



## Bullying & Harassment Policy

Policy Classification		
Policy Number: 09/2014	Date of Origin: 2014	By Whom: Ms D Gillis AP Pastoral Care
Policy Audience: Public Domain	Review Dates: Mar 2020; Jun 2022	Next Review Date: 2024
<b>Policy Approval:</b> This policy was approved by the Board, June 2022		
This policy supersedes all previous policies relating to matters contained herein.		
This policy is in accord with the Safeguarding Standards of Catholic Professional Standards Ltd which align with the National Principles of Child Safe Organizations.		

## 1.0 Rationale

- 1.1 All members of the Oakhill College community are called to share in a special way in the mission of the Church. The work of school leaders, teachers and support staff requires a sophisticated array of knowledge, skills and attributes, which, in the face of constant and rapid social, economic, technological and educational change, requires continual enhancement.

## 2.0 Guiding Principles

- 2.1 The College considers that bullying of any kind is unacceptable. The College also believes that all students and staff are entitled to study and work in an environment which is free from bullying of any kind.
- 2.2 The College is committed to providing a safe and productive teaching, learning, and work environment in which the diversity of individuals within the College community is recognised and respected.
- 2.3 This policy applies to all members of the Oakhill College community.
- 2.4 This policy covers conduct that takes place at the College, as well as conduct that occurs in the course of any College endorsed activity.

## 3.0 Policy

### 3.1 What is bullying?

- 3.1.1 Bullying is deliberate and persistent verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is harmful, and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons. Bullying can involve: humiliation, domination, intimidation, victimisation and all forms of harassment including that based on sex, race, disability, sexual orientation or practice of religion. Bullying of any form, or for any reason, can have long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders.
- 3.1.2 Cyber-bullying refers to bullying through the use of information and communication technologies by an individual or group that is intended to harm others, or is undertaken recklessly without concern for its impact.
- 3.1.3 Bullying can happen anywhere: at school, travelling to and from school, in sporting teams, or in the workplace. Bullying behaviour can be:
  - a) **verbal**, eg name calling, teasing, abuse, putdowns, sarcasm, insults, threats;
  - b) **physical**, eg hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting;
  - c) **social**, eg ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating, making inappropriate gestures;
  - d) **psychological**, eg spreading rumours, hiding or damaging possessions, malicious SMS and email messages, inappropriate use of communication technology/mobile devices.

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

- a) children not getting along well;
- b) a situation of mutual conflict such as, teasing or disagreement;
- c) a single episodes of hurtful words or actions, or random acts of aggression or intimidation.

(Adapted from: National Safe Schools Framework (2011) and DEC NSW Website)

### 3.2 Students

- 3.2.1 Aims of school intervention.

- to ensure the protection of those subject to bullying;
- to change bullying behaviours in individuals and groups;
- to deter or dissuade other students from engaging in bullying behaviour.

### 3.2.2 How can bullying be prevented?

The school community does not accept bullying behaviours. As students of a Lasallian school “we are brothers and sisters to each other”. Students in the College must speak up and report bullying to teachers. This requires students to:

- refuse to be part of any bullying situation;
- take preventative action, such as seeking advice from his/her parents/guardians, get help from friends or speak up for themselves, report bullying to his/her Dean;
- access available support services at the College;
- be familiar with the College policies and procedures for managing bullying.

### 3.2.3 Recommendations for parents/guardians.

- encourage your son/daughter to discuss bullying at home - read the bullying policy with them and attend the Year 7 presentation on anti-bullying;
- watch for signs of distress for example; unwillingness to attend school, frequent apparent illness, mood changes, and reduced social interaction;
- encourage your son/daughter to speak with his/her Dean or the Counsellors about the bullying;
- contact your child’s Dean if his/her attempts to deal with bullying do not seem to be working.

### 3.2.4 If a student reports bullying:

- the issue will be treated seriously and managed delicately;
- the student will be advised of an appropriate management plan;
- every effort will be made to protect the student and improve the situation the situation and the bully will be made accountable for their action.

