St Andrews Christian College

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

May 2015
1. Preamble

1.1 All policy, protocols and procedures flow from the St Andrews Christian College Mission Statement:

1.2 “To educate our students so that they are well skilled, understand life on the basis of biblical truth, and are motivated to walk with God and serve Him in their lives, so that they will be a positive Christian influence in the world.”

2. Rationale

2.1 As a Christian learning community our purpose is to work together as the body of Christ, for the glory of God.

2.2 Although made in God’s image (Genesis 1:27), we are all unique and different, made for the purpose of contributing to God’s kingdom in various ways:

2.3 “So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.” Ephesians 4:11-13 (NIV)

2.4 We are committed in providing a nurturing environment where everyone feels safe and secure and where staff, students and volunteers are helped, encouraged and built up by each other.

2.5 “Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing. Now we ask you, brothers and sisters, to acknowledge those who work hard among you, who care for you in the Lord and who admonish you. Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other.” 1 Thessalonians 5:11-13 (NIV)
2.6 St Andrews Christian College does not tolerate bullying in any form. All students and staff will have the right of respect from others, the right to learn or teach, and a right to feel safe and secure in their school environment.

3. Guiding Principles

3.1 With the increased prevalence of students using the internet and mobile phone technology for communication, it has become clear that a number of students are using cyberspace for the purposes of bullying and intimidating others. Recent Australian statistics show that it is a growing phenomenon where up to one in four students are either perpetrators or victims of cyber bullying.

3.2 If we are bullied, we may feel frightened, unsafe, embarrassed, angry or unfairly treated. Our work, sleep and ability to concentrate may suffer and there may be a deterioration in the relationships with our family and friends. We may feel confused and not know what to do about the problem. This Policy is aimed at providing some guided lines as to how incidents are managed by the College.

3.3 Our aim as a Christian community is to restore and build up, encouraging each other to act in a manner that is in keeping with the Christian ethos of the College. The College will take the necessary steps to resolve all bullying situations in age appropriate ways that may include consequences, forgiveness and restitution so that, where possible, relationships are renewed and restored within the school community.

3.4 As a College community we will not allow cases of bullying to go unreported, but will speak up – even at risk to ourselves. It is every student’s and parent’s responsibility to report bullying to a relevant staff member to ensure support is provided to those involved in bullying situations.

3.5 The concepts of acceptance, care and safety will be given a whole school focus each year, within the framework of promoting a ‘zero’ tolerance attitude towards bullying. Our College is a “No Put Down Zone”, we are to be a College that encourages and builds up each other. Ongoing staff development sessions will ensure that the profile of zero tolerance is maintained.

4. Definitions

4.1 A person is bullied when they are intentionally and regularly exposed to negative or harmful actions by one or more other people. Bullies are people who deliberately set out to embarrass, intimidate, exclude, threaten and/or hurt others repeatedly. Bullying is a clear form of harassment and an abuse of power.

4.2 Bullying can take many forms and can be planned and organised. It may be demonstrated as follows:

4.3 Physical Bullying: Can include forms of fighting, pushing, spitting, hitting, shoving, gestures, standing over or invading someone’s personal space, forcing others to act against their will.
4.4 Verbal Bullying: Can include forms of name calling, offensive language, putting others or their family down directly or behind their backs, picking on people because of their culture, gender, social background or religion and humiliating someone through sarcasm or insults.

4.5 Victimisation: Can include forms of intimidation, including stand-over tactics, picking on others, threats to get people, repeated exclusion, rumours, interfering with another’s property by stealing, damaging or destroying it, writing offensive notes or graffiti about others, extortion of money or food by force.

4.6 Sexual bullying: Can include forms of touching or brushing against one in a sexual manner, sexually oriented jokes, drawings of, or writing about someone’s body, using rude names or commenting about someone’s morals or appearance, unwanted invitations of a sexual nature, asking questions about someone’s private life.

4.7 Exclusion bullying: Leaving people out of activities on purpose.

4.8 Racial discrimination: Includes forms of written or verbal comments relating to or referring to a persons’ race.

4.9 Cyber bullying: Can include sending e-mails, use of social media sites, text messages or any form or electronic media which contain material that is threatening or offensive.

