St Catherine's School
Sydney

STU014 Student quality behaviour and anti-bullying policy

This policy should be read in conjunction with the discipline policy (STU008). Both policies can also be found in the student diary. Parents/guardians should familiarise themselves and their daughters with these policies.

Rationale

St Catherine's School Sydney (school) is aware of its legal obligations to protect students according to international conventions and legislative requirements. Central to the aims of the school is the development of responsibility for personal conduct and positive relationships with others. Founded on Biblical wisdom, our values of integrity, courage, relationships, and service offer a model for our own actions and interactions with each other as a community.

The school's purpose is to develop young women of character and intellect who are equipped to make their unique contribution to the world. Our school community celebrates diversity and respects and supports individual difference. All members of the school community have a shared responsibility for quality behaviour.

Scope

This policy applies to all students and staff.

Definitions

Bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social, or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group of individuals towards one or more persons. This behaviour is regarded as unjustified, typically repeated, and perceived by the target as aggressive, humiliating, frightening and/or disempowering. Bullying may cause distress not only at the time of the attack, but because of the threat of future harassment or victimisation it may manifest itself as ongoing fear.

Bullying may take one or more of the following forms:

Verbal bullying can include (but is not limited to): teasing; using offensive names; ridiculing others; spreading rumours; demanding money; making personal threats; verbally attacking a person about their family, race or religion; creating or communicating notes, cartoons, photographs, graffiti and similar means and messages that impact negatively on the wellbeing of others.

Physical bullying can include (but is not limited to): hitting, punching; kicking; biting; scratching; tripping; pushing; spitting; hiding; damaging or destroying another student's possessions or food.

Social bullying can include (but is not limited to): deliberately excluding others from a group; refusing to sit next to someone; glaring or making menacing gestures at another, refusing to pick a student for a team activity, any form of alienation or ostracism; sexual harassment from an individual or group of the same or opposite sex.

Psychological bullying can include (but is not limited to): causing someone to feel afraid through intimidation; revealing personal or confidential information about the student or student's family; making threats; manipulating a person's emotions.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying carried out through internet and communication technologies may include (but is not limited to): using a technological device or devices to: tease or make fun of others; insult or ridicule people; post malicious or private information; spread rumours; send vicious, cruel or threatening text messages about or to a person; trick someone into sharing private information; defame or slander others; deliberately mislead others through the use of false identities; transmit photos, images or caricatures of individuals without their permission; hack into email or similar accounts. Cyberbullying closely links to psychological and social bullying.

Behaviour not considered to be bullying

Disagreements, mutual age-related conflict and single episodes of anti-social or poor behaviour are not considered to be bullying and will be responded to on a case by case basis.

The school takes these actions seriously and they will be dealt with as per the school's discipline policy.

Policy

The school believes that bullying can have a negative effect on a student's academic attainment and emotional wellbeing. Victims may suffer fear, anxiety, depression and low self-esteem. The school owes its students a duty of care. The duty of a school extends to reasonably protecting a student from the reasonably foreseeable conduct of other students or strangers and from the student's own conduct.

Quality behaviour is promoted proactively to all students by the school.

- All students are reminded of expected behavioural protocols through year meetings, assemblies, in the classroom and other avenues such as academic care time.
- Student expectations are clearly described in the school diary given to each student.
- Staff model quality behaviour.

Bullying is a form of harassment and victimisation, and not tolerated by the school. Every individual has the right to feel safe from bullying, harassment, victimisation and violence in all its forms.

All members of staff are committed to providing a community that celebrates diversity and respects and supports individual difference.

Any instance of bullying is treated as a serious incident. The school will take prompt action to address any incident of alleged bullying. Parents/guardians of students will be informed where appropriate.

Quality behaviour, and the proactive approach taken to it across the school, is designed to reduce any bullying behaviours, encourage students to identify what is inappropriate behaviour and to enhance the learning environment at school.

Procedures

Managing and reducing bullying at school

The social context and supervision at school has been shown to play a major part in the frequency and severity of bullying. While staff do not have control over individual and family factors, bullying can be greatly reduced in severity by ensuring a positive climate in school, with appropriate supervision and intervention measures in place.

The social climate in the school needs to be one where there is warmth and acceptance of all students, and one where there are high standards for student and teacher behaviour towards one another.

