

ST EUPHEMIA COLLEGE



Anti-Bullying Policy K-12

Status	APPROVED by Senior Executive
Date of Approval	31 st January 2024
Owner	Deputy Principal Secondary School Deputy Principal Primary School
Contact	Welfare Coordinator
Review Cycle	Two years
Date for Review	31 st January 2026

Purposes

The purpose of this document is to document the strategies undertaken by St Euphemia College as part of our zero-tolerance to any form of bullying and harassment.

Scope

This policy applies to all students and staff of St Euphemia College.

Policy Statement

St Euphemia College is committed to a high expectation of respect for others. All students and staff have the right to learn and to teach in a supportive and caring environment. This right also carries with it the responsibility that nothing done, felt or said interferes with the learning and teaching of others. Bullying and harassment in all forms – physical, verbal, electronic, emotional, psychological and social are totally unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Key Principles

The key principles of this policy are:

1. Bullying at St Euphemia College is not tolerated.
2. All bullying incidents must be reported.
3. They will be dealt with quickly, confidentially, sensitively and firmly.
4. Dealing with allegations of bullying is a priority and will be managed as such.
5. Allegations of bullying will be individually managed, with impartiality in the investigation and decision-making process.
6. All investigations will be managed with procedural fairness. All parties have the right to impartiality in the investigation and decision-making process; and the right to an absence of bias in the decision-maker.
7. While it is understandable that students and parents/carers who report incidents of bullying wish to remain anonymous, this is not always possible. The College needs to be open about all reports of bullying received. Every effort is treated compassionately and sensitively, while the incident itself is managed firmly to reach a positive outcome.
8. Confidential records will be maintained of reported bullying incidents.

Bullying

Bullying is repeated and often deliberate hurtful behaviour by an individual or a group of individuals towards another person that causes distress, intimidation or undue pressure.

It is often characterised by a power imbalance between bully and target. Bullying is not only done in person. It can also happen via social media and/or SMS.

Examples of repeated and often deliberate behaviours that constitute bullying include:

- Any form of physical violence or threats of violence.
- Verbal abuse; name calling, malicious teasing, belittling, ridiculing, or insulting someone.
- Any form of harassment based on race, religion or sexuality.

- Offensive gestures, or subtle but intimidating body language.
- Damaging or hiding another person's property.
- Excluding, or encouraging others to exclude someone from a group.
- Spreading rumours or telling lies to damage someone's reputation.
- Any form of cyber bullying.

Bullying may be subtle or blatant. Bullying may involve any combination of students, staff and parents.

It is important to remember that not every unpleasant action is bullying. Bullying is repeated and often deliberate behaviour that causes hurt or distress. It is distinct from playful teasing, even though that may appear to be mean at times. Changing social groups, arguments and mutual conflict can be part of school life. It is when these issues involve repeated and often deliberate attempts to belittle, distress or isolate that it becomes bullying.

What is not Bullying

There are many negative situations which, whilst being potentially distressing for students, are not bullying. These include:

- ☐ **Mutual Conflict Situations** which arise where there is disagreement between students but not an imbalance of power. Mutual conflict situations need to be closely monitored as they may evolve into a bullying situation.
- ☐ **One-Off Acts** (of aggression or meanness) including single incidents of loss of temper, shouting or swearing do not normally constitute bullying.

Signs of Bullying

Major behavioural changes in a student may be indicative of bullying. Such behavioural changes may include, but not limited to:

- ☐ change his/her usual routine
- ☐ unwilling to go to School
- ☐ become withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- ☐ start stammering
- ☐ attempt or threaten suicide or run away
- ☐ cry themselves to sleep at night or have nightmares
- ☐ feel ill in the morning
- ☐ begin to do poorly in schoolwork
- ☐ possessions go missing
- ☐ continually lose recess or lunch money
- ☐ become aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- ☐ stop eating
- ☐ be frightened to say what's wrong
- ☐ give improbable excuses for any of the above.

Parents/carers are encouraged to notify the College if they recognize any signs of bullying through a trusted staff member immediately (such as a class teacher or Counsellor).

Responding to Bullying

Bullying behaviours vary enormously in their extent and intent and, consequently, each incident needs to be dealt with on its facts.

