



St Ursula's College

K I N G S G R O V E

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

1. Policy Statement

St Ursula's College is an inclusive environment, where diversity is affirmed and individual differences are respected. This policy is to reinforce aims of the College Mission Statement and Student Management Policy and Student Behaviour Plan. All students at the College have the right to receive an education in a secure and happy learning environment free from all forms of bullying, harassment, intimidation and victimization. Bullying devalues, isolates, frightens and affects an individual's ability to achieve.

St Ursula's College aims to protect the health and safety of both the students and the whole community and provide a positive College culture where bullying is **not** acceptable in any form. All members of the community have the right to be respected by others, right to learn, right to feel safe and secure in their environment.

St Ursula's College Anti-bullying Policy is proactive and oriented towards prevention and early intervention.

2. Definition

Bullying is a form of harassment which is characterized by oppressive behaviour by a person or group over another. It is a form of anti-social behaviour which is based on an abuse of power where there is a willful and conscious desire to isolate, exclude, hurt, tease or intimidate someone. Bullying may be:

- 2.1. **Verbal** eg. Name calling, teasing, abuse, putdowns, sarcasm, insults, and threats.
- 2.2. **Physical** eg. Hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting.
- 2.3. **Social** eg. ignoring, excluding, ostracizing, alienating, making inappropriate gestures.
- 2.4. **Psychological** eg. spreading rumours, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions, malicious SMS and email messages, inappropriate use of images

3. Responsibilities

- 3.1. At St Ursula's we embrace a whole school collaborative approach as we believe bullying is everyone's responsibility. Students, teachers, parents and carers have a shared responsibility to create a safe environment, free from all forms of bullying.
- 3.2. Students have the responsibility to:
 - 3.2.1. behave appropriately and respect individual's differences and diversity;
 - 3.2.2. follow the Student Behaviour Plan and Student Behaviour Code of Rights and Responsibilities;
 - 3.2.3. learn and use proactive bystander skills which promote support for victims.
- 3.3. Students can expect to:
 - 3.3.1. Know their concerns will be dealt with as a matter of priority and they will be given appropriate support.

4. Parents and Carers have the responsibility to be aware of the

- 4.1. **Student Behaviour Plan and Student Behaviour Code of Rights and Responsibilities.**
- 4.2. Support their daughter in developing positive responses to incidents of bullying consistent with the College Anti-bullying Plan.

5. Teachers have the responsibility to

- 5.1. respect and support students in all aspects of their learning;

- 5.2. model appropriate behaviour;
- 5.3. respond in an appropriate and timely manner to incidents of bullying according to the Anti-bullying Policy;
- 5.4. undertake professional development in creating a safe and supportive environment;
- 5.5. learn skills that allow them to understand and manage bullying behaviour;
- 5.6. ensure the reporting system is secure and designed to maintain the dignity of the person accused of bullying.

6. Strategies to Prevent Bullying

- 6.1. Promote the development of positive relationships across all Key Learning Areas;
- 6.2. All incidents of bullying will be dealt with quickly and effectively in a firm, positive, caring manner;
- 6.3. Students, parents and carers are encouraged to be proactive in dealing with bullying;
- 6.4. Students will be taught a range of skills that can assist them to respond effectively to bullying, including talking to an adult;
- 6.5. Students are taught social and emotional skills to improve resilience and values education;
- 6.6. Students will be educated through the Pastoral Care program concerning the College Anti-bullying Policy, the behaviour that constitutes bullying and in all ways of dealing with bullies;
- 6.7. Teach bystander skills. Students instructed on how bystanders can speak up and speak out and disciplinary action.

7. Intervention

- 7.1. **Reporting** - All incidents of bullying including cyber-bullying must be reported immediately to a responsible adult. It is not always easy because of the subtle nature of bullying to identify incidents therefore students are encouraged to report incidents to Year Coordinators or a teacher they trust. If parents become aware of any bullying in the College carried out against their child, or another child, they should notify the Year Coordinator immediately;
- 7.2. Once identified, the bully, victim and witnesses will be interviewed;
- 7.3. Each allegation of bullying will be fully investigated and documented;
- 7.4. Bullies and victims will be encouraged to undertake counselling and support;
- 7.5. Bullies and victims will be encouraged through restorative practices back into the community;
- 7.6. Parents will be notified and will need to attend an interview at the College with their daughters;
- 7.7. Students may be immediately sent home until the matter is resolved;
- 7.8. The consequences implemented will be consistent with **College's Student Behaviour Plan**;
- 7.9. Student may be placed on a behaviour contract before resuming normal classes.

