



Related Policies

St Clare's College:

Positive Behaviours (Personal Best)

Pastoral Care

Mandatory Reporting

Catholic Education Archdiocese of Canberra and Goulburn's:

Restraint of Students

Child Protection - Mandatory Reporting ACT & NSW

Guidelines for Professional Conduct in the Protection of Children and Young People

Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment

Rationale/Purpose

The National Safe Schools Framework, implemented in all schools in January 2006 (revised in December 2010), is an Australian Government initiative and provides a nationally consistent approach to the development of policies and protocols in schools to promote student wellbeing and develop respectful relationships. It identifies nine elements to assist Australian schools to continue to create teaching and learning communities where all members of the school community both *feel* and *are* safe from harassment, aggression, violence and bullying.

Policy

The Guiding Principles of the National Safe School Framework are based upon the premise that all Australian schools:

- affirm the right of all school community members to feel *safe* and *be* safe at school
- acknowledge that being safe and supported at school is essential for student wellbeing and effective learning
- accept responsibility for developing and sustaining safe and supportive learning and teaching communities that also fulfil the school's child protection responsibilities
- encourage the active participation of all school community members in developing and maintaining a safe school community where diversity is valued
- actively support young people to develop understanding and skills to keep themselves and others safe
- commit to developing a safe school community through a whole-school and evidence-based approach.

In response to the implementation of the National Safe School Framework and as an adjunct to the Positive Behaviours (Personal Best) Policy, St Clare's College has developed a Safe School Policy which relates specifically to harassment and bullying. The Safe School Policy is designed to ensure processes and procedures exist so that all members of



the College are safe and are treated with respect and dignity in keeping with the College vision and mission.

Procedures

The College is committed to the development and implementation of early intervention strategies to prevent harassment and to strengthen student coping mechanisms and wellbeing.

In general this includes:

- ensuring that policies, programs and strategies are implemented which aim to build a sense of belonging and which promote the wellbeing of all students
- the use of a range of resources to develop preventative programs which include skills based learning for all community members
- the identification of harassment behaviour as detrimental to the welfare and wellbeing of students, staff and the wider community
- programs to assist students to improve their anger management, conflict resolution and communication skills
- strategies to deal with students who harass or are harassed by others
- a clear statement of the responsibilities of students who witness incidents of harassment
- the provision of counselling and mediation services to support students at risk of being harassed or who are harassing others
- clear referral protocols and communication processes
- clearly stated procedures in the context of the College Positive Behaviour (Personal Best) Policy to address harassment as it arises
- regular evaluation and refinement of College protocols dealing with harassment.

The College Positive Behaviour (Personal Best) Policy is the framework upon which student rights and responsibilities is based and which clearly supports the Safe School Policy.

Positive Behaviour (Personal Best)

- Expresses the rights and responsibilities of students, staff and parents
- Is expressed in positive terms
- Is able to be understood by all members of the College community
- Contains appropriate levels of sanctions and consequences which staff, students and parents know
- Is structured in such a way that sanctions and consequences can be fairly and consistently applied
- Is based upon the engagement of students and on the provision of appropriate intervention strategies to develop appropriate behaviours



The Positive Behaviour (Personal Best) Policy states that all students have the right to:

- be treated justly and respectfully
- be provided with a range of learning experiences in well-managed environments that meet individual needs
- have all work expectations made clear
- receive timely, respectful and constructive feedback
- have all personal property respected
- be provided with a selection of challenging and enjoyable co-curricular activities
- feel safe and secure
- benefit from the opportunities that exist from membership of the College community.

Teachers are in a unique position to identify how students are functioning in the school environment and therefore play a vital role in the identification of changes and in the early assessment of student needs. Teachers play a critical role in the development of student resiliency through the implementation of appropriate programs and in the provision of effective pastoral care of individual students or groups of students.

