



St Clare's College

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Aims of the Policy

The community of St Clare's college strives to achieve its vision through serving others and through the spiritual, moral, cultural and intellectual development of each person. In achieving this, each member of the community has rights and responsibilities.

As a living Franciscan community inspired by the values and teachings of St Clare and St Francis, this anti-bullying policy helps to ensure that we treasure:

- the integrity and gifts of each person
- a compassionate and reconciling heart
- reverence for all creation

Students and staff are committed to being proactive to minimise bullying to act individually and with others to maintain an environment that is peaceful, harmonious and safe.

Statement on Bullying

Everyone at St Clare's College has the right to enjoy an environment free from harassment or intimidation of any type. Bullying denies this right to people and as such bullying has no place or justification at the College. Everyone in the College Community is therefore responsible to ensure a safe and respectful environment is maintained.

St Clare's College does not tolerate bullying of any type. Within the College we seek to build a safe and caring Christian environment in which every individual has the right to feel safe and valued. Within this context, individual differences are accepted as everyone's right. We all share in the responsibility of caring for others within and beyond the College community.

What is Bullying?

Bullying occurs when any member of the College is subjected to behaviour that is persistently hurtful, threatening, frightening or exclusionary. This may be behaviour that is physical or non-physical in nature and can include verbal, physical, social and/or psychological harassment. Bullying can be carried out by an individual or a group.

Examples of bullying include, repeated incidents of but are not limited to the following:

Physical

- Hitting, pushing, kicking, spitting, tripping
- Rude gestures
- Damaging, removing or hiding belongings
- Physical violence or threats

Verbal

- Being attacked or ridiculed because of varying opinions, beliefs, religion or race
- Name calling, teasing and ridiculing
- Putting down others and their achievements
- Spreading rumours
- Teasing, name calling, insulting, spreading rumours, making fun of someone because of their appearance, physical characteristics or cultural background



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Non-Verbal

- Writing offensive notes or graffiti about others, using social media, emails or text messaging to hurt others.

Emotional

- Exclusion by purposely leaving someone out of activities
- Deliberately using put-downs, threatening to take others' possessions, food or money, belittling others' abilities and achievements, stealing, hiding or damaging another's property

Cyber-bullying

- The NSW Police define cyber bullying as, "the use of email, instant messaging, chat rooms, pagers, cell phones, or other forms of information technology to deliberately harass threaten, or intimidate someone."

Conflict or fights between equals and single incidents are not defined as bullying. Bullying behaviour is not:

- Children not getting along well.
- A situation of mutual conflict.
- Single episodes of nastiness or random acts of aggression or intimidation.

(NSW Public Schools Website & CEO Anti-bullying Policy)

How to respond to Bullying

Bullying is viewed as a serious breach of the College code of discipline. Any reports of bullying will be investigated thoroughly and appropriate action will be taken.

All members of the College play a part in preventing bullying. We will endeavour to:

- Educate students regarding bullying - what it is, its impact and what can be done about it.
- Educate staff regarding bullying and the implementation of the College's anti-bullying policy.
- Treat all instances of bullying seriously.

The College seeks to promote a culture in which students will be encouraged to:

- Build positive relationships with others so that bullying does not occur
- Take positive actions to stop bullying
- Refuse to be involved in any bullying
- Report a bullying incident to an adult as soon as possible
- Make it clear to their peers that bullying is not accepted
- Not delete messages from cyber bullies; keeping these as evidence to show a parent, a guardian or an adult.

Responsibilities of the Recipient of the Bullying

- Not overreact to comments (if possible or appropriate)
- Be assertive and ask the person who is bullying you (or bullying someone else) that their actions are unwanted and must stop
- If you feel uncomfortable approaching the person responsible or the bullying does not stop, report the bullying to a teacher, Homeroom teacher, House Dean or Deputy Principal, whether it is happening to you or to someone else
- Report the bullying to an adult – talk to her parents, teachers, Homeroom Teacher, House Dean, Deputy Principal or the Principal.



