

SIENA COLLEGE CAMBERWELL ANTI-BULLYING POLICY



SIENA
COLLEGE
CAMBERWELL

POLICY TITLE: ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

DEVELOPED / REVIEWED BY

Deputy Principal Wellbeing and Strategy
Siena College Policy Committee
MACS (Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools)

REVIEW SUMMARY

The Dominican Ideals are a commitment to truth explored in dialogue, a vibrant preaching of the Gospel, a critical appreciation of culture and cultures, and a love of the beautiful. Our goal in each of our Educational Ministries is to foster these values, together with a spirit of prayer and contemplation, respect for the dignity and uniqueness of each individual, and the pursuit of excellence. (Dominican Education Australia)

At Siena College the dignity of the human person is the foundation of all Catholic social teaching and is intrinsic to our education ministry. Consequently, the principle that the person is made in the image and likeness of God is central to the mission of our College.

This policy identifies the interconnectedness of the characteristics of quality Catholic learning and teaching. It is intended to value, respect, and promote the self-esteem and dignity of each student, regardless of their cultural or linguistic background. The College will actively promote anti-bullying messages, alerting students and staff of the need to be vigilant.

It is essential that we create and maintain a respectful, safe and supportive learning environment that promotes student wellbeing, personal growth and positive self-esteem amongst our diverse range of learners ([eXcel: Wellbeing for learning in Catholic school communities](#)).

The prevention of and responses to incidents of bullying, inappropriate use of technology and disrespectful behaviour are more readily achieved in a caring and supportive environment that promotes positive relationships and reflects Gospel values. Bullying, cyber-bullying, harassment, aggression, and violence disregard core values of our faith, including dignity, respect, justice, equity, compassion, trust, and courage. Importantly, such actions can adversely affect the wellbeing of our students and are therefore unacceptable.

DOCUMENT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

This document was first developed by Deputy Principal Wellbeing and Strategy in June 2022 considering the new Child Safe Standards coming into effect from 1 July 2022.

RATIONALE

This policy:

- reflects that the College does not tolerate bullying of any form
- articulates how bullying is defined and addressed; including the means taken to prevent incidents and the response taken when an incident occurs
- supports the College Mission and Vision Statement and guidelines of Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) and Dominican Education Australia
- actively promotes anti-bullying messages, alerting students and staff of the need to be vigilant.

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- is communicated to the College community via the College website and College intranet portal, Siena Central

DEFINITIONS

<p>bullying</p>	<p>Includes but is not limited to repeated unreasonable behaviour directed towards a person that creates a risk to health and safety. It occurs when an individual or a group deliberately upsets or hurts another person, their property, reputation, or social acceptance on more than one occasion.</p> <p>Bullying can be direct or indirect and can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • harassment • physical bullying • verbal bullying • gesture bullying • extortion bullying • exclusion bullying • visual bullying • sexual bullying • cyber bullying <p>Bullying does not include socially unpleasant behaviours. Socially unpleasant behaviour which does not constitute bullying includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mutual conflict: In mutual conflict situations, there is an argument or disagreement between students but not an imbalance of power. Both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution to the problem. However, unresolved mutual conflict sometimes develops into a bullying situation, with one person becoming targeted repeatedly for 'retaliation' in a one-sided way. • Social rejection or dislike: Unless the social rejection is directed towards someone specifically 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 or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. If a student is verbally abused or pushed on one occasion they are not being bullied. Nastiness or physical aggression that is directed towards many different students is not the same as bullying.
<p>physical bullying</p>	<p>Includes but is not limited to hitting, tripping, pushing, shoving, fighting, pinching and any other unwelcome physical contact used intentionally to intimidate or hurt someone and includes damaging property.</p>



verbal bullying	Includes but is not limited to name calling, insults or put downs, particularly those referring to physical characteristics, lying and spreading rumours, playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate, mimicking, verbal abuse and homophobic or racist remarks.
gesture bullying	Includes but is not limited to non-verbal signals used to silence and intimidate a victim.
extortion bullying	Includes but is not limited to physically stronger and more powerful students may bully other students into giving up their possessions, buying food and drink, or taking part in rule breaking activities.
exclusion bullying	Includes but is not limited to deliberately being left out of activities or encouraging others to socially exclude someone.
visual bullying	Includes but is not limited to offensive notes or material, graffiti, or damaging other people's possessions.
sexual bullying	Includes but is not limited to touching, sexually orientated jokes, drawings of, or writing about someone's body, using rude names, or commenting about someone's morals, unwanted invitations of a sexual nature, asking questions about someone's private life.
cyber-bullying	Includes but is not limited to the use of various forms of electronic media to spread text and visual messages to intimidate, lie or spread rumours or to cause hurt, embarrassment, humiliation or distress.
harassment	Harassment includes any unwelcome behaviour that offends, humiliates or intimidates a person. Generally, unlawful harassment occurs when someone is subjected to prohibited behaviour under anti-discrimination legislation.
restorative practice	Is a whole-school teaching and learning approach that encourages behaviour that is supportive and respectful. Restorative practices remove power imbalances by focussing on building positive relationships.

