



## School mission

At Christ Church Grammar School we seek to live our mission 'Boys Educated To Know, To Do, To Live With Others and To Be'(UNESCO 1996)

The quality of the relationships we are able to build between people is central to our purpose. The active support of all members of the school community – students, families and staff – is needed if we are to achieve this aim. We recognise positive behaviour consistently at all year levels through a variety of means; such as rewards in the form of house points, virtues cards, green cards, honour certificates and acknowledgement from tutor and head of house. We value and take pride in the inclusive ethos in our school and expect relationships to display respect and dignity for others.

## Policy

*Bullying and harassment are forms of abuse. They will not be tolerated in our school community and will be treated seriously.*

Bullying and harassment are not just about the student engaging in the bullying and the person being victimised. These behaviours are part of a wider social context and require policy and procedures that include both preventative measures and effective intervention strategies.

## The school undertakes to:

- Provide a supportive environment that encourages positive relationships between students, staff and parents
- Provide curriculum material to help students understand and develop positive relationships, resilience and appropriate social skills
- Provide opportunities for both online and offline reporting for students, and promptly attend to reported incidents
- Provide counselling to students with regard to conflict resolution and anger management
- Support all concerned – those who bully, who are bullied by others and witnesses – with a view to resolving all issues involved in the bullying.

## The school expects students to:

- Refuse to be involved in any bullying situation
  - Be aware of their responsibilities as a bystander or a witness to bullying
  - Take preventative action and report actions of students who engage in bullying
  - Support the values of the school by speaking out about incidents of bullying they experience or observe.

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## The school expects staff to:

- Promote a positive and caring environment for all
- Model appropriate language and actions for students at all times
- Be approachable and respond sensitively to signs of distress or suspected incidents of bullying
- Actively circulate around their designated area when on grounds supervision duty, being aware of the nature of student interactions
- Encourage students to both speak out about bullying and to take steps to help people who are being bullied
- Intervene in situations where bullying is directly observed
- Follow the procedures outlined in this policy for all reported incidents of bullying
- Be aware of their own classroom practice (and routines within their co-curricular commitment) with the aim of discouraging activities that enable exclusion or allow a person to become the target of bullying under the guise of a legitimate activity. For example, being aware of how groups are chosen, or how students divide into team, or whether students save seats for each other in class.

## The school expects parents to:

- Actively promote a positive and caring environment for all, including modelling the desired standards of behaviour at home and when visiting the school
- Discuss issues and strategies with their children to develop relationship skills, resilience and understanding
- Communicate with the School any signs of distress in their children
- Discuss with their children any incidents of bullying and positive strategies to help them to deal with bullying situations
- Work with the School, supporting the School's efforts to resolve the key issues involved.

## Definitions

**Bullying** is the ongoing misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that causes physical and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power over one or more persons.

Bullying can happen in person or online, and it can be obviously (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders. Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying. However, these conflicts still need to be addressed and resolved.

**Harassment** is the behaviour that targets an individual or group due to their identity, race, culture or ethnic origin; religion; physical characteristics; gender; sexual orientation; marital, parenting or economic status; age; ability or disability and that offends, humiliates, intimidates or creates a hostile environment.

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Harassment may be an ongoing pattern of behaviour, or it may be a single act. It may be directed randomly or towards the same person/s. It may be intentional or unintentional (i.e. words or actions that offend and distress one person may be genuinely regarded by the person doing them as minor or harmless).

**Violence** is the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against another person(s) that results in psychological harm, injury or in some cases death. Violence may involve provoked or unprovoked acts and can be a single incident, a random act or can occur over time.

*(The definitions above have been adopted from the Australian Government websites [studentwellbeinghub.edu.au](http://studentwellbeinghub.edu.au) and [bullyingnoway.gov.au](http://bullyingnoway.gov.au))*

Forms of bullying and harassment may include but are not limited to:

**Verbal/written**

- “Put downs” or “pay-outs” (to their faces or behind their backs)
- Spreading rumours
- Name-calling, teasing and ridiculing others about their appearance, achievements or social, cultural or religious beliefs
- Sending or delivering of hurtful messages
- The use of phones (mobile or otherwise), SMS, email, websites or similar means of communicating messages that are designed to harass, intimidate, threaten or impact negatively on the wellbeing of others.

**Physical**

- Pushing, hitting, punching, kicking, spitting and other hurtful or disrespectful acts
- Physically hurting someone under the guise of “horseplay”
- Making threats to physically harm someone; non-verbal gestures which are designed to intimidate
- Damaging, removing, hiding or interfering with another’s property.

**Covert/emotional**

- Purposely excluding someone from an activity or situation
- Ignoring someone as if they do not exist
- Spreading rumours about someone
- Influencing others not to like or associate with someone
- Controlling or dominating someone by withdrawing or threatening to withdraw friendship
- Pressuring others to act against their will – such as by handing over money or possessions.

