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# BISHOP TYRRELL

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ANGLICAN COLLEGE

## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

<b>Document Approval and Version Control</b>			
<b>Policy Number:</b>	02.02.00	<b>Last Amended</b>	January, 2022
<b>Approved By:</b>	Corporate Services Manager	<b>Approval Date:</b>	January, 2022
<b>Contact Officer</b>	Corporate Services Manager	<b>Next Review Date:</b>	January 2023



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# 1. DOCUMENT MANAGEMENT

## 1.1 Version History

*Responsibility of author to track and maintain*

Version	Date	Author	Section #	Amendment (What Changed?)
1.1	02/09/2015	Tamara Powell	All	Initial draft
1.2	09/02/2016	Tamara Powell	3.1, 3.2	Amended draft
1.3	14/09/2016	Tamara Powell	5.4	Amended policy
1.4	2016	Tamara Powell	All	Amended Policy
1.5	15/04/2019	Principal	All	Amended Policy
1.6	26/02/20	Executive Officer	All	Amended Policy
02.02.00	Jan 2021	Shea Hafey	All	As part of overall update of all College Policies to consolidate, reformat, and restructure. Also separate this policy from a combined Bullying, Discrimination and Harassment policy and general update of content.
02.02.00	Jan 2022	Shea Hafey	All	Annual Review. No amendments made

## 1.2 Related Documents

### 1.2.1 Legislation

- Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998
- Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Regulation 2012
- Child Protection (Working with Children) Act 2012
- Child Protection (Working with Children) Regulation 2013

### 1.2.2 Policies

- Child Protection Policy
- Code of Conduct – Students
- ICT Acceptable Use Policy
- Cyber Safety Policy

### 1.2.3 Procedures

- Anti-Bullying Procedures

### 1.2.4 Other

- Anti-Bullying Report Form

## 2. SCOPE

This policy applies to all College employees, students, parents, Council members, contractors, volunteers and people undertaking work experience or vocational placements at the College. This policy applies to all conduct, work, interaction or any other activities that are under the management, control, influence or participation within the College. This policy applies to all College interests and activities, both on and off campus.

## 3. STUDENT PROTECTION

Bishop Tyrrell Anglican College supports the rights of children and young people and is committed to ensuring the safety, welfare and wellbeing of students. The College is therefore committed to responding to allegations of student harm resulting from the conduct or actions of any person including that of employees. This commitment includes the provision of a safe and supportive learning environment for all students and requires all employees, volunteers and visitors to model and encourage behaviour that upholds the dignity and protection of students from harm.

## 4. BACKGROUND

All students have the right to enjoy learning in an environment that is free from intimidation. Bullying, in any form, is unacceptable.

Persistent bullying can severely inhibit a child's ability to learn effectively. The negative effects of bullying can have an impact on a person for their entire life. Bishop Tyrrell Anglican College wishes to promote a secure and happy environment free from threat, harassment and any type of bullying behaviour. Therefore, this policy promotes practices within the school to reinforce our vision, and to remove or discourage practices that negate them.

All members of the College community share the collective responsibility to ensure students feel safe, supported and valued at all times. Students and parents are encouraged to come forward with reports of bullying in the knowledge that the College will take appropriate action to address occurrences of any unacceptable behaviour.

## 5. OBJECTIVE

The purpose of the Anti-Bullying Policy is to ensure that students learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied. Bullying is anti-social behaviour and affects everyone. If bullying does occur, students should feel confident that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

Every effort will be made to deal informally, internally and efficiently with such problems, however it should be clearly understood that ongoing behaviour of this nature will not be tolerated and will be considered adequate grounds to ask the perpetrator to leave the College.

## 6. DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this Policy, the following definitions apply:

**The College** refers to Bishop Tyrrell Anglican College

**Bullying** is defined as being repeated behaviour that:

- is harmful
- targets a certain person or group of people; and
- embarrasses, dominates or intimidates the person being bullied.

## 7. BULLYING

Bullying has three main features:

- it involves a misuse of power in a relationship
- it is ongoing and repeated, and
- it involves behaviours that can cause harm.