PRINCIPLES / GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The College does not tolerate any form of bullying or harassment. This policy is grounded in the belief that:

- every person has the right to be treated respectfully and feel safe from any form of verbal, physical and emotional abuse, including those from diverse backgrounds and cultures (such as Aboriginal culture)
- the College is committed to building and nurturing a community that values diversity
- parents are the prime educators of their children
- the College community is involved in the development of College policies

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- identification and reporting of bullying is essential to the effective implementation of this policy
- complainant(s) will be protected from victimisation
- learning technologies are used ethically and responsibly in the classroom environment, and in a way that minimises the opportunity for children, young people, and students to be harmed
- communication is respectful and human dignity is valued
- regular monitoring of College policies is necessary, and improvements are made where appropriate

PROCEDURES

All members of the Siena College community must be aware of the possibility of bullying and take action to prevent bullying if it is reasonably foreseeable.

Responsibilities: The College

The College's approach to student wellbeing is underpinned by the restorative practice approach, which has at its core an understanding that in respecting ourselves, we learn to respect others. This understanding encourages all members of our community to take responsibility for their actions.

Rather than adopting a punitive approach to student wrongdoing, an emphasis is placed on working with the student so that they can better understand the impact of their behaviour.

The College will respond to all reported incidents of bullying, alleged or actual, sensitively, fairly, and promptly by:

- initiating a restorative practices intervention
- keeping a written record of any bullying investigation
- encouraging students, staff and parents and carers to report bullying and cyber-bullying to the class teacher, Head of House, Director of Students or Deputy Principal Wellbeing and Strategy
- investigating complaints of bullying and cyber-bullying in a manner that respects the dignity and privacy of those involved.
- Ensuring that complaints of bullying and cyber-bullying are handled in a way that is sensitive to students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds, and that recognises the diverse circumstances of students
- nominating a person or staff to co-ordinate strategies for the resolution of specific bullying incidents reported in the College
- notifying parents/guardians/carers of bullying incidents involving their children
- contacting the Police/Police Youth Liaison Officer if the bullying situation has involved violence, threat of harm or alleged criminal conduct
- maintaining records of bullying incidents and related interventions in accordance with relevant recordkeeping requirements (such as the Public Record Office Victoria Recordkeeping Standards)
- promoting student voice and empowerment in classrooms and also through the use of Student Representative Council to discuss matters associated with bullying, cyber bullying, safety and wellbeing
- regularly reviewing and evaluating this policy and the responsible use of technology policies and procedures to ensure they are working effectively
- engaging with parents/guardians/carers to review and evaluate this policy and the responsible use of technology procedures to ensure they are working effectively

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Responsibilities: Staff

Staff at the College aim to treat all members of the College community with dignity and respect and build respectful relationships that respond effectively and sensitively to the needs of each student by:

- implementing the student anti-bullying and responsible use of technology policies and procedures by responding promptly and appropriately to reported incidents of bullying
- implementing a restorative approach to incidents
- supporting the student anti-bullying and responsible use of technology policies and procedures through positive modelling and the promotion of appropriate behaviour
- engaging in professional learning to support appropriate anti-bullying responses which could include cyber safety, restorative justice practices, mediation and developing social skills in students. Such opportunities are made available to staff on the same basis as other professional learning.
- supporting all aspects of related school policies
- remaining vigilant in how students are using technology
- positive modelling and the promotion of appropriate online behaviour
- embedding critical thinking, values clarification, respectful relationships and developing empathy into our teaching practice
- responding to bullying and cyber-bullying concerns by providing age-appropriate guidance and boundaries so that students can learn to self-regulate.

Responsibilities: Students

Students at the College have responsibilities to use technology appropriately and respectfully. The staff at the College will encourage and support students to:

- follow the anti-bullying and responsible use of technology policies and procedures
- immediately seek help from a trusted adult if they are aware of or involved in a bullying or cyber-bullying incident
- seek support if bullied and refrain from retaliating in any bullying incident
- understand that any social networking site that identifies the College by name or image or implication is part of the College environment
- in age-appropriate circumstances the student should keep evidence of alleged bullying and produce it on request (for example phone text messages).

Responsibilities: Parents/Guardians/Carers

Parents/guardians/carers at the College have responsibilities to use technology appropriately and respectfully. The College will work in partnership with parents/guardians/carers in responding to incidents of bullying. Staff at the College will:

- remind parents/guardians/carers about the need to reinforce the College messages in the proper use of technology to help children grow into ethical and responsible digital citizens
- encourage parents/guardians/carers to report serious matters of out-of-school hours bullying and cyber-bullying to the Police or other appropriate authority (such as the Internet Service Provider) and, as relevant, to the College
- ask parents/guardians/carers to contact the College immediately if they know of any bullying incident

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- expect that parents/guardians/carers will model behaviour that is indicative of Gospel values and that reflect the College Vision and Mission statement. Thus parents/guardians/carers are required to always act respectfully to all members of the College community
- encourage parents/guardians/carers to report serious matters of out-of-school hours bullying and cyber-bullying to the Police or other appropriate authority (such as the Internet Service Provider or the eSafety Commissioner <https://www.esafety.gov.au/report>). When such bullying concerns the wellbeing of their own child, parents/guardians/carers are to contact the College.

