

HOLY CROSS COLLEGE

Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedures

Preamble

Holy Cross College was founded in 1897 by the Patrician Brothers. The College has a tradition of educating the whole person. Its mission statement refers to the College being founded on the Gospel Values of Jesus Christ. Among these Gospel Values the values of respect for the individual, compassion and forgiveness underpin this policy. The college is committed to Restorative Justice Practices which involve an active repairing of relationships that are troubled by conflict. Restorative Justice is dealt with later in this document.

The College Vision Statement also refers to our belief “In Creating a College climate that encourages academic excellence and personal growth”. To this end the anti-bullying policy contains a number of education practices that are in place to minimise the occurrences of bullying.

Most importantly, the College Mission states that “All staff and students are valued members of this community and therefore deserve care and respect”. This belief is at the core of this policy. Every student is valued for who they are and for what they bring to the community and Holy Cross. Every student’s rights which are detailed in the Student’s Diary and reprinted below.

Aims of this Policy

1. To provide procedures that are to be followed when an incident of bullying is reported.
2. To detail educational strategies that are to be undertaken every year to help reduce occurrences of bullying through educating students, teachers and families.

Student's Rights and Responsibilities

RIGHTS

1. I have the right to be happy and to be treated with understanding.
2. I have the right to be treated with respect and politeness.
3. I have the right to be safe.
4. I have the right to expect my property to be safe.
5. I have the right to obtain maximum benefit from all my lessons and classes – other students will not deprive me of this by their behaviour.
6. I have the right not to have health habits interfered with.
7. I have the right to have a pleasant, clean and well-maintained school and grounds.
8. I have the right to be provided with a school in which I am not in any physical danger. When defects occur, they will be repaired.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- I have the responsibility to treat others with understanding – not to laugh at others; tease others, or try to hurt their feelings.
- I have the responsibility to treat others politely and with respect. I have the responsibility to respect the authority of teachers. If necessary I should be able to disagree without being disagreeable.
- I have the responsibility to make the school safe by not threatening, hitting or hurting anyone in any way.
- I have the responsibility not to steal, damage or destroy the property of others.
- I have the responsibility to co-operate with teachers and other students to make sure that lessons proceed and I keep up-to-date with required work.
I will not behave so as to interfere with other students' right to learn. I also have the responsibility to be punctual, to attend school regularly and to take part in activities that will be of benefit to me.
- I have the responsibility not to smoke, take alcoholic drinks or drugs, or encourage other students to do so.
- I have the responsibility to care for the school environment – to keep it clean and to be prepared to remove litter.
- I have the responsibility of telling teachers about any defective buildings or fittings. I accept that teachers may more readily see dangers than I and I will obey their instructions.

Restorative Justice

Restorative Justice is an integral part of the College's response to any conflict. The key principles behind Restorative Justice are:

- Talk about the behaviour without blaming or being personal.
- Focus on the relationship and how people are affected.
- Restore damaged relationships.
- Be future focussed and talk about how to make things right.
- See future mistakes and misbehaviour as an opportunity for learning.
- Students often cycle through change – plan how to manage set backs.
- Accept that sometimes we cannot get to the ultimate truth

After a conflict between students, or staff and student(s) it is most important that a restorative interview be held to work to normalise the relationship that has been damaged by the conflict.

Definition of Bullying

“*Bullying Behaviours* are about an imbalance in power where there is deliberate intent to cause harm or distress. These behaviours can be verbal, social, psychological or physical. They impact on the lives of the person/people being bullied, those doing the bullying and those looking on. Bullying incidents can be isolated or repeated.”

(Peer Support Foundation, 1998)

Bullying takes many forms, all of which will cause distress. Some examples of bullying include:

<i>Physical</i>	hitting, pushing, tripping, kicking, spitting on others
<i>Verbal</i>	teasing, using offensive names, ridiculing, spreading rumours.
<i>Non-Verbal</i>	writing offensive notes or graffiti about others, using email or text messaging to hurt others, rude gestures
<i>Exclusion</i>	deliberately excluding others from a group, refusing to sit next to someone, saving seats for friends in classrooms
<i>Extortions</i>	threatening to take someone's possessions, food or money
<i>Property</i>	stealing, hiding, damaging or destroying property
<i>Electronic</i>	damaging a person's reputation through text messaging, computer chat such as MSN, using photographs taken by camera phones or similar or by use of email or web page. This form of bullying is most dangerous and unacceptable.

Anti-bullying Procedures

- Report of incident goes to the Year Co-ordinator preferably in writing from teacher/witnesses.
- Report from teacher/witnesses goes in the Yard folder for a minor incident.
- The involvement of the Assistant Principal depends on the severity of the incident.
- Year Co-ordinator interviews witnesses – statements written
- Year Co-ordinator interviews victim – statement written
- Year Co-ordinator interviews the accused – statements written
- Then Year Co-ordinator confers with Assistant Principal depending on the severity
- Due process – accused is informed of the charges and responds
- Year Co-ordinator and Assistant Principal make a decision after listening to the responses.

Resolution Phase

- Depending on the outcome of the investigation and the history of the participants a decision is made as to the need for penalties. These go from a warning, written apology, up to the suspension from school.
- The possibility of a restorative meeting may be undertaken.
- Phone call first if repeated incidents then the Year Co-ordinator may decide to write to the parent to alert them to the possible bullying problem that their son is causing.
- Depending on the severity the Principal may be involved.
- Year Co-ordinators may, depending on the incident, phone the parents of the bully and the victim to alert them

Anti-bullying Educational Strategies

An important goal of this policy is that there be some educational procedures that occur every year across a range of year group. The purpose of these procedures is to ensure that there is an awareness throughout the school each year of the issue of bullying.

- Bullying is an important topic in the Year 7, 8 and 9 Pastoral Care programs.
- The College Counsellor undertakes a bullying survey with Year 8 during Term 1 each year. The boys named in this survey as victims and the boys named as bullies are dealt with in separate groups.
- Anti-bullying messages are made over the P.A. and at Full School Assemblies by the Principal and Assistant Principal each year.

Teacher Awareness

- Any bullying incident should be reported promptly and in writing. This then becomes evidence that will assist the Year co-ordinator in following up incidents (Possible Report Form).
- Early each year the issue of bullying is to be raised at the staff meeting to inform teachers of various types of unacceptable practice.
 - Eg: name calling, exclusion in class from group work, exclusion from games, various psychological attacks.
 - Teachers must be informed annually of their duty of care. Teachers must be made ware of the difference between minor and major bullying. This is to be done by the Assistant Principal.

Preventative Measures

- Peer support is a compulsory event in Year 7.
- Year 12 leaders will be attached to a Year 7 Homeroom from the beginning of Term 4. They are to attend Year 7 Homeroom one day per week. They will then be called early in Term 1 to address their homeroom in the Pastoral Care period about bullying.
 - These leaders will encourage other whole school initiatives in their role.
- Preventative work is to be done in Year 8 also to break down the barriers between the groups.
- Becoming a Telling School – Boys need to be reassured of their safety.
 - Remind them that reporting bullying is about defending the right of a students safety.
- Organised competitions on top oval with Seniors and Year 7s.
- Targeted students (victims) must be empowered with strategies of assertiveness training.
- Possible Rock and Water experiences for Years 7s.

Points of contact if required:

- NSW School Liaison Police 9746 9799
- Kids Helpline 1800 551 800/ www.kidshelp.com.au