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Responsibilities of Students

- Report instances of bullying to an adult (parent, teacher, Dean).
- Respond to victims of bullying in a caring and supportive manner.

Responsibilities of Staff

- Be positive role models in relationships with others.
- Treat all instances of bullying seriously and, if necessary, report it to the Homeroom Teacher, House Dean, Deputy Principal or Principal.
- Report observed incidents of bullying via the Staff Anti-Bullying Reporting Tool online.
- Where appropriate apply intervention strategies and Restorative Practices in a manner which is supportive of and in the best interests of the students.
- Educate students in ways to prevent bullying.
- Understand that through punctuality to class, active supervision and challenging unacceptable behaviour staff can play an active role in preventing bullying.
- Be aware that the nature of bullying may change with maturity.
- Respect the privacy of the individuals involved in bullying.

Responsibilities of Parents

Parents play a key role in the support of both the victims and the perpetrators of bullying. The College works in partnership with parents to prevent and respond to bullying. Parents can assist in the following ways;

- Be aware of what constitutes bullying.
- Let your child know that bullying in any form is never acceptable.
- Listen to your child and take her feelings and fears seriously.
- Reassure your child that being bullied is not her fault;
- Encourage your child to inform the school.
- If necessary, inform your child's Homeroom Teacher or House Dean.
- Take an active interest in your daughter's social life and acquaintances.
- Advise your daughter to speak to a trusted member of staff.
- Under no circumstance should parents/guardians contact the student/s involved.
- Understand that the resolution of the situation may take time.
- Encourage your daughter to speak openly with you and to look to positive strategies to deal with her feelings.
- Monitor your daughter's progress and if concerned contact the College.

The College will deal seriously with students who retaliate against a person for reporting bullying.

'Hands Off' Rule

At St Clare's College we believe that everyone has the right to feel safe and to be treated with respect. As such we enforce a strict 'hands off' policy. A breach of this policy may result in immediate suspension within the guidelines of Sydney Catholic Schools' Policy.



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Process for Dealing with Bullying at St Clare's College

The Catholic ethos of the College places an emphasis on a peaceful resolution of disagreements and emphasises restorative practices.

Depending on the nature of the incident, the following steps may occur as a result of an allegation of bullying:

1. House Dean &/or Home room Teacher of both the student who is reporting and the student accused of bullying are informed
2. The student making the report is interviewed by her House Dean, she is reassured and is informed that the matter will be investigated
3. An investigation takes place
4. It is made clear that any suggestion of retaliation by any party will not be tolerated
5. If the incident is found to warrant action then the student accused of bullying is counselled by the House Dean and/or Deputy Principal and appropriate consequences reflecting the nature of the incident are administered. The student(s) involved may be referred to the School Counsellor
6. Where appropriate, restorative practices are put into place that focus on restoring relationships and facilitate learning
7. If the bullying continues or is repeated, an Action Plan is formulated in consultation with the Deputy
8. Serious incidents of repeated bullying will result in an interview with the Principal and may also require the notification of any relevant authorities

Contacts and Resources for Parents

- College Counsellor: natalie.green@syd.catholic.edu.au
- Office of the Children's eSafety Commissioner <https://esafety.gov.au/>
- Mind Matters: <http://www.mindmatters.edu.au>
- NSW Health: www.health.nsw.gov.au
- Bullying. No Way: www.bullyingnoway.gov.au
- Kids Helpline: 1800 551 800 www.kidshelp.com.au
- National Coalition Against Bullying: www.ncab.org.au
- ThinkuKnow site: www.thinkuknow.org.au
- Reach Out: www.reachout.com.au
- eSafety Hotline: www.acma.gov.au/hotline
- NSW Police Youth Liaison Officer: Waverley Police Station - Ph: 93699837