RESPONSIBILITY

- Principal (Primary responsibility)
- All College Staff
- All Students
- All Parents/Guardians/Carers

RELATED LEGISLATION

The *Education Training and Reform Regulations 2017* (Vic.) (sch 4 cl 12) outlines the College obligations to ensure that the care, safety, and welfare of all students attending the College. In discharging its duty of care responsibilities, the College and teaching staff must exercise professional judgment to achieve a balance between ensuring that students do not face an unreasonable risk of harm and encouraging students' independence and maximising learning opportunities. Non-teaching staff, volunteers and external providers must exercise judgment appropriate in the circumstances. The College must also comply with legislation related to Occupational Health and Safety for staff.

This document is informed by relevant Australian and Victorian legislation including:

- *Education and Training Reform Act 2006* (Vic.)
- *Education and Training Reform Regulations 2017* (Vic.)
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (Cth)
- *Disability Standards for Education 2005* (Cth)
- *Equal Opportunity Act 2010* (Vic.)
- *Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004* (Vic.).

RELATED SIENA COLLEGE POLICIES

- Enrolment Policy 2023
- Student Behaviour Policy September 2022
- Student Pastoral Care Policy 2022
- School Complaints Handling Policy 2022
- Staff Digital Technology Policy 2022
- Staff Social Media Policy 2022

RELATED DOCUMENTS

- [Privacy Compliance Manual](#) (2020). Catholic Education Commission of Victoria Ltd (CECV) (CEVN website)

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- Department of Education and Training (Vic). 2021. [Bullying Prevention and Response Policy](#)
- Department of Education and Training (Vic). 2021. [Cybersafety and Responsible Use of Digital Technologies](#)
- Department of Education and Training (Vic). 2020. [Mobile Phones - Student Use](#).
- [Bully Stoppers](#) – a resource containing information and advice for the school community, including students, parents, and school staff.
- [Bullying. No Way!](#) – a website for Australian schools, managed by the Safe and Supportive School Communities Working Group (SSSC) which has representatives from all states and territories, including the Catholic and independent schooling sectors.
- [eSmart](#) – assists schools to develop a culture that promotes the safe, smart and responsible use of technology.
- [eSafety Commissioner](#) – provides a range of up-to-date information and resources, coupled with a complaints system to assist children who experience serious cyberbullying and image-based abuse.
- [Australian Student Wellbeing Framework \(2018\)](#)
- [Student Wellbeing Hub](#)
- Catholic Education Commission of Victoria Ltd (CECV). (2018). [Positive Behaviour Guidelines](#)
- Catholic Education Commission of Victoria (CECV). Child Safety Commitment Statement
- Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools. (2018). [eXcel: Wellbeing for learning in Catholic school communities](#)
- Catholic Education Melbourne. (2017). [Horizons of Hope: Vision and Context](#)
- Catholic Education Melbourne. (2017). [Horizons of Hope: Wellbeing](#)
- Catholic Education Melbourne. (2017). [Horizons of Hope: Learning Diversity](#)
- Catholic Education Melbourne. (2018). [Identity and growth: A perspective for Catholic schools](#)
- [Public Record Office Victoria Recordkeeping Standards](#)

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RISK

In the Committee's deliberations it is important to consider the College's main strategic processes and the identification of associated risks. Some sample questions are included for referral.
Answers are to be documented as part of the policy.

1. **Faith and Catholic Identity.** Identify any risks to Catholic Identity or Dominican charism of the school. How will this policy harm or enhance either?
2. **Reputation.** Identify if there are any reputational risks to the College. How will this policy impact Siena and wider communities?
3. **Financial.** Identify any financial risks to the College. How will this policy impact the financial stability of the College?
4. **Contemporary Learning and Teaching.** Identify any risks to learning and teaching. How will this policy impact the academic performance of the College?
5. **Wellbeing.** Identify any risks to safety and wellbeing. How will this policy impact the mental and physical wellbeing of the College community?
6. **Community Engagement.** Identify any risks to building community engagement. How will this policy impact community relationships?
7. **Governance and Leadership.** Identify any risks to governance and leadership in the College. How will this policy affect the strategic direction of the College?

Do any risks identified above warrant changes to the proposed policy? If so the policy should be referred back to the developer/s.

NEXT REVIEW

March 2025

POLICY LOCATION

<https://sienacentral.siena.vic.edu.au/send.php?id=62798>

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