5. What Bullying is not:

5.1 There are also some behaviours, which, although they might be unpleasant or distressing, are not bullying. These include:

5.2 Mutual conflict – which involves a disagreement, but not an imbalance of power. Unresolved mutual conflict can develop into bullying if one of the parties targets the other repeatedly in retaliation.

5.3 Single-episode acts of nastiness or physical aggression, or aggression directed towards many different people.

5.4 Social rejection or dislike unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.

6. Cyber-Bullying

6.1 Cyber-Bullying is bullying that is carried out through the internet or mobile phones. It is extremely invasive and more likely to occur outside of school hours. Cyber-Bullying includes:
6.2 **Pranking:** Repeated hang ups, anonymous mocking or threatening phone calls.

6.3 **Image sharing:** Forwarding of sharing unflattering or private images without permission.

6.4 **Sexually explicit images:** People of any age, who forward or share images of a sexual nature of a person under 18 need to be aware that this is a criminal offence (child pornography) that may result in prosecution.

6.5 **Text and email:** Sending insulting or threatening text messages or emails.

6.6 **Personal online information:** Publishing online someone’s private, personal or embarrassing information without permission, or spreading rumours online.

6.7 **Identity theft:** Assuming someone’s identity online and negatively representing them in a way that damages their reputation or relationships.

6.8 **Hate sites:** Creating hate sites or implementing social exclusion campaigns on social networking sites.

7. **Implementation**

7.1 It is generally agreed that the College’s duty of care necessarily extends to situations involving students whose main point of association is the College.

8. **General Practices:**

   **Staff employed at St Andrews Christian College are expected to:**

   8.1 Be role models in word and action at all times.

   8.2 Be alert to signs of distress or evidence of bullying

   8.3 Make efforts to remove occasions for bullying by active patrolling during yard duty.

   8.4 Arrive at class on time and move promptly between periods.

   8.5 Take steps to support both victim and perpetrator and remove sources of distress without placing the victim at further risk.

   8.6 Report suspected incidents to the appropriate Staff member, Home Room teacher, Year Level Coordinator / Section Head, promptly, and ensure that all reported incidents are followed up appropriately.

   8.7 Ensure that you aren’t addressing bullying behaviour by responding in an overbearing or derogatory manner.

   8.8 Provide programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving. Education will include age specific programs within appropriate school curriculum to help students recognise and prevent bullying.
8.9 Increase the School community’s awareness on the characteristics of bullying and harassment and suggest strategies to counteract them via newsletter items and assemblies.

9. Students at St Andrews are expected to:
   9.1 Take a stand and lend a hand against bullying at St Andrews Christian College.
   9.2 Refuse to be involved in any bullying situation.
   9.3 If present when bullying occurs, and if appropriate, take some form of preventative action.
   9.4 Report the incident or suspected incident to staff and/or parents and help break down the code of secrecy.
   9.5 Work collaboratively to ensure that St Andrews Christian College is a bully-free school where no-one is put-down.
   9.6 To encourage each other and build each other up, God’s way.

10. Parents are expected to:
   10.1 Watch for signs of distress in their children, e.g. an unwillingness to attend school, a pattern of headaches, missing equipment, requests for extra money, damaged clothing, or bruising.
   10.2 Take an active interest in their child’s social life and acquaintances, including online networks.
   10.3 Advise child to tell a staff member about the incident. If possible and depending on severity, allow their child to report and deal with the situation themselves. Children can gain much respect through taking initiative and dealing with the problem and reporting the incident without parental involvement.
   10.4 Inform the College if bullying is suspected or if their child is reluctant to speak with staff.
   10.5 Keep a written record (who, what, when, where, why, how).
   10.6 In cyber bullying cases, keep copies of any offensive emails or messages.
   10.7 Do not encourage retaliation.
   10.8 Communicate to child that parental involvement if necessary, will be appropriate for the situation.
   10.9 Be willing to attend interviews at the College if their child is involved in any bullying incident.
   10.10 Be willing to inform the College of any cases of suspected bullying – even if their child is directly/indirectly involved.
   10.11 Work directly with staff to find effective solutions.
11. Consequences/Intervention

11.1 Consequences of bullying will be in line with our Nurture and Discipline Policy.

11.2 All incidents of bullying are treated seriously regardless of the type of bullying that takes place, however the consequences may vary depending upon the type of bullying and frequency.

