



## Rationale

Hope Christian College (College) seeks to provide a safe, supportive environment to learn and work. A Christian community should have no dealings with bullying or harassment. Matthew 7:12 teaches Christians to treat each other the way we would like to be treated, and to model such behaviour. One translation says, *Do unto others as you would have them do unto you*. This Biblical precept provides the foundation for the College's Anti-Bullying/Anti-Harassment policies and procedures.

## Policy statement

The policy of the College concerning bullying or harassment is that it is not acceptable in any form. Through education, providing safe environments for discussion and dealing with grievances, and clear discipline for breaches, the College strives to provide a culture that does not tolerate bullying or harassment in any form for or by any part of the College community.

## Scope

This policy is written to guide all members of the College community on acceptable behaviour and basic procedures to deal with perceived bullying or harassment at College.

## Definitions

**at/to the College** – this refers to being on the College grounds, but also to being present at College activities such as excursions, on or off site, and special days (e.g. Sports Days)

**College community** – this includes but may not be limited to: students, parents of students, immediate family of students, authorised volunteers, authorised visiting speakers and guests, staff (whether temporary, contracted or permanent), staff spouses and dependent children (who are not staff or family), College leadership, OSHC and CCC staff and leadership who are connected in some way to the College (e.g. not unconnected church attendees)

**College leadership** – includes Principal, principal's advisors and College Board

**Head of School** – refers to an appropriate Senior line manager or Coordinator

**parent** – includes caregivers and guardians, or responsible person as listed on the enrolment form

**staff** – refers to the student's class teacher or a paid Hope Christian College staff member who is responsible for supervising the student during College hours or activities

**student** – any student enrolled at Hope Christian College through a contract with their parent/guardian(s), regardless of their age

## 1. Specific policy definitions

**1.1 Bullying** is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social or psychological harm. Bullying:

- can be subtle, with the victim not realizing immediately they are being bullied
- can involve an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power
- can be against one or more persons
- can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices
- can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert)
- is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated (e.g. sharing of digital records), over time
- has effects on all those involved, including bystanders.

It should be noted that single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online,



are not defined as bullying or harassment.

**1.2 Harassment** can be more overt and recognisable, when a person is subjected to repeated behaviour (of a non-sexual nature) by a co-worker or classmate that:

- is unwelcome and unsolicited
- a reasonable person would consider to be offensive, humiliating, intimidating or threatening.

**1.3 Discrimination** occurs when there is *adverse action* such as exclusion from a group or an activity because of characteristics such as a person's race, religion or sex.

It should be noted that any member of the College community found engaging in bullying, harassment or discrimination will be subject to some form of disciplinary action, regardless of the age, relationship or power differential of the parties involved.

## **2. Types of bullying and harassment**

**2.1 Verbal** which includes but is not limited to:

- name calling or offensive remarks
- insulting someone about physical characteristics or other attributes (including race, sex, culture, or religion or achievements)
- making threats, comments, sarcasm, innuendo, whispers or the like
- repeated laughter or noises
- using abusive language or images (including gestures, written or pictures or electronic)
- through means such as electronic or social media or any other online or technological form.

**2.2 Physical** which includes, but is not limited to:

- hitting, punching, kicking, jostling, pushing, touching, grabbing or spitting or otherwise hurting someone
- shoving or intimidating another person
- standing intimidatingly over another person or getting in their person space
- damaging, stealing or hiding another's belongings
- actions that may be also sexual in nature
- actions that may include organising or encouraging others to do the bullying.

**2.3 Social** may be in person, or through other means such as social media or any other online or technological form (cyber-bullying) and includes:

- consistently excluding another person
- or sharing information, spreading rumours, or images that will have a harmful effect on the other person including upon their reputation or social standing.

**2.4 Emotional** which can be part of social bullying and includes but is not limited to:

- relational aggression in peer groups
- manipulation and coercion to act in unbeneficial ways
- psychological abuse (e.g. *gas-lighting* such as instilling self-doubt, isolating, etc.)

**2.5 Other forms:** including sexual and spiritual, which are beyond the scope of this policy.

## **3. Basic procedures for bullying or harassment**

College community members are to treat others with care and respect, actively avoid bullying or harassing others. If anyone perceives they are being harassed or bullied, they are to follow these procedures.



### **3.1 Alleged Bullying or Harassment of a Student**

If this occurs, regardless of whether the one allegedly harassing or bullying is, the student is to, as is appropriate and safe for them to do so, follow this procedure.

