes that exhibit socially acceptable norms of personal conduct. Positive behaviours are those that help students move toward the goal of becoming well-adjusted, fully functioning adults with a Christian conscience.

### **2.2 Bullying**

Bullying is a repetitive act that causes distress not only at the time of the attack, but also by the threat of future attacks. It is categorised by an imbalance of power.

### **2.3 Cyber-bullying**

Cyber-bullying is when an individual or group use technologies to intentionally hurt another person or group of people. It is a form of bullying, which is carried out through an internet service such as email, chat room, discussion group, online social networking, instant messaging or web pages. It can also include bullying through mobile phone technologies such as SMS, voice recordings, video, webcam and still photography.

## 2.4 Harassment

Harassment is any unwanted, unwelcome or uninvited behaviour, which makes a person feel humiliated, intimidated or offended. Harassment can be seen as one form of bullying. The terms are often used interchangeably.

## 2.5 Examples of Bullying and Harassment

- verbal - name-calling, constant put-downs, threats (spoken, written or electronic), teasing, name calling, threatening, sending or posting nasty or malicious messages electronically, sexual innuendo and harassment
- physical - hitting, pushing, tripping, punching, throwing objects, stealing, interfering with the property of others
- social – ignoring, hiding, deliberately ignoring or excluding
- psychological – stalking, threatening looks, gossiping, spreading rumours, sending hurtful notes, damaging possessions
- cyber-bullying - teasing, making fun of others, spreading of rumours or passing on gossip when online, taking photographic images without permission and/or posting inappropriate photographic material or animation, sending unwanted messages
- racism – jokes or comments that cause offence or hurt, name-calling or verbal abuse, harassment, intimidation or commentary (including online) that inflames hostility towards certain cultural groups, physical abuse and violence, direct or indirect exclusion based on bias or prejudice.

## 3. Principles

Holy Cross College:

- owes a duty of care to its students
- promotes positive interpersonal relationships between members of the College community
- promotes respect for self and others, physical/emotional well-being and positive mental health
- strives to provide a safe, supportive environment in which it is acceptable to talk about bullying to people who can help
- promotes respect for self and others and physical and emotional well-being
- strives to provide an environment which challenges bullying and applies sanctions when bullying occurs
- takes all aspects of bullying seriously

## 4. Procedures

- 4.1 All staff at Holy Cross College, teaching and non-teaching, have the responsibility to promote and facilitate the creation of a safe and welcoming environment in the College, one in which bullying is not tolerated and can be reduced. To this end, a number of strategies are encouraged:

Whole School Strategies

- develop and implement a whole school Positive Behaviour Policy
- evaluate the effectiveness of the Positive Behaviour Policy through surveys/discussion
- publish the Positive Behaviour Policy on the intranet and promote through the curriculum, assemblies and newsletters
- ensure that this policy is understood and implemented by College staff
- develop effective interventions in response to bullying incidences
- encourage open communication between parents, students and staff

- provide information for students about what to do in bullying situations
- provide information for students and parents on cyber safety
- provide opportunities for the development of positive relationships between student and teachers
- provide opportunities for the development of positive peer relationships through vertical pastoral care groups called House Tutor Group and the College House system
- filter for language, virus, malware, inappropriate content on websites; and monitor student use of ICT
- provide information sessions for parents on cyber-safety

#### Staff Strategies

- promote the Christian ethos by modelling caring and appropriate behaviour
- be familiar with the College Positive Behaviour Policy
- provide appropriate supervision of students both in and out of classrooms
- encourage the disclosure of bullying incidents by being available and empathetic to students
- be alert to indicators and signs of distress in students
- listen to reports of bullying, facilitate mediation and endeavour to stop bullying behaviour from recurring
- create a positive classroom climate
- encourage cooperation and participation rather than competition in the classroom
- incorporate the teaching of positive social skills, conflict resolution and coping strategies in the curriculum
- make students aware of the possible dangers of the indiscriminate use of webcam and other forms of digital photography, in particular the laws concerning the sending of intimate images and/or sexting
- offer support through pastoral care and well-being services