The College is committed to ensuring that teachers:

- have a shared knowledge and understanding of school procedures and protocols for dealing with incidents of harassment in the classroom, playground and via electronic communication devices
- are committed to developing supportive relationships with students and to the provision of communication between the school, students and families
- have the skills to identify individual students experiencing difficulty
- monitor student attendance and implement procedures and protocols to ensure student engagement with school
- are skilled and empowered to deal with harassment issues as they occur
- undertake professional development such as conflict resolution, mediation, classroom management and assertiveness training in order to enhance their skills and to enable them to support students.

Harassment

Harassment is any behaviour which threatens, hurts or frightens a person. It can be expressed as physical, verbal or social behaviour. While some harassment is unlawful, all harassment is inappropriate.

Physical harassment is:

- hitting, pushing, kicking, punching or jostling in classrooms, corridors, on stairs, on the sports field, and in the playground
- physical threats



- interfering with another student's property by stealing, damaging, destroying or hiding it.

Verbal Harassment is:

- name calling, insults, put-downs, teasing, swearing at
- belittling the ability of a person
- spreading rumours or stories about a person or his or her family
- writing graffiti about a person.
- writing or distributing inappropriate communications about another person
- name calling of a racist nature.

Social Harassment is:

- making degrading comments about the cultural, religious or social background of another person
- the use of offensive jokes or inappropriate material
- making degrading comments about the appearance or attire of another person
- pressuring a person to do something against his or her will
- deliberate exclusion of an individual or group of people
- deliberately disturbing a student or teacher during class
- repeated questions about the private life of a person
- offensive letters or phone calls
- offensive communications through computers.

Sexual Harassment is:

Unwelcome behaviour of a sexual nature in which a reasonable person in the circumstances would anticipate that the behaviour would cause offence, humiliation or intimidation of that person.

Some examples include:

- name calling or comments of a sexual nature
- comments or rumours about a person's sexuality
- repeated questions about a person's private life
- non-verbal gestures such as body gestures of a sexual nature
- physical contact such as patting, pinching, touching, pushing, brushing against another person's body, or invading a person's space
- jokes of a sexual nature
- display of offensive pictures, posters or graffiti
- letters or phone calls in which there is a sexual reference



- pestering someone to go out or engage in sexual activities
- sexual abuse or sexual assault
- communications through the computer of a sexual nature

Electronic Harassment is:

- the transmission of threatening messages via email, chatrooms, instant messaging, social networking sites, Webpages or SMS
- the transmission of messages or jokes of a sexual nature via email, chatrooms, instant messaging, social networking sites, Webpages or SMS
- the posting of photographs on the internet without permission

The College recognises that harassment can lead to:

- feelings of powerlessness, fear and isolation
- depression
- difficulty sleeping, working or concentrating
- difficulty relating to friends or family
- feelings of confusion or stress
- students not wishing to attend school
- exclusion from social groups.

In the event of harassment:

If a student experiences harassment or witnesses the harassment of another person, she is encouraged to contact one of the following:

- their Pastoral Care Leader
- their Pastoral Coordinator
- their Dean
- the School Counsellor
- one of the Assistant Principals or the Principal
- any member of staff with whom they feel comfortable
- a senior student
- a parent.

The person to whom this information is given is required to pass this on to the appropriate personnel so that measures can be implemented to resolve the issue.

In resolving reports or issues of harassment one or more of the following may apply:

- the offending student or students may be interviewed by the classroom teacher, Pastoral Leader, Pastoral Coordinator, Curriculum Coordinator, Dean or Assistant Principal Pastoral Care.



- the offending student or students may then be interviewed with their parents
- the student or students may be given an appropriate sanction or consequence which may involve a significant disciplinary action.
- all students involved may be required as a result of the incident to engage in counselling or contact with other outside agencies so that they learn strategies to deal with relationship issues in appropriate ways.

References

The National Safe Schools Framework

<https://www.education.gov.au/national-safe-schools-framework-0>

Approved by:	Executive
Implementation date:	2006
Revision date:	2016
St Clare's Contact Officer	Assistant Principal Pastoral Care