8. Tips for Parents (Protect Your Child From Bullying)

Here are some steps parents can take and information to help a child who is being bullied.

- 8.1. For behaviour to be labelled as bullying, it has to be intentionally designed to hurt or frighten your daughter. Also, the bully must have power and control over your daughter.
- 8.2. Let your daughter know that no one deserves to be bullied.
- 8.3. Stay calm.
- 8.4. Be sensitive to the fact that your daughter may feel embarrassed and ashamed.
- 8.5. Find out what happened, who was involved, and when and where it happened, and keep a log of this information.
- 8.6. Express confidence that you, the adults at the College and your daughter will be able to find a solution.
- 8.7. Ask your daughter to write down in a journal or notebook her thoughts and feelings about what happened.
- 8.8. Explain that bullies seek to hurt and control. So your daughter must not let them know she is hurt by their behaviour.
- 8.9. Let your daughter know that it is normal to feel hurt, fear, and anger.
- 8.10. Avoid being a "fix-it" parent by calling the bully's parents. Most of the time, this action is not effective. However, not all parents of bullies respond in a protective manner.

- 8.11. Don't tell your daughter to retaliate. It's against College policy, and retaliation frequently makes the bullying worse and more prolonged. Additionally, bullies are often more powerful than their victims.
- 8.12. Don't tell your daughter to ignore the bully. Most of the time, ignoring doesn't work.
- 8.13. Teach your daughter to be assertive, but not aggressive.
- 8.14. Don't promise that you will not tell anyone.
- 8.15. Become familiar with the College anti-bullying policy which is located on the College website
- 8.16. Report all physical assaults to the College and to police.
- 8.17. Take pictures of all injuries and hold a ruler next to the injuries to show their sizes. Keep a record of all medical treatment, including counselling, and all medical expenses and related travel expenses.
- 8.18. Be patient. Some situations take more time to investigate and stop than others.
- 8.19. Involve your daughter in activities inside and outside the College. Involvement in activities she enjoys increases the chances of high-quality friendships.
- 8.20. Monitor your daughter's whereabouts and her friendships.
- 8.21. Involve your daughter in discovering solutions to her bullying situation.
- 8.22. Watch for signs of depression and anxiety in your daughter, and do not hesitate to seek professional counselling.
- 8.23. Ask an older student with good morals to mentor your daughter.
- 8.24. Don't give up.

9. **Victim Warning Signs**

These are some of the warning signs victims of bullying might display.

- 9.1. Sudden decreased interest in school (wants to stay home)
- 9.2. Sudden loss of interest in favorite school activities (e.g., band, swim team, basketball team)
- 9.3. Sudden decrease in quality of school work
- 9.4. Wants the parent to take her to school instead of riding the bus
- 9.5. Seems happy on weekends, but unhappy, preoccupied, or tense on Sundays
- 9.6. Suddenly prefers the company of adults
- 9.7. Frequent illnesses such as headaches and stomachaches
- 9.8. Sleep issues such as nightmares and insomnia
- 9.9. Comes home with unexplained scratches, bruises, and torn clothing
- 9.10. Talks about avoiding certain areas of the school or neighbourhood
- 9.11. Suddenly becomes moody, irritable, or angry and starts bullying others (e.g., siblings, children in neighbourhood)
- 9.12. Seeks the wrong friends in the wrong places (e.g., drug users, cult, hate group, gang)
- 9.13. Talks about being sad, anxious, depressed, or having panic attacks
- 9.14. Wants to stay home at night
- 9.15. Wants to stay home on weekends
- 9.16. Self-mutilates
- 9.17. Talks about suicide

10. **Cyber-bullying**

For the purpose of this policy cyber-bullying can include but is not limited to:

