

St James College



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

A. INTRODUCTION

St James College is a co-educational Catholic Secondary School in the Edmund Rice Tradition. The school was established in 1868 by Catholic lay teachers and the administration of the school was taken over by the Congregation of Christian Brothers in 1893. The school's philosophy is based on Gospel values and the tradition of Edmund Rice, the founder of the Christian Brothers. This philosophy is to integrate faith, life, learning and culture in an environment of respect for individual worth.

Three key documents which are foundational in the formulation of this policy statement are:

- St James College. *Mission Statement*
- Edmund Rice Education Australia. *The Charter for Catholic Schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition*
- MCEETYA. *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians*

1. ST JAMES COLLEGE MISSION STATEMENT

Challenged by the Gospel and inspired by Edmund Rice, St James College, as a Catholic School in the Edmund Rice Tradition, engages and nurtures the hearts and minds of young men and women. Through our inclusive teaching, learning and pastoral practices, we seek to create authentic pathways for all students in our diverse community to grow towards becoming hope-filled members of society. We commit to just and supportive relationships in our way of living and we promote justice in our world.

2. THE CHARTER FOR CATHOLIC SCHOOLS IN THE EDMUND RICE TRADITION

St James College affirms its commitment to the Charter. Two of four Touchstones of the Charter in particular describe this commitment:

- **Inclusive Community:** Our community is accepting and welcoming, fostering right relationships and committed to the common good.
- **Justice and Solidarity:** We are committed to justice and peace for all, grounded in a spirituality of action and reflection that calls us in solidarity with those who are marginalised and the Earth itself.

3. MELBOURNE DECLARATION ON EDUCATIONAL GOALS FOR YOUNG AUSTRALIANS

St James College affirms its commitment to the goals of the *Melbourne Declaration*. Of particular relevance to this policy statement is Goal 2 which states: 'All young Australians become successful learners, confident and creative individuals, and active and informed citizens.' Within the context of this goal, the Declaration describes the successful learner as a young person who

- is motivated to reach their full potential
- has a sense of self-worth, self-awareness and personal identity that enables them to manage their emotional, mental, spiritual and physical well-being
- has a sense of optimism about their lives and the future
- develops personal values and attributes such as honesty, resilience, empathy and respect for others

- acts with moral and ethical integrity
- relates well to others and forms and maintains healthy relationships
- embraces opportunities, make rational and informed decisions about one's own life and accepts responsibilities for one's own actions

B. RATIONALE

This policy statement embraces and emphasises the rights and responsibilities of all members of the school community to enjoy a safe and supportive learning environment. All procedures, protocols and practices included in this policy statement are derived from and are founded upon the fundamental premise that all persons are entitled to be afforded respect and dignity as human beings created in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:27)

C. DEFINITION

Bullying is characterised by a desire to hurt. It can involve a hurtful action, a use of power imbalance, a (typically) repeated action, or an unjust use of power. It may take the form of repeated physical, psychological or verbal abuse by one person or group towards another person or group. Incidents of bullying normally demonstrate evident enjoyment by the aggressor and a sense of being oppressed on the part of the victim. Bullying is “recipient defined”, i.e. the victim ‘feels’ they are being bullied. Excuses such as “It was only a joke” or “They don’t mind” are considered unacceptable reactions by the perpetrator. It should be noted that the break-up of a friendship or rifts in friendship groups does not necessarily constitute bullying.

D. TYPES OF BULLYING

PHYSICAL

Physical bullying such as kicking, punching, pushing, shoving, spitting, damaging or destroying other people's property, jostling, pinching, fighting, touching or any other unwelcomed physical contact.

VERBAL

Verbal bullying such as offensive or abusive comments, sarcasm, crude jokes, ridiculing appearance, actions or beliefs, obscene phone calls, teasing or putting other people down (sledging or pay outs), verbal intimidation, whistling rudely.

SOCIAL

Social bullying such as exclusion, rejection from groups, spreading rumours, gossip, racial or sexual comments, graffiti, passing notes, including emails and texting, and posting inappropriate comments or images on social networking sites.

EMOTIONAL

Emotional bullying such as victimisation, instilling fear in others, extortion (forcing others to hand over money, food or other possessions), coercing students to act inappropriately on their behalf.

CYBER

Cyber bullying (a method of bullying). It includes bullying by text messaging, instant messaging services and social networking sites, email, images or videos posted on the internet or spread by mobile phone. It can take the form of any of the previously referred-to types of bullying. The use of technology for any of these purposes above is contrary to Australian law and will be dealt with as such.

E. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All students and staff in the St James College community have certain rights and responsibilities:

All students have the right

- To feel safe, cared for and respected
- To be free from intimidation and threat
- To have their property respected
- To a positive and productive learning environment
- To a healthy, safe and pleasant environment

All students have the responsibility

- To respect the rights, person and property of other students and staff
- To be assertive in the face of bullying
- To report bullying in all its forms

All staff members have the right

- To feel safe, cared for and respected
- To be free from intimidation and threat
- To have their property respected
- To work in a healthy, safe and pleasant environment
- To a positive and productive working environment

All members of staff have the responsibility

- To provide a safe, secure learning environment for students
- To provide an environment free from bullying, harassment, intimidation and abuse
- To actively promote a culture where bullying is unacceptable
- To be role models in word and action.

F. PREVENTION OF BULLYING

At St James we work to prevent and manage bullying incidents by

- Providing education on bullying, harassment, rights and responsibilities to students
- Providing ongoing professional development to teaching and non teaching staff
- Visual advertising around the school
- Reminding students and staff frequently about the College's *Bullying Policy* at Assemblies and at House meetings
- Inducting new staff and students in this Policy
- Providing a supportive Pastoral Care Program
- Using evidence based responses to deal with incidents of bullying (Restorative Justice Processes, Method of Shared Concern)
- Providing counselling for victims, perpetrators and families
- Promoting a school culture where bullying is unacceptable

STRATEGIES FOR STUDENTS

- Talk to any of the following people for initial advice and support:
 - Homeroom teacher
 - House Pastoral Coordinator
 - Classroom teacher
 - Counsellor
 - Parents
 - Principal, Assistant Principal Pastoral and other College Leadership Team members
 - Non-teaching staff member
- Report **any** incident of bullying at school immediately to:
 - Assistant Principal Pastoral
 - Pastoral Coordinator
 - Counsellor
 - House Pastoral Coordinators

- College Leadership Team member
- If bullying continues after the incident has been reported, the matter must be brought to the attention of any one of the following people:
 - House Pastoral Coordinator,
 - Assistant Principal Pastoral
 - Counsellor
 - Police Liaison Officer (as appropriate for on-going illegal issues)
 - Principal
- Don't give up until you are satisfied with the outcome.

STRATEGIES FOR PARENTS

- Watch for signs of bullying such as wanting to miss school, unusual behaviour changes, feeling fearful or depressed, a pattern of headaches or stomach upsets, physical injury, damage to or loss of property
- Contact any one of the following people:
 - The student's House Pastoral Coordinator, the
 - Assistant Principal Pastoral
 - Counsellors
 - Principal
- Do NOT encourage your child to hit back physically or be verbally abusive
- Support your child in the reporting process
- Express confidence that the problem can be solved
- If bullying involves severe physical assault, it is your right to consider police action
- Show support of and become involved in school procedures and practices that are used to manage incidents of bullying

G. MANAGEMENT OF BULLYING INCIDENTS

At St James College, all work hard to prevent bullying and manage incidents fairly and effectively if they occur. The College treats all incidents of bullying very seriously and instigates strategies to manage such incidents and implements appropriate consequences for perpetrators. The management of all incidents of bullying is according to the College's Behaviour Management Policy which is underpinned by the model of restorative justice and in the interest of the student/s learning from the experience.

RELATED LEGISLATION AND LITERATURE

- QLD Government. *Child Protection Act 1999* <http://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/LEGISLTN/CURRENT/C/ChildProtectA99.pdf>
- QLD Government. *Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian Act 2000* www.legislation.qld.gov.au/LEGISLTN/ACTS/2000/00AC060.pdf
- QLD Government. *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006* www.legislation.qld.gov.au/LEGISLTN/ACTS/2006/06AC039.pdf
- Rigby, Ken (2010). Report: *Enhancing Responses to Bullying in Queensland Schools* www.education.qld.gov.au/studentservices/behaviour/index.html
- Commonwealth of Australia. Ministerial Council on Education Employment Training and Youth Affairs (MCEETYA) (2008). *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians* www.mceetya.edu.au/.../melbourne_declaration
- MCEETYA (2004). *National Safe Schools Framework* http://www.mceetya.edu.au/verve/_resources/natsafeschools_file.pdf
- Edmund Rice Education Australia (2011). *The Charter for Catholic Schools in the Edmund Rice Tradition* www.stjamescollege.qld.edu.au/Home/Charter