



## Anti-Bullying and Harassment

Policy

### Rationale:

Sunbury Downs College is committed to providing a safe and caring environment that enables positive relationships to be formed between students and staff. SDC creates an environment that encourages self-esteem, cooperation, personal growth and a positive attitude to learning and teaching. This policy on bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment will inform the community that these actions in any of its forms will not be tolerated. This policy should be read in conjunction with the College's Engagement and Wellbeing Policy, eSmart Policy, and the ICT Acceptable Use Agreement, which is agreed to as part of the College's 1:1 Device program.

### Aims:

To reinforce that no form of bullying and harassment is acceptable, address signs and evidence when bullying and harassment occurs and build a collective understanding of how to address and report incidences whether as an observer or victim to staff.

### Guidelines:

A College-wide approach will be taken to deal with bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment in a consistent and systematic way.

All new students and staff will be informed of the Anti-bullying and Harassment policy and practices at the commencement of their time at the school. The Student Planner also provides an important reference point for staff, students and parents to readily access practical implications and suggested actions relevant to this policy.

All complaints of harassment will be heard in confidence and taken seriously. Sunbury Downs College will organise preventative curriculum programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving for its students.

Staff programs will occur periodically to keep informed of current issues/strategies for dealing with these issues.

There will be disciplinary consequences, covering a range of strategies, for those in breach of the Anti-Bullying and Harassment (including cyber bullying), guidelines and procedures. Additionally there will be disciplinary consequences in line with the Behavior Management Plan as required.

Any breach of criminal law with respect to bullying and harassment, including cyber bullying, will be dealt with in consultation with appropriate agencies and personnel. Additionally school based consequences including suspension and possible expulsion will be issued.

Sunbury Downs College strongly believes that all students have a right to a safe, secure and effective learning environment. The underpinning values within the College community (staff, students and parents) encourage all stakeholders to commit to share responsibilities for taking preventative measure to alleviate bullying and/or harassment. These responsibilities are as follows:

**School staff** have a responsibility to:

- respect and support students
- model and promote appropriate behaviour
- have knowledge of school and departmental policies relating to bullying behaviour
- respond in a timely manner to incidents of bullying according to the school's Anti-bullying Policy.

In addition, **teachers** have a responsibility to:

- provide curriculum and pedagogy that supports students to develop an understanding of bullying and its impact on individuals and the broader community.

**Students** have a responsibility to:

- behave appropriately, respecting individual differences and diversity
- behave as responsible digital citizens
- follow the school Anti-bullying Policy
- behave as responsible bystanders
- report incidents of bullying according to their school Anti-bullying Policy.



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**Parents and caregivers** have a responsibility to:

- support their children to become responsible citizens and to develop responsible online behaviour
- be aware of the school Anti-bullying Policy and assist their children in understanding bullying behaviour
- support their children in developing positive responses to incidents of bullying consistent with the school Anti-bullying Policy
- report incidents of school related bullying behaviour to the school
- work collaboratively with the school to resolve incidents of bullying when they occur.

**All members of the school community** have a responsibility to:

- model and promote positive relationships that respect and accept individual differences and diversity within the school community
- support the school's Anti-bullying Policy through words and actions
- work collaboratively with the school to resolve incidents of bullying when they occur.

**Sunbury Downs College does not tolerate any form of bullying and/or harassment.**

### Definitions of Bullying / Harassment

Harassment is any verbal, physical or sexual conduct (including gestures), which is uninvited, unwelcome or offensive to a person.

Bullying is repeated oppression, physical or psychological, of a less powerful person by a more powerful person or group.

Cyber bullying is a form of bullying, which is carried out through an online service such as email, chat room, discussion group, social networking, instant messaging or web pages. It can also include bullying through mobile phone technologies such as SMS. It may involve text or images (photos, drawing).

Examples of cyber bullying include, but are not limited to;

- teasing and being made fun of
- spreading of rumours online
- sending unwanted messages
- defamation

Cyber bullying can happen to anyone and the bully can act anonymously if they want. People can also be bullied online by groups of people such as class groups or collective members of an online community. It is important for the school to provide a safe and friendly environment for students and staff and to encourage care, courtesy and respect for others. All persons have a legal right to protection from harassment under the Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act and the Victorian Equal Opportunity Act.