#### Student Strategies

- model positive behaviours with staff and other students
- be familiar with the College Positive Behaviour Policy
- respect difference and accept diversity in others
- be aware of the role of bystanders in bullying and develop safe ways to challenge bullying
- make it clear to peers that bullying is not acceptable
- discuss incidents of bullying with parents or a trusted staff member, whether a victim or a bystander
- support students who are involved in bullying incidents
- participate in education programmes promoting positive social skills
- when using ICT guard your user name and password
- be aware of the possible dangers of the indiscriminate use of webcam and other forms of digital photography, in particular the laws concerning the sending of intimate images and/or sexting
- guard personal contact information; only give mobile phone number, instant messaging name or e-mail address to trusted friends. Do not give personal details to people you do not know
- take a stand against cyber bullying; speak out whenever someone is being mean to another person online.

#### Parent/Guardians' Strategies

- model and teach appropriate behaviour
- acknowledge and accept difference in others
- discuss the Positive Behaviour Policy with your son/daughter
- discuss bystander behaviour and ways to be a positive bystander with your son/daughter
- develop your son/daughter's self-esteem through praise, feedback, and encouraging involvement in College/community life
- be aware of signs of distress in your son/daughter
- listen sympathetically to reports of bullying, clarify what happened, keep an open mind and remember you are only hearing one part of the story
- accept an issue has been resolved if it has been dealt with to your child's satisfaction
- encourage your son/daughter to notify his/her House Tutor if he/she is victim or a bystander in a bullying incident
- notify your son's/daughter's House Tutor if you are aware of bullying occurring
- attend information sessions on cyber safety
- monitor your child's use of the internet and know what they are doing on-line

#### 4.2 Sending Intimate Images or Sexting

It is important to note that it is an offence under Commonwealth Law to use a carriage service to menace, harass or cause offence to someone by repeatedly sending them unsolicited intimate images.

Sexting refers to sending, receiving, or forwarding sexually explicit messages, photographs, or images, usually between mobile phones, of oneself to others.

Under Commonwealth laws it is an offence to take, keep, send, or ask for an intimate image of a person who is under the age of 18 – including an image of oneself.

Under the Criminal Law Amendment (Intimate Images) Act 2018 WA, it is an offence to threaten to hurt, harm or cause a detriment to another person by threatening to distribute an intimate image of another person. A person can be charged with this threat offence even if they do not actually have the ability to distribute the intimate image or the image does not actually exist. Severe penalties apply if the threat is made with the intention of gaining a benefit, causing a detriment, or compelling a person to do something against their will.

Students will be made aware of the implications in regard to sending Intimate Images or Sexting within the Keeping Safe Program.

Instances of students sending Intimate Images or Sexting shall be dealt with in-line with the obligations under the relevant State and Commonwealth laws.

### 4.3 Responding to Harassment and Bullying (Staff)

The College's response to bullying is to support, repair and rebuild. Bullying incidents should be reported to students' House Tutors. The House Tutor will involve other relevant staff as required. Management of incidences of harassment and bullying will be dealt with according to three levels:

#### **Level One - Low Level Incidences**

**Low Level Incidences:** Low level incidences do not involve acts of aggression or violence and present little or some evidence of repeated action.

**Discussion:** Students involved speak with a member of staff to clarify what happened. Restorative practice will be the basis of the approach.

**Mediation:** All parties involved will meet with a member of staff to provide an opportunity for discussion and resolution (Method of Shared Concern and No Blame Approach will be utilised).

**Consequences:** All parties involved will meet with a member of staff to review whether there has been a positive behaviour change. If bullying has continued the behaviour management policy, will be followed. This may include contacting parents/guardians.

#### **Level Two - Medium Level Incidences**

**Medium Level Incidences:** Medium level incidences include serious breaches of the student's enrolment agreement and the College rights and responsibilities. Furthermore there is evidence of repeated incidents.