### 3.2.5 If a student is bullying:

- his/her parents/guardians will be contacted;
- his/her Dean or Heads of School will manage him/her according to College Policy;
- his/her Level will be reviewed;
- he/she will be required to take responsibility for his/her actions and apologise to those they have harmed;
- he/she may be required to participate in counselling sessions and / or a mediation meeting;
- in serious cases, a student will be withdrawn from classes or suspended from school;
- the College reserves the right to terminate the enrolment of students who engage in bullying behaviours. Tackling bullying is a whole-school responsibility;
- the College promotes that bystanders take verbal action. Bystander intervention and using peer pressure in a positive way has been found to be the most effective way to stop bullying.

## 3.3 Staff

### 3.3.1 What should I do if I am being bullied at the College?

3.3.1.1 Do not ignore bullying, thinking it will go away. Ignoring the behaviour could be interpreted as tacit approval by the person causing the bullying. Bullying is not tolerated at the College.

3.3.1.2 If you reasonably feel that you are being bullied, and you feel comfortable doing so, tell the person to stop, or make it clear that you find the behaviour offensive or unwelcome.

3.3.1.3 If you do not feel comfortable speaking to the person directly, this does not mean that your complaint will not be taken seriously. If the behaviour does not stop, or even if it does stop, but you wish to raise a complaint, you should follow the steps outlined in the College's Complaint Procedure as soon as possible after the incident or incidents have occurred.

3.3.2 Is there someone I can talk to if I am not sure what to do?

3.3.2.1 Staff should make an appointment to meet with the Academic Head in the first instance. Where that is not appropriate, contact should be made with the Human Resources Manager for people with complaints of bullying at the College.

3.3.2.2 The Academic Head and/or Human Resources Manager will, when made aware of any bullying:

- listen empathetically to your complaint and try to relieve any initial distress you may be feeling;
- suggest and explore options for resolving your complaint and possible outcomes;
- support and assist you to resolve the complaint informally; and
- support you and, if you wish, accompany you if you decide to raise a formal complaint.

3.3.2.3 The Academic Head / Human Resources Manager will not determine the outcome of complaints. Investigation of complaints will be conducted by the Principal or his delegated in accordance with the College Complaint Procedure.

3.3.2.4 The Academic Head / Human Resources Manager will talk to the individual about their options and the process involved in resolving a complaint informally or formally. This will be done confidentially. The person to whom the individual reports their complaint, and any other person who subsequently may be made aware of the complaint will treat as confidential the information disclosed. Nothing will be done in relation to an individual complaint without the person's agreement, unless inaction may result in a breach of the law or the College's legal obligations to a third party (eg, an insurer).

3.4 Whom should I talk to if I have questions about this policy?

3.4.1 Staff should contact the Human Resources Manager or Deputy Principal with questions about this policy.

3.4.2 Parents / Guardians should contact the Assistant Principal Pastoral Care or Deputy Principal.

## **4.0 Procedures**

N/A

## **5.0 Evaluation and Review**

The College, via the Principal, is to ensure that this Policy is monitored and reviewed. Next review date is 2024.

## **6.0 Explanatory Notes**

N/A

## **7.0 Supporting Documents**

### **7.1 External Documents**

- 7.1.1 NSW Anti-Discrimination Act 1977;
- 7.1.2 NSW Disability Services Act 1993;
- 7.1.3 Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth);
- 7.1.4 Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth);
- 7.1.5 Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth);
- 7.1.6 Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission Act 1986 (Cth);
- 7.1.7 Racial Hatred Act 1995 (Cth);
- 7.1.8 Workplace Relations Act 1996 (Cth);
- 7.1.9 Equal Employment Opportunity for Women in the Workplace Act 1999 (Cth).

### **7.2 Internal Documents**

- 7.2.1 Student Behaviour and Management Policy