The effects of harassment or bullying include:

- poor health – anxiety, depression
- lower self esteem
- reduced study performance
- missed classes, social withdrawal
- reduced career prospects

If a student sees another person being harassed or bullied they should tell the person that they witnessed the incident and advise them to report it to an appropriate third person. However, if they witness someone harassing another person, they should let them know that their behaviour is unacceptable.

Bystanders who do nothing to stop bullying may be contributing to the problem by providing an audience for the bully.

Harassment is usually directed at a person because of their religion, ethnicity, physicality, gender, race, creed or abilities. It can be subtle or explicit.

### **Subtle: (The most common)**

They include:

- Offensive staring and leering.



- Unwanted comments about physical appearance and sexual preference.
- Racist or smutty comments or jokes.
- Questions about another's sexual activity.
- Persistent comments about a person's private life or family.
- Physical contact e.g. purposely brushing up against another's body.
- Offensive name-calling.

### Explicit: (obvious)

- They include:
- Unwelcome patting, touching, embracing
- Grabbing, aggressive hitting, pinching and shoving etc
- Repeated requests for dates, especially after refusal
- Offensive gestures, jokes, comments, letters, phone calls or e-mail
- Sexually and/or racially provocative remarks
- Displays of sexually graphic material– pornography
- Requests for sexual favours
- Extreme forms of sexual harassment will lead to criminal prosecution

### Cyber bullying

Being involved in online spaces – either at home or at school - requires students to behave responsibly. This includes:

- the language used and the things that are said
- how students treat each others
- respecting people's property (eg copyright)
- visiting appropriate online spaces or sites

### Behaving safely online means:

- protecting one's own privacy and personal information (we used to call it 'stranger danger')
- selecting appropriate spaces to work and contribute
- protecting the privacy of others (this can be sharing personal information or images)
- being proactive in letting someone know if there is something is 'not quite right'. At home this would be a parent or carer, at school a teacher

### If a student is being harassed or bullied they should:

- Indicate that they don't like what is being said or done and request that this behaviour stops
- Discuss the matter with a student leader or a teacher/coordinator that the behaviour makes you feel uncomfortable

Sunbury Downs College requires that all cases of bullying are reported and will do what it can to prevent it. This requires the cooperation of students, teachers/staff and parents.

Students should refuse to be involved in any bullying situation. If present when bullying occurs, he/she should take some form of preventative action. If the student is involved in a bullying situation they are encouraged to report it immediately to a Home Group Teacher, classroom teacher, Year Level Coordinator, Mini School Leader or Assistant Principal. Students are encouraged to decrease the incidents of bullying by reporting any incidents or suspected incidents to their Home Group Teacher / Year Level Coordinator, Mini-School Leader or Assistant Principal.

Victims and perpetrators will be provided with appropriate follow up. This may involve counselling and guidance within their Mini-School, and when appropriate by a member of the Student Service Team or referral to regional / external support agencies. Parents will be involved in the resolution of incidences of bullying. External referrals require parent permission.

Constructive strategies to deal with bullying and harassment will include: education in coping strategies; assertiveness training; problem solving and social skills; restorative practice, method of shared concern, counseling and behavior modification. These strategies will be employed in preference to punitive sanctions and negative consequences where possible. The College will record bullying and/or



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harassment related matters reported by students as a Chronicle Entry in Compass. The relevant Mini-School and/or Student Services will collect records specifically related to the incident and use these to develop a contextual understand the issue/s.

The Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy and Engagement and Wellbeing Policy of the College will be widely promoted to students, staff, parents/carers and the local community.

The school leadership team and the teachers will work together to ensure the safety of all school members in situations of bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment, by thoroughly investigating all complaints while respecting the need for confidentiality, notifying parents/carers and planning interventions as appropriate to matters on a case-by-case basis.