The school is proactive in promoting quality behaviour and managing bullying by:

A. Maintaining a strong, supportive culture

Built on Christian foundations, the school fosters a culture of respect and support for one another.

In all areas of the school life, the school aims to guide students towards:

- developing a personal understanding of the Christian faith
- demonstrating respect and tolerance for one another
- growing in their understanding of diversity in background and ability
- personal autonomy, self-efficacy and self-worth.

Explicit strategies that aim to prevent bullying include:

- guiding senior school students through the school's student quality behaviour and anti-bullying policy

- an academic care program that seeks to promote student wellbeing, positive relationships, quality behaviour and to develop students' social/emotional intelligence and communication skills at a developmentally appropriate level. In the senior school this includes sessions appropriate to the year group by the local Police Youth Liaison officer as required. In the junior school the PDHPE program and the classroom is used to develop these areas

- various cross-age mentoring opportunities including the big sister program in the senior school and wellbeing groups in the junior school

- key staff to identify and support students of concern. Key staff include the Year Mentors (senior school), Stage Leaders (junior school), Chaplain, Counsellors, the Head of Junior School and the Director of Day School

- staff supervision and staff awareness of duty of care including classroom management and playground duty.

B. Class climate and management

Teachers should:

- provide active supervision for students
- develop a class set of rules regarding expected behaviours within the classroom
- create a supportive and inclusive classroom that does not tolerate aggressive and bullying behaviour
- model positive, respectful, and supportive behaviour toward students
- use cooperative learning groups in class learning activities where appropriate.

C. Monitoring and evaluation

The following strategies monitor and evaluate behaviour in the school:

- identification of areas of concern by students or staff members

- regular communication between key staff to ensure students' needs are known

- year group and house meetings in the senior school

- Deputy Head of Junior School and the Head of Junior School in the junior school and the Year Mentors and the Director of Day School in the senior school work collaboratively (as needed) to detect patterns of behaviour and respond to such behaviour as needed

- communication with the School Liaison Police Officer as required or needed.

The role of student leadership

Student leaders act as positive role models promoting quality behaviour and mentoring other students.

Working with parents/guardians

The school works in partnership with parents/guardians to educate them about the school's approach to bullying and skills that they can discuss with their daughters to use in managing bullying.

Reporting bullying

Students who are subject to or who witness incidents of bullying are encouraged to report the information to an adult. This could be their parents/ guardians or a member of staff.

Responses to bullying

The response to any bullying allegation will be undertaken using the framework described in the school's discipline policy (STU008). Reported bullying will be thoroughly investigated in an impartial, timely and confidential manner.

Responses will be determined by the details and severity of the incident, but may include (but are not limited to):
- guidance interviews
- counselling
- consequences as per the discipline policy
- referral to the relevant authorities if appropriate.

Key contact information

School Liaison Police Officer, Waverley LAC 02 9369 9837

Communicating this policy

AUDIENCE	COMMUNICATED BY	COMMUNICATION PATHWAY
Teachers	Director of Day School Head of Junior School	Staff portal / professional development day
Students	Stage Leaders / Year Mentors	Academic care time / school diary
Parents/Guardians	Headmistress	e-communication / school portal

References

AIS NSW – Policy guidance document on duty of care (2011)

Related documents

STU008 Discipline policy
School diary: Student quality behaviour policy and anti-bullying policy

Responsibilities

It is expected that all staff working for the school administer this policy at all times.
Director of Day School
Head of Junior School
Headmistress
Year Mentors / Stage Leaders

St Catherine's School
Sydney

Authorisation

[signature]   11/9/23

Signature of Headmistress   Date

Certified by

[signature]   12/9/23

Signature of Policy Officer   Date

Policy number	STU014	Version	0006
Written by	Director of Day School	Approved date	11/9/23
Authorised by	Headmistress	Scheduled review	11/9/25
Certified by	Policy Officer		

Document tracking

Version	Date	Change
0004	14 March 2019	Role and responsibility updates, junior school responsibilities added, and minor revision changes as required with rebranding. Student added to the policy name.
0005	29 July 2020	Streamlining of content and language for greater clarity.
0006	11 September 2023	Changed to new format in adherence with 2023 Style and Grammar Guides. Title change from Head of Boarding and Academic Care to Director of Day School. Friday friends buddy system changed to wellbeing groups.