1. Tell the person who has harassed them to stop, and not retaliate in any way.
2. If the matter does not stop, to report it to their Home Group, class or the Yard Duty teacher, or another trusted College staff member.
  - The student is to report when the incident occurred, what happened and who might have witnessed it as soon as possible so it can be followed up in a timely manner.
  - The student may bring a support person or witness to help in the reporting of the matter or to any subsequent meeting concerning the matter.
3. The student is to tell their parent about the matter (the College will also notify parents) or the parent is to inform the College of harassment or bullying behaviours as soon as they become aware of it.
4. The student is not to discuss the matter with other students who were not involved, including on social media, via texting or similar.
5. The student who has made a report may be asked to participate in an interview or mediation to clarify or resolve an issue, however students have the right to refuse, or to have a support person present.
6. The student is able to access College counselling or chaplaincy as required.

#### *3.1.1 Outside of school hours*

Where bullying or harassment occurs outside of school hours involving a College student or staff member (in person or by peer groups or through means such as social media or any other online or technological form) the College remains able to follow its procedures and will implement appropriate consequences.

#### *3.1.2 Alleged harassment or bullying by a College staff member*

If a student accuses a College staff member of bullying or harassment, they should report the matter to their Coordinator or Head of School. Students have the right to have a support person (including a trusted College staff member) or parent with them through this process.

#### *3.1.3 Role of parents in supporting their children*

Parents, upon enrolment, agree to support the College in its efforts to provide a safe, nurturing and caring environment. Therefore parents will encourage their children by:

- not engaging in behaviours that are harassing or bullying
- reporting matters to staff where they, or a friend, are being bullied or harassed
- not to retaliate even when someone is being unfair or unkind.

Additionally parents are:

- not to engage in any behaviour towards students and staff that would be considered harassment or bullying
- not to engage any student who is not their child directly over matters of discipline, bullying/harassment or any matter where they or one of their children are involved
- to report the matter to the relevant College teacher/staff member.

### **3.2 Alleged Bullying or Harassment of a Parent**

#### *3.2.1 By a student*

If the matter involves a student bullying or harassing a parent, the parent:

- must not to approach or the student or respond to the student
- must report the matter the Head of School for the relevant year level of the student



- may bring a support person to report the matter and to all subsequent meetings
- is to report when the incident occurred, what happened and who might have witnessed
- is not to comment about the matter to other persons, or refer to the matter, directly or indirectly, on social media or via texting or the like.

#### *3.2.2 By a staff member*

If the matter involves a staff member bullying or harassing a parent, the parent:

- is not to approach the staff member in the yard or in front of students
- may choose to approach the staff member in a calm manner where students are not present, or make contact by email (parents may include the relevant Head of School in the email), explain their point and ask the staff member to stop the behaviour
- may bring a support person to report the matter and to all subsequent meetings
- is to report when the incident occurred, what happened and who might have witnessed it
- is not to comment about the matter to other persons, or to refer to the matter directly or indirectly on social media, via texting or similar.

#### *3.2.3 By another parent or family member who is not a student or staff member*

If the matter involves a parent bullying or harassing a parent or family member, it is not the role of the College to resolve this conflict. However, at its discretion, the College may assist parents to resolve a matter where the College or students are directly related.

However, the parent must not to approach the other parent or family member in an attempt to resolve the issue in the yard or in front of students. It is advised that the parent approach the other party in a calm manner off site, or make contact by email and explain their point and ask the other parent to stop the behaviour.

### **3. College commitment**

The College commits to, as much as is practicable, providing a safe environment for learning by:

- implementing and periodically reviewing the *HCC Anti-Bullying/Anti-Harassment* procedures and practices that will minimise incidences of bullying and harassment (e.g. ensuring there is adequate supervision at College activities)
- ensuring staff have access to, and are familiar with, relevant policies and procedures
- providing education to College students about appropriate behaviour towards others and expectations of safety and respect from others
- responding and investigating, in a timely and appropriate manner, grievances lodged by College community members of perceived bullying or harassment
- interviewing and allowing a fair hearing for parties involved, including witnesses and including the accused (which may occur after other interviews)
- facilitating mediation or counselling where appropriate
- notification of parents when their student is involved
- appropriately re-educating or disciplining (according to the *HCC Behaviour Management Procedure*) perpetrators of bullying and harassment
- involving other agencies, including the Police in criminal matters, when the situation is deemed necessary by the College leadership.

For further information contact the College on 8287 1111, or email to [admin@hopecc.sa.edu.au](mailto:admin@hopecc.sa.edu.au)