SAFE SCHOOL STATEMENT

A guide for all members of the
St Francis College Community

2022

SAFE SCHOOL STATEMENT

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It is important that all members of the St Francis College Community have a shared understanding of bullying behaviours, how they impact on people and how the college responds when these behaviours are demonstrated. The College has a zero tolerance of bullying behaviour.

St Francis College is committed to taking appropriate action to protect students from bullying behaviours and to respond appropriately when they are demonstrated. St Francis College is a community of care and compassion; we value the dignity of all members of our school community. We are responsible and therefore committed to creating a safe and supportive environment where all people are empowered to reach their potential.

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WHAT IS BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

Bullying behaviour is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons.

THE KEY KEATURES OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR ARE THAT IT:
- causes hurt and distress
- is repeated
- involves the use of power in an unfair way.

Although it is neither respectful nor acceptable if someone behaves in a mean or aggressive way on one occasion, it is not considered bullying. A fight or disagreement between students of equal power or status is not considered bullying behaviour.

Bullying is when someone targets another person, again and again, and intentionally attempts to make them feel bad. They say or do many mean and hurtful things, make fun of them often, try to stop them from joining in or make others not like them.

Although it is not nice if someone says or does something mean to someone else, this is not immediately bullying. It also is not bullying if students of the same age have a one-off argument. Bullying is NOT:
- mutual arguments and disagreements (where there is no power imbalance)
- not liking someone or single acts of social rejection
- one-off acts of meanness or spite
- isolated incidents of aggression, intimidation or violence.

TYPES OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

Cyber bullying
Using technology, such as email, mobile phones, chat rooms, and social networking sites to bully verbally, socially or psychologically.

Physical bullying
This is when a person (or group of people) uses physical actions to bully, such as hitting, poking, tripping or pushing.

Repeatedly and intentionally damaging someone's belongings is also physical bullying.

Verbal bullying
Repeated or systematic name calling, insults, homophobic, sexist, derogatory or racist remarks and verbal abuse.

Covert bullying
Such as lying about someone, spreading rumours, playing a nasty joke that makes the person feel humiliated or powerless, mimicking or deliberately excluding someone.

Psychological bullying
For example, threatening, manipulating or stalking someone.

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WHAT IS CYBER BULLYING?

- Sending hateful or threatening comments or pictures via mobile phone or the Internet and by Social Networking sites, apps or via gaming such as Facebook, Snapchat, Instagram, TikTok, Twitter, Fortnite etc.

- Using modern technologies to engage in the social exclusion of someone and in hate group recruitment.

- Posting rude, explicit or embarrassing messages or pictures about someone on the internet.

- Stealing someone's identity in order to harm them in some way.

- Putting pressure on a person to send revealing or compromising pictures of themselves.

- Covertly filming, recording or taking a picture of someone and posting the files on the internet to cause hurt.

- 'Outing' and circulating confidential information about someone.

- Using aliases and fake names in chat rooms and on Social Networking sites in order to harass and upset.

- Engaging in cyber-stalking and the invading of privacy.

- Online "fights" using electronic messages with inappropriate/angry and obscene messages.

- This includes any member of the College community.

SEXTING

Sexting is the sending of sexually explicit messages or photographs of oneself or others, using mobile phone technology either by request or spontaneously. It can also include posting of this material online. A student's current, or potential romantic partner, may be the source of a request to engage in sexting. Such photos may be sent (without permission) to many other people, or used to coerce or blackmail after a relationship break-up.

Using fake names, passwords and avatars does not protect the identity of a cyber bully. Technologies exist to identify those who misuse modern technologies to harm others.

STUDENTS NEED TO REMEMBER THAT SOMETHING SENT ELECTRONICALLY CAN NEVER BE ENTIRELY REMOVED EVEN WITH A PRESS OF THE 'DELETE' BUTTON.

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HOW DOES ST FRANCIS COLLEGE DEAL WITH BULLYING BEHAVIOURS?

Bullying behaviour is in conflict with St Francis College's values and Positive Behaviour for Learning framework. The College is committed to providing an educational environment in which students feel valued and safe.

Currently at St Francis College our bullying behaviour responses are aimed at creating a proactive and educational environment. We operate from the philosophy that teaching positive behaviour will encourage students to proactively respect each other.

STRATEGIES AT ST FRANCIS COLLEGE

- Student connections:
  - Cool Connections
  - Student Buddy program.

- Safe Schooling Policy on student portal and promoted on college website.

- Student Leadership Team – raising awareness and providing a student voice.

- Weekly Personal Development (7-12 phase) building student awareness and management of themselves and others.

- HPE curriculum explicitly teaching personal, social capabilities in P-10.

- Growing a strong Franciscan Catholic community and identity by:
  - Religious Education curriculum teaching moral formation, mission and justice, prayer and spirituality
  - Teaching of Franciscan values (simplicity, harmony and peace, compassion, hope, perseverance and resilience, reconciliation, service and stewardship, prayer and reflection)
  - Encouraging staff to model Catholic Social Teachings.