If a teacher feels a student is at serious and imminent risk from bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment then it is their professional duty to pass on the information to a relevant person in order to ensure appropriate support for the student. It is important that teachers document fully their interaction with the student and to verify the actions taken.

Student Co-curricular programs will be organized to raise student awareness about bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment, to provide a forum for discussion of matters and to aid development of attitudes.

Some matters will be dealt with formally in the curriculum and through peer support programs, extracurricular programs and occasional activities run by outside experts and workers.

Professional development will be provided for staff relating to bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment and proven strategies to address these issues in classrooms will be shared with all staff.

Consequences for bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment will comply with the College's Policies. The Principal or their nominee will provide disciplinary consequences including suspension in accordance with Department of Education and Training (DET) guidelines. Any consequences issued as a result of breaching this policy will be done so in accordance with the consequences outlined in the College's Engagement and Wellbeing Policy.

### Other relevant policies / guidelines:

- DET's Engagement and Inclusion Guidelines:
- <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/participation/Pages/studentengagementguidance.aspx>
- <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/school/principals/participation/minorder625.PDF>
- DET's Safe Schools are Effective School
- Child Safety Standards
- Sunbury Downs College ICT Acceptable Use Agreement.
- Sunbury Downs College Engagement and Wellbeing Policy
- Sunbury Downs College E smart Policy
- Other relevant DET policies

### Links and Appendices (including processes related to this policy)

The following appendices are connected with this policy:

Appendix A: Anti-Bullying (including cyber bullying) and Anti-Harassment Procedures  
Appendix B: Formal Referral of Student who has bullied / harassed to Student Services  
– Template


### Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed annually or more often if necessary due to changes in DET regulations or circumstance.



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 Sunbury Downs College <i>'Confidence to Achieve'</i>	Quality Controlled		Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy			
	Document No. & Title					
	Version	V3.0	Author	CS	Owner	CS
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VRQA Minimum Standard	Student Welfare					



### Appendix A - Anti Bullying and Harassment Policy

Anti-Bullying (including cyber-bullying) and Anti-Harassment Procedures

#### 1. What are Bullying, Cyber Bullying and Harassment?

##### 1.1 Bullying

###### Definition of Bullying

Bullying is when someone, or a group of people, who have more power at the time, deliberately upset or hurt another person, their property, reputation or social acceptance on more than one occasion.

###### Types of Bullying

There are three broad categories of bullying:

1. Direct physical bullying – e.g. hitting, tripping, and pushing or damaging property.
2. Direct verbal bullying – e.g. name calling, insults, homophobic or racist remarks, verbal abuse.
3. Indirect bullying – this form of bullying is harder to recognise and often carried out behind the bullied student's back. It is designed to harm someone's social reputation and/or cause humiliation. Indirect bullying includes:

- lying and spreading rumours
- playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate
- mimicking
- encouraging others to socially exclude someone
- damaging someone's social reputation and social acceptance
- cyber-bullying, which involves the use of electronic means to humiliate and distress

###### What Bullying is not.

Many distressing behaviors are not examples of bullying even though they are unpleasant and often require teacher intervention and management. There are three socially unpleasant situations that are often confused with bullying:

###### Mutual Conflict

In mutual conflict situations, there is an argument or disagreement between students but not an imbalance of power. Both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution to the problem. However, unresolved mutual conflict sometimes develops into a bullying situation with one person becoming targeted repeatedly for 'retaliation' in a one-sided way.

###### Social Rejection or Dislike

Unless the social rejection is directed towards someone specific and involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others, it is not bullying.

Single-episode acts of nastiness or meanness, or random acts of aggression or intimidation

Single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. If a student is verbally abused or pushed on one occasion they are not being bullied.

Nastiness or physical aggression that is directed towards many different students is not the same as bullying.

##### 1.2 Cyber-bullying

Consists of covert, psychological bullying, conveyed through the electronic mediums such as cell-phones, web-logs and web-sites, on-line chat rooms, 'MUD' rooms (multi-user domains where individuals take on different characters) and Xanga's (on-line personal profiles where some adolescents create lists of people they do not like). It is verbal (over the telephone or mobile phone), or written (flaming, threats, racial, sexual or



homophobic harassment) using the various mediums available.