Bullying occurs when an individual or a group uses strength or power to hurt, either physically or emotionally, by intimidating or demeaning others.

Bullying can happen in person or online, and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert) and is a conscious attempt to hurt, threaten or frighten someone. Bullying can have a lasting impact on everyone involved, including those who witness it.

Some reasons why people bully:

- desire to appear powerful
- unhappiness
- feelings of inadequacy
- difficulties at home
- learned behaviour (they too have been bullied)

## 7.1 Examples of Bullying

The following types of behaviour, particularly if directed towards an individual repeatedly, may amount to bullying:

- a) demeaning language
- b) threats
- c) outbursts of anger or aggression
- d) physical or verbal intimidation or verbal abuse
- e) verbal insults such as teasing, name-calling, harassing, belittling or humiliating comments
- f) anti-social behaviour such as exclusion, isolating, gossip, spreading rumours or making offensive gestures
- g) pressure to behave in an inappropriate manner
- h) ganging up.

With the constant advancement in new technologies, there is also an increased risk of cyber bullying using e-mails, instant messenger, social networking sites, and public websites inappropriately. The College also has an *ICT Acceptable Use Policy* which all students and parents must be aware of.

## 7.2 Signs of Bullying

Teachers, parents, guardians or students who observe a radical change in a student's behaviour should discuss this with the individual and possibly the class Teacher, Head of House or Deputy Principal, as such changes may be symptomatic of bullying.

Some of the behaviours that might be observed are:

- unwillingness or refusal to go to school
- a decline in quality of school work
- becoming withdrawn and lacking confidence
- feeling ill in the mornings
- changing their route to school or become frightened of walking to school
- changes in sleeping or eating patterns
- frequent tears, anger, mood swings and anxiety
- having unexplained bruises, cuts and scratches
- missing or damaged belongings or clothes
- asking for extra pocket money or food
- arriving home hungry

- having unexplained bruises, cuts or scratches
- beginning to bully other children or siblings; or
- becoming aggressive and unreasonable.

### 7.3 Behaviours that ARE NOT Bullying

There are often many behaviours which, although distressing to those involved, are not strictly classified as bullying. Some of these behaviours may be part of a child's normal social skills development. Young children have a low tolerance for difference and diversity until their social skills are fully developed. In some instances, this type of behaviour may often require teacher intervention and management.

Some common situations which can often be confused with bullying are:

**Mutual conflict** ~ In mutual conflict situations, there is an argument or disagreement between students, but not an imbalance of power. Mutual conflict may evolve into a bullying situation at some point if it is not resolved; for example, when one person becomes 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** ~ Single episodes of nastiness, meanness, intimidation or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. If a student is verbally abused or pushed on one occasion, this does not constitute being bullied. This does not, however, lessen the seriousness of the incident or the subsequent consequences.

### 7.4 Responsibilities

The College Principal has a responsibility to respond quickly and appropriately to the issues being raised.

**The College Council** ~ Is responsible for ensuring the proper and effective management and operation of the College. This includes defining and monitoring the strategic direction, developing and monitoring policies, monitoring the effectiveness of the College Council and College, and establishing control and accountability systems.

**The Principal** ~ Is responsible for the administration and implementation of the College's strategic direction, policies and procedures and control and accountability systems developed by the College Council. The Principal works closely with and is accountable to the College Council for leading the College to deliver high quality curriculum and educational outcomes, excellence in teaching and learning, a strong College community and driving market growth.

**College Leadership Team (CLT)** ~ Members of the CLT are responsible for ensuring that this policy is adhered to in their respective areas.

**Employees** ~ All employees are expected to abide by this policy and its procedures.

**Members of the College Community** ~ College Community members also have an important role in the prevention of bullying. They must take reasonable care for their own health and safety, as well as that of others in the College. They must comply with this policy, and they must not engage in bullying, or encourage or allow others to do so.

## 8. RESPONDING TO BULLYING

Any student who is, or has been, the victim of bullying is urged to seek help and, by collaboration with staff and others, confront the influence of any bully.

