

# Student Bullying and Harassment Policy

The College adopts the policy of the Catholic Education Office entitled “***Student Bullying and Harassment Policy***”

## 1.1 Bullying

Bullying is a form of harassment. It is the wilful, conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone. It may occur because of a person’s race, age, disability, sexuality, religious beliefs. This type of behaviour is unwarranted, unwelcome and unsolicited. It undermines the right of the individual and has some effect on the morals and values that the school seeks to promote.

Bullying can take many forms:

- a) Physical - fighting, pushing, hitting
- b) Verbal - name calling, offensive language, insults, rumour
- c) Non-Verbal - offensive notes, graffiti
- d) Victimisation - threats to get/harm another, ‘picking on’
- e) Exclusion - isolation
- f) Property - stealing, hiding, damaging
- g) Electronic - e-mail, social media

## 1.2 Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is any unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature where the purpose has been to offend, humiliate or intimidate, or in circumstances where a reasonable person should have anticipated the possibility that their actions could be interpreted in this way. Sexual harassment is unlawful under the Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 whenever and wherever it occurs, and whoever is the victim.

## 1.3 Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is harassment using electronic means such as emails and social networking sites. Cyberbullying has negative implications as it affects the school community and relationships within it. Parents and teachers need to work together to educate students about the legal and moral consequences of Cyberbullying.

The College addresses Cyberbullying through education, facilitated either by some KLA areas and external agencies (e.g. Legal Aid, Cybershots, Drama performances). Where incidents arise, will make an appropriate response which may involve Restorative Justice or referral to the Police.

## 1.4 Students

Students are encouraged to:

- a) intervene if they observe an incident of bullying or harassment and take some positive action to stop this
- b) make it clear to their peers that bullying or harassment is not acceptable
- c) report the incident of bullying or harassment to any member of staff as soon as possible.

## 1.5 Victims of Bullying or Harassment

Victims of bullying or harassment are encouraged to:

- a) initially ignore the bullying and not show that it is upsetting. Many bullies will stop if they do not elicit a response
- b) face the bully and let him/her know that the behaviour is unwanted and not justified. This step should be taken if the initial tactic is unsuccessful
- c) discuss the problem with parents and friends, who may be able to assist with strategies to deal with the problem
- d) notify a teacher, their Year Coordinator or the Assistant Principal

## 1.6 Victims of Sexual Harassment

Victims of sexual harassment can choose from the following actions:

- a) approach their Year Coordinator or Assistant Principal for advice, support and assistance;
- b) ask the Principal or Assistant Principal to speak to the person accused of sexual harassment;
- c) make an informal complaint;
- d) make a formal complaint where other approaches are unsuccessful, or allegations are so serious that other approaches are inappropriate.

## 1.7 The College

The College aims to create an environment of understanding and cooperation in which victims of bullying and bystanders are empowered to seek help.

*How do we respond to bullying and harassment at Holy Spirit College?*

Bullying and harassment is not tolerated at our College. Any report of bullying or harassment is investigated and appropriate action such as mediation with the Year Coordinator and/or Assistant Principal is taken. Confidentiality is assured.