Staff will:

- ☐ model appropriate, respectful and supportive behaviour at all times
- ☐ deal with all reported and observed incidents of bullying in accordance with this policy
- ☐ ensure that any incident of bullying that they observe or is reported to them, is recorded appropriately
- ☐ be vigilant in monitoring students that have been identified as either persistent bullies or victims
- ☐ acknowledge the right of parents/carers to speak with the College if they believe their child is being bullied.

Students should:

- ☐ be aware that no one has to put up with bullying
- ☐ know that every person has the right to tell an individual who is bullying that you find the behaviour unacceptable.
- ☐ report the bullying to a trusted adult/teacher
- ☐ be aware that sometimes actions are labelled bullying when they aren't. If you are not sure talk to someone about this who might help you to interpret the situation
- ☐ keep a record of any bullying websites, online voting sites, blogs by saving or printing them and noting the date, time and any details about the sender
- ☐ keep any bullying text messages, images or voice mail messages
- ☐ remember to be assertive not aggressive
- ☐ understand all individuals involved in a bullying incident need support
- ☐ be confident that the matter will be dealt with appropriately and confidentially
- ☐ if the bullying continues, do not be afraid to report it again as a different course of action may be required
- ☐ if your friend is being bullied, or you see an incident of bullying, you should encourage that person to tell a trusted teacher or tell a teacher yourself. You could go with that person to support them if that would be helpful for them.

Parents/Carers should:

- ☐ listen and try to provide an open, non-judgemental environment for your child to talk about the situation
- ☐ tell your child you understand and give them support. Remind him/her they have the right to feel safe
- ☐ suggest your child speak to a member of staff
- ☐ contact the Class Teacher or Year Advisor immediately if the problem seems particularly serious, or ongoing
- ☐ try to avoid an angry or emotional response
- ☐ assist your child to print out and hand in to the school any material from websites and emails etc

- ☐ be aware that actions such as discussing the matter with other parents and/or students directly can inflame the situation – it is better to telephone the school instead
- ☐ trust the school to carry through actions that will solve the problem. Any member of the Welfare Team (Class Teacher, Year Advisor, School Counsellors, Welfare Coordinator, School Chaplain, Deputy Principal Primary School, Deputy Principal Secondary School) is always available to discuss the problem with you and provide support for you.

When bullying is found to have occurred, St Euphemia College will take appropriate action to:

- ☐ ensure the immediate safety and well-being of those involved
- ☐ provide on-going support and counselling for the individual being bullied
- ☐ inform the individual who has been responsible for the bullying that this behaviour is unacceptable
- ☐ counsel the individual to understand the implications of bullying
- ☐ discipline the offender
- ☐ establish whether further support and/or counselling are required to rectify behaviour.
- ☐ advise the individual of the consequences of further bullying
- ☐ inform the parents/carers
- ☐ follow up with the individuals to provide any necessary support.

Bullying is not acceptable. All students, parents/carers and staff have a responsibility to report every instance of bullying to help us support all students, parents/carers and staff. St Euphemia College will always approach each case individually and with flexibility.

External Support

The following support services are available to students and staff:

- ☐ School Liaison Police are NSW Police officers who work with schools to reduce crime, violence and anti-social behaviour. School Liaison Police are a point of contact for the School community and the NSW Police Force. Our students are encouraged to contact the School Liaison police if they have any concerns.
- ☐ Our School Liaison Police Officer can be contacted at Bankstown Police Station on (02) 9783-2199.
- ☐ St Euphemia College also provides access to Counselling Services (Student).

Resources

The National Coalition Against Bullying: www.ncab.org.au

Andrew Fuller www.andrewfuller.com.au

Bullying. No Way. <https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/>

Bullying: What can we do? <https://kidshelpline.com.au/teens/issues/bullying>

Bullying. Everybody's Business. A Kids Help Line Initiative <https://kidshelpline.com.au/>

Bounce Back programme – Toni Noble • www.beyondblue.org.au

National Centre Against Bullying www.ncab.org.au

eSafety Commissioner <https://www.esafety.gov.au/key-topics/cyberbullying>

Related Policies

- Welfare Policy
- Welfare Procedures
- Complaints Handling Policy and its Procedures.

Access

Not restricted.

This document is available to all stakeholders via the College's website.