### 1.3 Harassment

Is any verbal, physical or sexual conduct (including gestures) that is uninvited, unwelcome or offensive to a person.

#### 1. Why do we have a Policy on these?

To provide a safe and friendly college environment for students and staff and to encourage care, courtesy and respect for others.

All persons have a legal right to protection from harassment under the Commonwealth Sex Discrimination Act and the Victorian Equal Opportunity Act.

#### 2. What are the effects of Bullying and Harassment?

- poor health - anxiety, depression
- lower self esteem
- reduced study performance
- missed classes, social withdrawal
- reduced career prospects

#### 3. Am I bullying or harassing someone?

If you are not sure about your behaviour you can:

- check it out by asking if it is offensive or inappropriate
- stop it
- apologise
- take it seriously if someone says they are feeling uncomfortable
- talk it over with an adviser or somebody who has an understanding of the issues

#### 4. What are some of the feelings victims of bullying or harassment may experience?

"I will ignore it and it will go away."

If anything it will make things worse - you will give the impression that you agree with the situation.

"I don't want to cause trouble."

Most causes of harassment are sorted out quite simply. By speaking up, action can be taken to address the problem.

"Am I to blame?"

Victims of harassment or bullying sometimes feel that it is their fault. Victims are made to feel guilty by the offender and often blame themselves.

It is your right to have a safe environment free from harassment or bullying.

"Am I imagining things?"

Often our hunches are correct. Rather than put up with nagging doubts, talk to someone about your feelings.

Bullying or harassment can often make people feel:

- embarrassed or ashamed
- offended or humiliated
- intimidated or frightened
- uncomfortable

#### 5. What should you do if you see another person being bullied or harassed?

Tell the person that you witnessed the incident and advise them to report it to an appropriate person. However, if your friend is harassing another



person, let them know that their behaviour is unacceptable. Bystanders who do nothing to stop bullying may be contributing to the problem by providing an audience for the bully.

### 5.1 Bullying can involve

- grabbing, aggressive staring, hitting, pinching kicking, pushing and shoving
- publicly excluding a person from your group
- knocking a person's books or belongings out of their hands or off their desk
- teasing a person because of their looks

### 5.2 Cyber-bullying can involve

- Flaming – online fights using electronic messages with angry or vulgar messages
- Harassment – repeatedly sending nasty, mean and insulting messages
- Denigration – posting or sending gossip or rumours about a person to damage his/her reputation or friendships
- Outing – sharing someone's secrets or embarrassing information or images online
- Exclusion – intentionally and cruelly excluding someone from an online group
- Cyber-stalking – repeated, intense harassment and denigration that includes threats or creates significant fear

### 5.3 Harassment is usually directed at a person because of their gender, race, creed or abilities – it can be subtle or explicit

Subtle (the most common) they include:

- offensive staring and leering
- unwanted comments about physical appearance and sexual preference
- racist or smutty comments or jokes
- questions about another's sexual activity
- persistent comments about a person's private life or family
- physical contact e.g. purposely brushing up against another's body
- offensive name calling

Explicit (obvious) they include:

- grabbing, aggressive hitting, pinching and shoving, etc
- unwelcome patting, touching, embracing
- repeated requests for dates, especially after refusal
- offensive gestures, jokes, comments, letters, phone calls or e-mail
- sexually and/or racially provocative remarks
- displays of sexually graphic material – pornography
- requests for sexual favours
- extreme forms of sexual harassment will lead to criminal prosecution

### 6. What do you do if you are being bullied or harassed?

- tell the person you don't like what they are doing and you want them to stop
- discuss the matter with a Year Level Coordinator, Student Wellbeing Coordinator or Manager of Student Services
- leader or a teacher that you feel comfortable with
- the school will take your concerns seriously - all complaints will be treated confidentially

### 7. How will your complaint be dealt with?

Your concerns will be taken seriously. All complaints will be treated confidentially.