- Staff are educated to engage in active supervision.

- Positive Behaviour for Learning framework which incorporates:
  - Data collection
  - Response flow chart
  - Reward systems
  - Teaching minor and major behaviours
  - Guest speakers
  - Outside organisations
  - Restorative practices.

- Employing school guidance counsellors who have specialist skills in helping both subjects of bullying behaviour and students demonstrating bullying behaviour.

- Establishing a student support team to monitor the well-being of students at risk.

- Encouraging staff to adopt classroom management techniques that discourage opportunities for bullying behaviours.

- Maintaining contemporary classroom curriculum that incorporates:
  - Growth mindset
  - Visible Learning
  - Belonging policy and classroom covenants.

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HOW CAN STUDENTS AND PARENTS RESPOND TO BULLYING BEHAVIOUR?

If you are experiencing bullying behaviour, it is important that you talk to a person who is in a position to help you; preferably an adult.

REMEMBER TO DO THE RITE THING:

Recognise that the repeated behaviour is bullying behaviour and you have the right to feel safe.

Inform the students who engage in bullying behaviour that you want them to stop. Name the behaviour and be assertive.

Tell a responsible adult about the bullying.

Evaluate the situation. If it doesn't improve, seek further help.

IT CAN TAKE COURAGE TO CHALLENGE A PERSON, TO EXPOSE INAPPROPRIATE CONDUCT AND TO PLAY A PART IN IMPROVING OUR COMMUNITY BY RIDDING IT OF BULLYING BEHAVIOUR.

IF YOU ARE BEING SUBJECTED TO BULLYING BEHAVIOURS THESE ARE THE PEOPLE IN THE ST FRANCIS COLLEGE COMMUNITY THAT YOU CAN TALK TO:

- Teacher
- Pastoral Leader
- Friends
- Parents
- Relatives
- Guidance Counsellor
- Campus Minister
- Assistant Principal Pastoral
- College Leadership Team

FURTHER HELP CAN BE SOUGHT FROM:

- Local Police
- Kids Helpline – 1800 551 800
- Lifeline – 13 11 14
- Headspace – 1800 650 890

WEBSITES:

- www.bullyingnoway.com.au
- www.ncab.org.au
- www.esafety.gov.au
- www.beyondblue.org.au
- www.reachout.com
- www.bullyzero.org.au

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HOW TO HELP A STUDENT WHO HAS EXPERIENCED BULLYING BEHAVIOUR?

The most important thing a parent can do to help your child who is experiencing bullying behaviour is to provide love, support, reassurance and encourage open communication within the home. A report of bullying behaviour should always be taken seriously.

Introducing good management systems in the home that monitor the presence of cyber bullying is important.

THIS INCLUDES BUT IS NOT LIMITED TO:

- Actively monitoring your child's online involvement.

- Reminding your child not to share personal details, passwords, security or access information with anyone, even their closest friends.

- Monitor your student's social media activity without involving yourself in negative conduct.

- Advise your child to record evidence of cyber bullying and report to the relevant adults.

- Remind and model to your child's responsible online behaviour.

- Become more computer literate and educate yourself about privacy settings and internet filters.

- Ensure that you maintain your parental control in terms of social networking. You have a right to ask for your child's password to monitor their online activity. Make sure that they are aware of this.

- Be proactive in establishing positive relationships with your child's friends and families.

- Encourage your child to conduct themselves properly in "Cyberia" and to ensure that their "Digital Footprint" is one they would be proud of.

- Ensure all technology use is in an open family area so that you can monitor online activity.

ONE'S "DIGITAL FOOTPRINT" MAY BE ACCESSED MANY YEARS AFTER MATERIAL IS POSTED ONLINE AND USED BY OTHERS, E.G. PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYERS AND THE MEDIA.

HOW CAN WE WORK TOGETHER?

The school appreciates being able to partner with parents to solve bullying behaviours. Sometimes a student can be reluctant to tell their parents. Parents are invited and encouraged to contact the school should they become aware of their student being subject to bullying behaviours.

REMEMBER

Be patient as the college is committed to investigating a bullying allegation in a manner that protects the rights of all involved, including the student exhibiting bullying behaviour.

This is not the college failing to take immediate action to issue consequences, rather the exercising of procedural fairness.

It is important to let the college investigate the matter rather than challenging the student who has demonstrated bullying behaviour or their parent.

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BULLYING/HARASSMENT RESPONSE PROCESS

Incident of bullying behaviour

Student or parent reports incident to staff

Students showing or subjected to bullying behaviours interviewed.

Data entered into Engage

Mediation led by staff with students involved

Parents informed of all action taken

Ongoing monitoring by nominated staff member

Has the bullying behaviour stopped?

Yes
- Review & Reward
- Ongoing monitoring

No
- Meeting with parent/carer
- Reponses applied from Engage