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## Cyber bullying statement

This issue is relatively new and complex and deserves particular mention. It refers to bullying by inflicting harm on others through electronic and digital media; such as mobile phone text messages, emails, phone calls, internet chat rooms, instant messaging, social networking sites such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat and Whatsapp. Cyber bullying can occur at different times and places, which may be outside the school day and outside the clearly demarcated campus. Where bullying takes place that falls into the category of cyber bullying, school network privileges may also be removed for the individual student.

The policy on cyber bullying at CCGS is clear. Where there is a resulting impact on the wellbeing of a student at school or on the quality of the relationships between students, or groups of students, instances of cyber bullying will be addressed by the school irrespective of where and when the bullying takes place.

## Actions students can take if bullied

If you have been bullied, in the first instance you may:

### ***Ignore the bullying***

Avoid an argument and simply walk away. Just because someone is hassling you, does not mean that you must respond to their negativity. Ignoring works best on the first occasion that bullying occurs.

### ***Talk to the person doing the bullying***

With people you know, such as a classmate, talk about the problem in an assertive, but non-hostile manner. Let the person know that you do not like being treated unfairly. Speak in a calm, clear voice and name the behaviour you dislike. For example, "I don't like you making fun of my name. I want you to stop bullying me."

### ***Cool the situation down***

Sometimes you can make the situation better by asking a question, such as, "Tell me why you are bullying me?" or make a joke that does not insult the other person. These responses are unexpected and students engaging in bullying may back down because they have not received the response they expected.

### **If the bullying continues:**

- Report the bullying to someone as soon as possible. Tell your classroom teacher, Director of Pastoral Care, Planning and Co-curricular, tutor, your Head of House, school psychologists, the chaplain, a senior student in your house, Deputy Principal, the staff in health centre, your parents or a friend. Telling someone will help you to deal with the bullying.
- When you tell someone about being bullied, you are being both truthful and strong. The school, your family and friends want to support you and in order to do this they need to know about what is happening to you. The School will work with you to resolve problems and change people's behaviour so we have a healthy environment. You have the right to feel safe at school.
- Your report of bullying will be listened to and the situation will be investigated. The student bullying will be a part of this process and assistance will be provided to this student so he learns new and better ways of behaving. In some, but not all, cases the student bullying will be punished and warned about re-offending. In some cases, the student bullying will be counselled and punishment may be avoided in the first instance. You will be contacted in the following weeks and months to make certain the bullying has stopped.

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## School procedures and consequences

- Students, parents, members of staff and members of the community are encouraged to report bullying and/or harassment to school staff.
- The staff member who observed the incident or to whom it was reported will interview all students involved in a bullying/harassment incident for the first time. The staff member will discuss the incident with the students involved, focusing on acceptable behaviour, making correct decisions and clarifying the issues for the students so that all know exactly where they stand in the matter. The staff member will report this to the Deputy Principal or Director of Pastoral care, Planning and Co-curricular.
- Further incidents will result in a report being compiled by the relevant classroom teacher, Director of Pastoral Care, Planning and Co-curricular or tutor and Head of House, and given to the Head of School. One of the members of the leadership team will re-interview the students who are identified as being involved, and parents will be informed. Further counselling may be recommended.
- Students who continue to be involved in on-going bullying will be interviewed, together with their parents, by the head of school. Appropriate action will be taken. This may include mediation, suspension or expulsion.
- In the case of students who are involved in a singular incident of a very serious nature, consequences along the lines of those in the paragraph above may be brought immediately into play.

## What is not bullying?

There are many distressing behaviours that are not examples of bullying even though they may require intervention and management. It is essential that incidents of bullying be clearly differentiated from incidents of mutual conflict or single-episode/random aggression as the strategies for effectively responding vary for each situation. Inappropriate responses may result in matters becoming worse for those involved.

There are three typical negative social situations that are often confused with bullying:

### ***Mutual conflict***

In mutual conflict situations there is an initial argument or disagreement between parties at the core of the exchange of negative feelings and behaviours. However, these situations are not characterised by an imbalance of power. Both parties are upset and usually want a resolution to the problem. Mutual conflicts are addressed using mediation procedures.

### ***Social rejection or exclusive friendships***

Students often decide not to be friends with someone anymore or they don't want to play with or associate with that person. Only when social rejection involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause a specific student distress is it categorised as bullying. Social rejection issues are dealt with through counselling

### ***Single-episode or random acts of meanness, intimidation or violence***

Aggressive behaviours are not categorised as bullying if they occur only once or are random in nature, such as when directed towards several different people without reason, and/or are not repetitive. These issues will be addressed using discipline procedures and counselling where this is needed.

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## Review and evaluation

Policy and procedures for addressing bullying and harassment will be regularly monitored and evaluated, while ensuring the privacy of individuals is protected.

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