



Anti-Bullying policy (including Cyber Bullying)

Definition:

Bullying is a repeated behaviour; that may be physical, verbal and/or psychological; where there is intent to cause fear, distress, or harm to another; that is conducted by a more powerful individual or group; against a less powerful individual or group of individuals who are unable to stop this from happening.

Cyberbullying is when a group or an individual use information and communication technologies (ICT) to intentionally harm a person over time, who cannot easily stop this bullying from continuing.

Bullying behaviour includes, though is not limited to:

- Making fun of / teasing someone in a mean and hurtful way
- Telling lies or spread nasty rumours about someone to try to make others not like him/her
- Leaving someone out on purpose or not allow him/her to join in with the intent to cause hurt
- Hitting, kicking or pushing someone around
- Deliberately damaging, destroying or stealing someone's things
- Threatening or making someone feel afraid of getting hurt

Cyber bullying behaviour includes, though is not limited to:

- Sending nasty or threatening emails or messages on the Internet or mobile phones
- Sending mean or nasty comments or pictures about a person to websites or other forms of social media, e.g. Facebook or to other students' mobile phones
- Deliberately ignoring or leaving out of online activities with the intent to cause hurt
- Pretending to be someone else online to hurt a person

Future reference in this document to the term bullying should be taken to include cyber bullying.

While some negative behaviours may not be classified as bullying, they are still seen as inappropriate and against school rules. These behaviours will be dealt with according to the *Discipline Policy*.

Rationale:

The school will provide a positive culture where bullying (including cyber bullying) is not accepted, and in so doing, all will have the right to feel safe and secure in the school environment.

Aims:

- To reinforce within the school community that **no form of bullying is acceptable**.
- Everyone within the school community to be **alert to signs and evidence** of bullying and to have a responsibility to report it to staff whether as observer or victim.
- To ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are **followed up** and that support is given to both victim and perpetrator.
- To seek parental and peer-group **support** and co-operation at all times.

Background:

Shepparton Christian College seeks to provide a safe environment for all. There are two main imperatives for this.

The first is **societal**. There is a standard of behaviour set by society, of which, all members are expected adhere to. Respecting other and treating others fairly, without harassment, teasing or bullying, is part of this.

The second imperative is **Biblical**. As a Christian organisation, our ideal is to have a culture that follows a biblical mandate to set an example, to love one another, to respect others, to turn the other cheek, to build each other up and to encourage one another.

³¹ Do to others as you would have them do to you.
Luke 6:31 (MEV)

¹¹ Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.
1 Thessalonians 5:11 (NIV)

Implementation:

The implementation of this policy is to be read such that Bullying and Cyber Bullying are one in the same. The medium used to bully is irrelevant.

Parents, teachers and community will be made aware of the school's position on bullying.

The school will continue to be proactive in addressing the issue of bullying, in all its forms. Aspects that are important considerations are outlined below.

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A. Primary Prevention:

- Provide programs that promote resilience, life and social skill, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving, including the role of the bystander
- Each primary classroom teacher and secondary homegroup teacher to clarify at the start of each year and where required throughout the year, the school policy on bullying.
- Staff and students to promote the following philosophies in a proactive manner
 - Building each other up
 - The role of the bystander
 - Promoting positive behaviours (whilst responding to negative behaviours)

B. Early Intervention:

- Promoting children reporting bullying incidents upon themselves or witnessed.
- Bullying survey questions to be included in the annual stakeholder surveys.
- Classroom teachers on a regular basis reminding students to report incidents, and that reporting is not dobbing.
- Parents encouraged to contact the school if they become aware of a problem.
- Safe place for a child to access.

C. Intervention:

- Once identified; all students involved including bystanders talked with, and all incidents fully investigated and documented in consultation with either the Head of Primary or Head of Secondary.
- Students involved may be offered counselling and support.
- If bullying behaviour is ongoing, parents of all students involved contacted and consequences implemented consistent with the *Discipline Policy*.
- There will be ongoing monitoring of identified bullying behaviour.

D. Post Violation:

- Steps in the *Discipline Policy* will be implemented.
- Students involved may be offered counselling and support to change bullying behaviours.
- Consequences may involve
 - exclusion from class
 - exclusion from yard
 - detention
 - after school detention
 - school suspension
 - withdrawal of privileges
- In cases where bullying behaviours are unable to be resolved, those responsible may have their enrolment cancelled.

Other considerations

- If bullying behaviour is occurring outside of the College and is reported, the following considerations will be taken into account
 - Parents of all parties will be notified.
 - Counselling (by either the College chaplain or counsellor) will be recommended and made available
 - If incidents occurring outside of school relate to digital resources provided by the College, then it will be taken as though the incident occurred within the College.
 - If incidents occurring outside of school are impacting on a student such that their safety or ability to feel safe at school or home is affected, then as far as practical, such incidents will come under this policy.

Evaluation:

- This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three year review cycle.

In developing the above policy the School Board has aligned these procedures to the Vision and Mission Statements where Biblical philosophies have been the underlying theme.

This policy was adopted at School Board on

SEPT 2017