Additionally, students who bully have poor social skills and need proactive assistance in developing appropriate interpersonal skills and will be provided with an opportunity to do so.

The College's anti bullying procedures are designed to support all parties. Teachers, parents, guardians or students who are aware of bullying are urged to initiate action by contacting a Teacher, Head of Department, or Deputy Principal.

**Due to the various and at times extenuating circumstances that are part of any behavioural incident, the following responses are to be read as guidelines only.**

Bullying is viewed as a breach of the College's '*Student Code of Conduct*'. Any reports of bullying will be investigated, and appropriate action will be taken. Responses to bullying will provide:

- guidance and other support for the victim
- appropriate and consistent sanctions and support for the bully

Staff are expected to report suspected incidents of bullying of both the victim and the bully to the Deputy Principal in the first instance.

The College seeks to promote a culture in which the students are encouraged to:

- take some positive action to stop the bullying if they observe an incident
- report the bullying incident to a teacher as soon as possible
- make it clear to their peers that bullying is not acceptable.

### 8.1 Procedures

If you feel that you are being bullied, there is action which you can take that may resolve the problem, such as:



- do not ignore circumstances where you feel you are being bullied, thinking it will go away. Ignoring the behaviour could be taken as tacit approval by the person causing the bullying;
- where you feel comfortable ask the person to stop, or make it clear that you find the behaviour offensive or unwelcome. Use unambiguous terms and plain language to ensure that the person causing the bullying is fully aware of the nature of the complaint and verbally informed that the behaviour is unacceptable. Be polite but firm and clear, indicating that the bullying should stop.
- Maybe the alleged bully is not aware that his or her behaviour is intimidating or unwelcome and will stop once they are told. It may be useful to speak with your supervisor/tutor teacher or the Dean of Students in the first instance to seek guidance on how to do this; and/or raise the issue as a grievance with either your Head of House or Head of Department or the Deputy Principal or College Principal under this statement, as soon as possible after the incident(s) have occurred.

If you are not able to approach the bully unaided, especially if the person is in a position of authority, you can choose to either seek the assistance of another member of staff - a colleague, a Head of House, a Head of Department or a Union Representative in verbally approaching the harasser/bully or make the complaint to the harasser/bully in writing rather than face to face. Such an approach may be sufficient to stop the bullying. If it is not, a formal complaint should be made in writing to the Deputy Principal or College Principal, supported by relevant documentation indicating time, date, location, what happened and what was said. The complaint will then be dealt with in accordance with the College's Complaints and Grievances Policy and Procedures.

Bishop Tyrrell Anglican College is committed to quickly and confidentially handling complaints regarding bullying and the main aim of all formal procedures is to ensure that:

- the behaviour stops
- that there are no reprisals for having made the complaint; and
- where disadvantage has occurred, that the situation is redressed as far as possible.

The guiding principles behind such aims are:

- the right of all individuals to be treated with respect
- observance of natural justice
- observance of confidentiality where appropriate
- acceptance of the legitimacy of the complainant's feelings
- support and protection for all parties concerned
- preservation of an unbiased approach by mediators.

The College will ensure that the formal complaint handling is:

**Confidential** ~ Only the people directly involved in making or investigating a complaint will have access to information about it.

**Impartial** ~ Both sides will have their chance to tell their side of the story. No assumptions will be made and no action taken until all relevant information has been collected and considered.

**Free of repercussions** ~ No action will be taken against anyone for making a complaint or helping someone to make a complaint. The College will take all necessary steps to ensure that no victimisation occurs against anyone who makes a complaint.

**Timely** ~ All complaints will be dealt with as quickly as possible.

The College will take whatever action it considers appropriate if there have been incidents of bullying, including disciplining or dismissing offenders. While a careful, measured and considerate course is the preferred option, it should be emphasised that nothing in the foregoing will prevent the College taking immediate action if a situation is considered to be sufficiently serious.

Teachers will take a calm, unemotional, problem-solving approach when dealing with incidents of bullying behaviour reported by pupils, staff or parents.