- 10.1. Sending harassing, threatening or menacing messages to targets either directly or anonymously or
- 10.2. Using another person's address or alias via email.
- 10.3. Harassing and heated arguments via Instant Messaging (e.g. MSN, Yahoo & Bebo, Facebook, Twitter);
- 10.4. Anonymously writing anything (true or untrue), creating and adding cruel entries in a worldwide form via Chat Rooms/Bash Boards.
- 10.5. Masquerading as another by using their mobile phone or computer to send harassing or threatening messages via Short Text Messages (SMS);

- 10.6. Mocking, teasing and harassing and posting visuals that can be altered via Websites/Social Networking sites.
- 10.7. Downloading images
- 10.8. Acts of cyber bullying are prohibited during and after school hours against:
 - 10.8.1. the students at this College or other schools;
 - 10.8.2. the staff at this College or other schools;
 - 10.8.3. the College itself.
- 10.9. Many acts of cyber-bullying are Criminal Offences and carry fines and punishment and will be reported to Community Services(formerly DOCS) and Police.

11. Disciplinary Action for Cyber-bullying

College rules prohibit the inappropriate and threatening use of email, internet and mobile phone messaging both in the College, at any College function and away from College where the behaviour seriously impacts on other students or staff at the College.

Cyber-bullying containing	Actions may include	Responsibility/Involvement
Bullying	Parental notification and/or interview with student and sent home Suspension Documentation	Pastoral Care Coordinator Assistant Principal
Overt sexual content	Police notification Community Services notification Parental notification Suspension	Assistant Principal Principal
Threatening life Or Criminal activity or sexual assault	Police notification Community Services notification Parental notification Suspension/Transfer/Expulsion Counselling	Principal Regional Consultant Regional Director Executive Director Communications unit

12. Tips for Parents from the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA)

- 12.1. **Talk to your child** about cyber-bullying before it happens. Work out strategies to address cyber-bullying that you are both comfortable with, so your child knows what to expect if they do report their concerns to you.
- 12.2. Establish one or two other trusted adults your child is comfortable to approach about their concerns.
- 12.3. Be aware of what your child is doing online and explore it with them.
- 12.4. Keep the lines of communication open so your child will be comfortable to talk to you if something is worrying them. Help your child to develop the skills they need to interact safely and respectfully online. Guide their online activities and help them learn to communicate appropriately.
- 12.5. Try to locate the computer in a shared or visible place in the home. Computers in student's bedrooms should be discouraged.
- 12.6. Discuss the kinds of sites that are okay to explore and those that are not, and have clear rules about online activities.
- 12.7. Help your child to block anyone who sends offensive content. Most social networking services

allow users to block and report someone who is behaving badly.

Tips for Parents -If you think your child is being cyber-bullied:

- 12.8. Discuss any changes in mood or behaviour with them. If you are concerned, help your child to stay connected to friends and family that they trust.
- 12.9. Notify the police immediately if you have serious concerns for your child's safety.
- 12.10. Work with your child to save evidence of cyber-bullying behaviour – it may need to be followed up by the child's school, Internet Service Provider (ISP), mobile phone carrier or the police.
- 12.11. If you need to involve your child's school, ask them to thoroughly explain their processes so that you can work towards achieving a positive outcome.
- 12.12. Cyber-bullying won't stop if it's ignored – you can help by listening to your child and working with them to take control of the situation.

Useful contacts

ACMA	www.acma.gov.au
Internet Safety Information	www.cybersmart.gov.au
Cyber safety Contact Centre	Telephone 1800 880 176
Kids Helpline	www.kidshelp.com.au Telephone 1800 551 800
Bullying No Way	www.bullyingnoway.com.au
Reach Out	www.reachout.com.au
Life Line	www.lifeline.com.au Telephone 13 11 14
Scam Watch	www.scamwatch.gov.au Telephone 1300 302 502
Protect Your Child From Bullying	Alan L Beane.
Police	Telephone 000
Police Youth Liaison Officer Hurstville Local Area Command	Constable Belinda Prince (0437881135) Telephone (02) 9375 8553

This policy:

is Endorsed by:	College Executive
is available in:	Staff Handbook, College website
Management responsibility:	Pastoral Care Coordinator
has been distributed to:	All Staff
is referenced in:	The Student Diary
Policy Created :	August 2011
Date for review:	As necessary