**Discussion:** Students involved will first speak with a member of staff. Then students will discuss the incident with relevant Class Teacher/Assistant Principal - Junior School or House Tutor. Parents/guardians will be informed and asked to attend a meeting with the Class Teacher/ Assistant Principal - Junior School or House Tutor.

**Mediation:** Student, Parent and Teacher/ Assistant Principal - Junior School or House Tutor/House Coordinator/Assistant Deputy Principal – Inter-relationships will meet together to provide an opportunity for discussion and resolution. Restorative practice will be the basis of the approach.

**Consequences:** Behaviour Management Policy will be followed as appropriate.

#### **Level Three - High Level Incidences**

**High Level Incidences:** High level incidences involved severe cases of violence, aggression and intimidation and/or persistent acts of bullying.

**Discussion:** Students involved will first speak to a member of staff. Staff member will inform Assistant Principal - Junior School or relevant House Coordinator. After the House Tutor has ascertained that severe incidences have occurred, parents/guardians and students will be required to attend a meeting with the Vice Principal and Assistant Principal - Junior School (for Junior school students) or Vice

Principal, Assistant Deputy Principal – Inter-relationships and House Coordinator (for secondary school students).

**Mediation:** Vice Principal and Assistant Principal - Junior School or Vice Principal and Assistant Deputy Principal – Inter-relationships. The Principal will be involved where appropriate.

**Consequences:** The Behaviour Management Policy will be followed. Referral to outside agencies may be considered and discussed with parents/guardians (for counselling, behaviour management strategies, etc)

#### 4.4 Responding to Harassment and Bullying (Students)

##### **Action Plan**

If you do not feel safe you can:

- 1) Ignore behaviour and show it doesn't upset you.

**You start to feel safe.**

- 2) Confront the person who is making you feel unsafe and tell the person that the behaviour is illegal and unwanted.

**Unwanted behaviour stops – you begin to feel safe.**

- 3) Talk it over with someone you can trust to help you, eg parents, family, friends.

**Unwanted behaviour stops – you begin to feel safe.**

- 4) Talk it over with someone you can trust to help you at school, eg staff member, Class/HTG Teacher, House Coordinator, College Counsellor. Talk openly, sharing what you have already tried, and act on suggestions. Report back to this person after a while.

**Unwanted behaviour stops – you begin to feel safe.**

- 5) Go to your Class/HTG. Talk openly about the problem. Your Class/HTG Teacher will take appropriate actions and may consult with your House Coordinator, the College Counsellor, Assistant Principal - Junior School, Assistant Deputy Principal – Inter-relationships, Vice Principal and/or Principal.

**Unwanted behaviour stops – you begin to feel safe.**

- 4.5 Where bullying, harassment, aggression and violence occurs outside of the school and these behaviours impact on a student's learning and behaviour in school, Holy Cross College will take action to support the continued wellbeing of those involved.

- 4.6 Bystanders or those who observe bullying can encourage or assist those who bully simply by doing nothing and therefore, will be counselled in the appropriate way to respond.

Bystanders have the ability to reduce the trauma caused by uncaring and bullying situations and they will help prevent further situations if the following positive bystander behaviour is exercised.

The bystander will:

Physical

- verbally discourage physical bullying
- discourage others involved in physical bullying by showing disapproval
- will make disapproving comments about picking on people
- walk away from fights
- offer support for the victim
- encourage the victim to seek support from staff
- defend the victim
- ask for support from staff

#### Verbal

- call the person by their preferred name
- question rumours
- question fairness of negative comments
- encourage the victim

#### Psychological

- ask about a person's well being
- offer ideas to the victim as to how to handle certain situations
- reassure the victimised person
- offer support

#### Social

- be friendly toward the victim
- ask friends to help support/include the victim
- share jokes or conversation
- allow the victimised person to sit next to them
- include the person in group activities

4.7 All parties to incidents of bullying, harassment, aggression, racism and violence are entitled to appropriate support.

4.8 Confidentiality of all parties to incidences of bullying and harassment will be respected, but it is recognised that, at times, information will need to be shared to resolve issues. In these circumstances, every effort will be made to advise parties before information is shared.