In any incident of bullying, the teacher will speak separately to the students involved, in an attempt to get both sides of the story. All interviews will be conducted with sensitivity and due regard to the rights of all the students concerned. Students who are not directly involved may also be asked to provide information.

The following general practices will be followed:

- When analysing incidents of bullying behaviour, the teacher will seek answers to questions of what, where, when who and why, in a calm manner, setting an example in dealing effectively with the conflict in a non-exaggerated manner.
- Teachers who are investigating cases of bullying behaviour will keep a written record of their discussions with those involved.
- All initial cases of bullying will be dealt with by the respective classroom teacher, who will keep the Deputy Principal informed. Written notes will be kept by the classroom teacher to assist further intervention, should it be required.
- The initial interview will include a clear statement on the consequences if the bullying continues, or if there are any reprisals as a result of reporting the incident. If the student continues to engage in bullying behaviour, parents will be contacted, and an interview arranged with the Deputy Principal/classroom teacher/relevant parties.
- The victim of bullying may need further support to develop strategies to overcome the situation. The classroom teacher will seek to involve parents in the development of an action plan to help the child if necessary. Should counselling be required, this will be negotiated with the Deputy Principal, Student Pastoral Care.
- Serious cases of bullying will be reported immediately to the Principal using the '*Student Anti Bullying Report*' form.

- Incidents of one-off aggression will be dealt with according to the College's *'Behaviour Management Procedure*.
- Interviews will be conducted to ascertain the specific nature of the bullying. Decisions will be made as to the level of severity of the incident and where the parents (of both parties) need to be informed. The interview will also focus on appropriate strategies to assist both the victim and the bully.

Any further recurrence of the bullying may result in an issue of warning re: suspension and could lead to the implementation of suspension procedures in accordance with College protocols. This is a major sanction that is not undertaken lightly and is a 'last resort' to ensure the safety of children in the Colleges' care.

### *8.1.1 Process for Dealing with Incidents of Bullying or Alleged Bullying*

The following sequential steps should be followed when dealing with incidents of bullying or alleged bullying:

1. Where possible, information should be gathered about the alleged bully, their name, and the circumstances in which the alleged bullying has taken or is taking place. Evidence of bullying should be collected if available, e.g. notes, emails or text messages. This step should be done carefully as the child may not wish to open up with such information.
2. The information is put down in the form of a written statement, to be signed by the parents or carers.
3. Parents may organise a meeting with the child's teacher to report the bullying incidence and to seek assurance that the matter will be dealt with immediately. The written statement should be left with the teacher for reference and follow up. The written statement will be signed by the teacher to indicate that it has been received and read.
4. If the alleged bullying is taking place among peers in the classroom, the teacher will address the issue at that level, immediately and directly. While addressing the issue, the teacher will seek to protect the victim while exercising natural justice for the alleged bully. The teacher will attempt to halt any bullying behaviour and where appropriate elicit an apology from the bully. During the investigation, the teacher will telephone the parents to report on progress and/ or outcomes of the investigation.
5. If the bullying continues or is occurring outside the classroom, the written statement will be forwarded to the Head of House together with the 'Student Anti Bullying Report' form, they will interview the bully and initiate steps to protect the victim and reform the bully's behaviour. Where the problem is entrenched, the Deputy Principal may seek an interview with the parents of the victim and the bully.
6. The relationships of the victim and bully will be monitored for a time until the teacher and Deputy Principal are satisfied that the issue is resolved. Reports from parents will be welcomed during this period.

7. If the bullying continues, the bully and his or her parents will be interviewed by the Principal. Reasons will be asked why the bully should not be suspended, temporarily or permanently, depending on the severity of the behaviour and its impact on the victim.
8. Where the victim has suffered trauma as a result of the bullying, the College will consult parents about offering support and counselling to the student.