11.3 All students who are identified as behaving in a bullying manner will receive appropriate support, be exhorted by a member of staff to desist and given consequences as outlined in our Nurture and Discipline Policy. In very serious cases, the Police may be notified by the College.

11.4 There will be ongoing parent communication with regard to the bullying and the maintenance of St Andrews Christian College as a safe environment for all members of our school community.

11.5 The degree of severity will depend on the nature of the incident, the age and maturity of those involved and the duration of the bullying.

The consequences will include one or more of the following:

- Withdrawal of privileges.
- Note in diary (diary to be signed by parent) or letter home to parents.
- Community Service.
- Detention(s) – Lunchtime or Afterschool.
- Interview with parent / students / Year Level Coordinator/Head of Section.
- Internal or external suspension.
- Written apology to the victim and the College.
- Referral to external professional counselling.
- Referral to a social welfare agency.
- Referral to a behaviour change program.
- Police involvement.
- Expulsion, if severe behaviour continues unabated and if the nature of the incident warrants this level of response.
- Ongoing support as well as ongoing counselling for the ‘victim’ of the bullying may also be recommended.

12. The Process Of Dealing With Cyberspace Bullies Will Be As Follows:

12.1 If a student is the victim of intimidating or denigrating information, the student will print the offensive material, or bring in the relevant mobile phone SMS message or screen shots and present it to the relevant Section Head.
12.2 Do not forward the email or text or image to anyone as this could be interpreted as spreading inappropriate material.

12.3 Parents of the victim and perpetrator of the bullying incident will be fully informed of the incident and the intended consequences.

12.4 If, after investigation, the offensive material is found to be genuine then the perpetrator will receive a punishment ranging from a one day internal/external suspension to immediate expulsion (at the discretion of the College), depending on the severity of the offensive material. Under certain circumstances and at the discretion of the Principal, the student may be able to return to the College. They will need to prove that the offensive material has been removed where possible and suitable restitution of the victim has been made or organised. This may involve a written apology or supervised mediation.

12.5 The College will take a proactive stance on this form of bullying by regularly reminding the student body of their responsibilities towards one another as well as to the proper and wise use of technology. This will be done through sectional assemblies, the use of the ICT agreement contract, student diary and the College’s newsletter.

13. Resources:

13.1 Information and Resources for Staff can be found on the Bully Stoppers website:


The Bully Stoppers Program provides practical advice, information and strategies to support everyone to ‘make a stand, lend a hand’ and stop bullying.

Information and help for teachers on the website include:

- Identifying and Addressing Bullying.
- Individual Strategies.
- Classroom Strategies.
- Behaviour Support Plans.
- Case Studies.
- Classroom Resources.
- Classroom and Cyber Safety.
- Interactive Learning Modules.
- Helpful Resources.
- Being Cool Online.

13.2 Information and Resources for Students can be found on the Bully Stoppers website:


Information available includes:

- I’m Being Bullied.
- Why Am I Being Bullied?
- I’ve Been Called a Bully.
• I Know Someone Who’s Being Bullied.
• Students and Cyber safety.
• Interactive Learning Modules.
• Helpful Resources

13.3 Information and help for parents is available on


Information available includes:
• My Child is Being Bullied.
• Warning Signs of Bullying.
• My Child Has Seen Bullying.
• My Child Is Using Bullying Behaviour.
• Why Might a Student Bully?
• Talk to Your School.
• Adult Bullying.
• Parents and Cyber-Safety.
• Interactive Learning Modules.
• Helpful Resources

14. Direction:

It is expected that all staff and volunteers follow this policy.