School procedures for responding to a student who bullies or harasses others are set out below





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### Level 1

If the bullying or harassment incident is minor or first time occurrence, teachers may elect to use one or more anti-bullying practices:

- stopping the bullying/re-statement of rules and consequences
- restorative questioning
- think time detention
- private conference
- method of shared concern

If the student does not take control over his/her behaviour, a Compass Chronicle entry will be recorded and submitted to the relevant Mini-School Team or Assistant Principal/ Principal.

### Level 2

If the bullying or harassment continues or in instances of severe bullying or harassing, a referral should be made to the relevant Mini-School Leader:

Here, the Mini-School Leader (or another who has responsibility for student wellbeing) may:

- meet with the student to develop a behaviour contract
- provide discussion/mentoring of different social and emotional learning competencies including structured learning activities
- conduct a restorative conference separately with the perpetrator and "target"

### Level 3

For 'at risk' students (many risk factors, few protective factors) whose bullying or harassing behaviour is severe and for other non-at risk students whose bullying or harassing and other aggressive behaviour is resistant to change, an individual 'strength building' plan should be developed by the a member of the Year Level Coordination and Student Services team in consultation with student, parents/carers and teachers. Individual strength-building plans and associated interventions help connect the student to positive people, programs and actions in the community, school and home as well as develop the student's inner social and emotional strengths (skills, values).

### Level 4

Students whose severe bullying or harassing behaviour resists school efforts and represents a significant threat to the safety and wellbeing should be referred to outside agencies for evaluation. Manager of Student Services and Student Wellbeing Coordinator will be familiar with community agencies and organisations that can offer more intensive services to the student and student's family.

Note: The school may choose, if bullying or harassment persists or the initial incident is of such magnitude, that parents/carers will be contacted and consequences implemented consistent with the College's Engagement and Wellbeing Policy. Furthermore, the Principal may commence formal disciplinary action in line with 'Student Engagement and Inclusion Policy Guidance' (DET) and Ministerial Order 625 at any stage in the process depending on contextual information relating to the severity of the bullying (including-cyber bullying) and harassment.

## Appendix B:



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### Sunbury Downs College Student Services Referral Form Years 7 - 12

This referral is based on concerns relating to student behaviour, engagement and general wellbeing issues. If a student discloses information that you think may be a Child Protection issue, Self-Harm or Suicide you **MUST** make a member of the Wellbeing Team aware in person as soon **as the information is disclosed to you.**

**This form is to be submitted to the Student Services Manager.**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Group: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender M / F

Year Level Coordinator: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Referral: \_\_\_\_\_

**Please tick the following that applies to the student you are referring:**

Exit & Renegotiation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Transition Problems	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bullying/ed at school	<input type="checkbox"/>	Self -Harm/Suicide	<input type="checkbox"/>
Peer relationships	<input type="checkbox"/>	Safety Concerns	<input type="checkbox"/>
Classroom behaviour	<input type="checkbox"/>	Change in behaviour	<input type="checkbox"/>
Controlling emotions	<input type="checkbox"/>	General health issues	<input type="checkbox"/>
School Attendance & Refusal	<input type="checkbox"/>	Attention/Concentration in class	<input type="checkbox"/>
Conflict resolution & restoration	<input type="checkbox"/>	Social relationship issues: Anger	<input type="checkbox"/>
Family Issues	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>
Other-please specify:			

#### Reasons for Concern/Referral:

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Signature of referring teacher: \_\_\_\_\_ Initials: \_\_\_\_\_

**The referring teacher to submit this form to the relevant Year Level Coordinator (YLC)**



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**Year Level Coordinator to consult with the relevant Mini-School Leader and obtain approval**

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Approved by Mini-School Leader**

The YLC is to submit this form to Student Services. Date submitted to Student Services: \_\_\_\_\_ (By YLC)

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**Student Services**

**Feedback to Year Level Coordinator**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Group: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender M /F

Date received by Student Services Manager: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Signature of Student Services Manager: \_\_\_\_\_