## 8.2 Possible Outcomes

Where an incident of bullying has been reported and investigated, possible outcomes may include:

the student suffering the bullying is protected

- the bully is made aware of how his or her behaviour is affecting the victim
- the bully's behaviour is halted, and steps are taken to reform the behaviour
- the bully apologises to the victim (a written apology may be appropriate)
- where relevant, the parents of the bully are asked to monitor the bully's use of the internet, emails and text messaging, or
- where appropriate and justified, the bully's enrolment is suspended.

## 8.3 Bullying by Outsiders

Bullying of a student by non-College persons outside the College grounds should be reported to the Police. A report should also be made to the Principal or the Head of Primary, whichever is relevant, so that appropriate support can be offered to the student at the College.

The College cannot be responsible for acts of bullying that occur outside the College, this is the domain of the parents or guardians. This includes physical as well as electronic forms of bullying. However, the College recognises that any bullying can affect the academic progress and the emotional wellbeing of a student. If a student is subject to bullying outside the College, then they are encouraged to inform the College or request that their parents/guardians inform the College. The College will not take responsibility for those acts of bullying in terms of discipline but will note them, and if warranted, pass the information on to the applicable parents/guardians. It is the family's responsibility to discipline children outside of College endorsed activities.

If the College becomes aware of bullying incidents that are occurring outside the College and they are having an effect on the well-being of the student, the College will inform the student's parents/guardians and offer advice.

## 8.4 What is Victimisation?

Bishop Tyrrell Anglican College Community members must not victimise a person because they have made or propose to make a complaint of bullying or because they have provided information in relation to a complaint. Victimisation means subjecting a person to some detriment, for example, ostracising an employee or excluding them from an opportunity or activity.

If you feel that you are being victimised because you have made, or propose to make, a complaint of bullying or because you have provided information in relation to a complaint, you should raise the issue as soon as possible with either the Deputy Principal or College Principal.

## 8.5 Cyber Bullying

The incidence of electronic bullying is ever increasing as students have greater access to mobile phones and the internet. This subtle form of bullying can be more vicious as it can be done in a cowardly manner without the victim knowing who sent them a message via a text message or using an internet program.

Should an incident of bullying involving an electronic medium occur at school then the College will deal with the issue by following the relevant *Cyber Safety Policy* and procedures.

## 8.6 The Role of Parents/Guardians

If a parent or guardian believes their child/student is involved in bullying, either as a victim or as an aggressor, it is appropriate to communicate this information to the College by contacting the classroom teacher or relevant pastoral care staff member as soon as possible.

If you suspect that your child/student is involved in bullying at school, either as a victim or as an aggressor, the College suggests;

- encourage them to talk to you about it
- never dismiss the matter by saying it is the child's responsibility to deal with it, either by standing up to the bully or ignoring it
- don't be too over-protective. Your child should be encouraged to come to school after the school is made aware of the situation
- Listen carefully and sympathetically. Try to get the relevant facts without interrogation
- encourage your child to tell someone at school about it
- describe accurately what has been happening to your child to your contact at the College
- be prepared to work with the College to resolve the issue/s.

## 8.7 Health and Wellbeing

College Community members should take care of his or her health and wellbeing. Bullying at the College is a serious issue that can affect people in a number of ways. If a College Community member has been assaulted or fear he or she may be assaulted, he or she may wish to consider contacting the police.

## 9. PRIVACY

Personal information may be collected, stored and released and is done so in accordance with the *Privacy Act 1988*. For further information, please refer to the College's [Privacy Policy](#).

## 10. POLICY MANAGEMENT

### 10.1 Responsibilities

In accordance with responsibility for the College compliance, the Principal also retains responsibility for this policy and all delegated authorities within.

All employees are responsible for the welfare of students and their colleagues. All employees should be familiar with this policy and ensure adherence is maintained at all times. This responsibility cannot be delegated.

### 10.2 Policy Adherence

Adherence to this policy is a mandatory requirement of all College employees. Breaches of the policy will be subject to formal investigation and may lead to disciplinary action.

### 10.3 Review

This policy will be reviewed annually, or when legislative or governing body changes may warrant a review. The Principal reserves the right to make changes as and when required. The Principal or the Principal's delegate is responsible for reviewing or making approved modifications to the policy and distribution of the policy.