Anti-bullying policy

Sydney Secondary College

Policy Statement:

Sydney Secondary College provides excellent public education based on quality, opportunity and diversity.

We value: quality, opportunity, diversity, learning, respect, responsibility, cooperation, safety, achievement, fairness, integrity, participation, care, democracy.

Students of Sydney Secondary College are expected to:

* Respect yourself, others and the community
* act responsibly
* Participate productively in learning

Sydney Secondary College is an inclusive environment which respects difference and values the qualities of equity, diversity, tolerance and acceptance.

The well-being, safety and health of students are our highest priority. We believe that all students should feel safe in the school environment and that the college should be free from bullying of any kind.

The Core Rules for Student Discipline in NSW Government Schools states that behaviour that infringes on the safety of others, such as harassment, bullying and illegal or anti-social behaviour of any kind will not be tolerated.

Students have the right to expect that they will spend the day free from the fear of bullying, harassment and intimidation.

Bullying

- devalues, isolates and frightens
- affects an individual’s ability to achieve
- has long-term effects on those engaging in bullying behaviour, those who are the subjects of bullying behaviour and the onlookers or bystanders

Bullying will not be tolerated at Sydney Secondary College and all students and staff have a responsibility to work together to address bullying.
Definition:
Bullying can be defined as intentional, repeated behaviour by an individual or group of individuals that causes distress, hurt or undue pressure.

Bullying involves the abuse of power in relationships. Bullying can involve all forms of harassment (including sex, race, disability, homosexuality or transgender, medical condition), humiliation, domination and intimidation of others.

Bullying behaviour can include but is not restricted to:

- **verbal** – for example, name calling, teasing, abuse, putdowns, sarcasm, insults, threats
- **physical** – for example, hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting
- **social** – for example, ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating, making inappropriate gestures
- **psychological** – for example, spreading rumours, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions
- **cyber bullying** – for example, malicious SMS and email messages, inappropriate use of social networking websites, camera phones and laptops, posting information and/or images on websites.

Responsibilities for Dealing with Bullying

**What students can do about bullying**

1. **Respect** everyone’s right to be safe and happy by avoiding bullying and harassment of other people

2. Show **responsibility** by speaking up against bullying. Students are often far more influential than staff.

3. Make it known that they can and will **support** fellow students by giving advice to students on how they might handle conflict constructively, avoid being bullied and get help if needed.

4. Look out for students who are having problems with others and offer them **support**.

5. **Provide** staff with information about bully/victim problems, and keep telling them until the matter is resolved.

6. Help directly in the resolution of bully/victim problems by being involved in peer mediation.

**What parents can do about bullying**

1. If you suspect that your child is being bullied, encourage them to talk to you about it.

2. Never dismiss the matter or be over-protective.

3. Listen carefully and sympathetically. Try to get the relevant facts.
4. Decide whether it is best to discuss the problem with the campus.

5. You can be assured that all cases of bullying reported will be carefully investigated and dealt with in accordance with this Anti-Bullying policy.

6. If you discover that your child is bullying others, exercise whatever influence you can to stop this behaviour.

7. If the college informs you that your child has been bullying others, be prepared to work out a plan with the campus to bring about a change in your child’s bullying behaviour.

**What teachers can do about bullying**

1. Help to create a classroom in which bullying is less likely to happen by using the campus merit scheme to recognise and reward appropriate and positive student behaviour.

2. Effective supervision of lessons and duty areas to lessen bullying opportunities.

3. Actively discourage bullying by investigating and responding to student reports of bullying according to this Anti-bullying policy.

4. Provide support and advice to students who are being bullied.

5. Continue to support the campus welfare practices and by participation in training opportunities.

6. Actively communicate the campus welfare practices at year assemblies and in class.

**What Sydney Secondary College can do about bullying**

1. Provide trained staff to work with students.

2. Provide students with the necessary social skills by running appropriate programs.

3. Offer opportunities for students to participate in peer mediation.

4. Assist victims of bullying and bullies though appropriate support and counselling.

5. Providing appropriate social models when dealing with others.

6. Work constructively with parents.

7. Provide annual training for peer mediation.

**Prevention**

As a Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) school community we will teach students expected behaviour through social skills lesson. We will acknowledge positive student behaviour on assemblies, in newsletters and websites.
Early Intervention

Students who are identified as being at risk of developing long term difficulties with relationships and those students who are identified at or after enrolment as having previously experienced bullying, or engaged in bullying behaviour will be referred to the Learning Support Team and or the Welfare Team for further support.

Reporting

If students are being bullied or know of other students being bullied they should immediately notify their class teacher, Year Adviser, the Deputy Principal or any other teacher.

Recording

If a student makes a complaint or notification of bullying, the student should complete a Harassment / Bullying Report Form. This form can be accessed from the campus website or from the school office.

When the form is completed it is to be passed to the Deputy Principal, Head Teacher Welfare or Year Adviser for further action.

Intervention

Most cases will involve an interview with the student about whom the complaint has been made.

If the complaint is substantiated, the student will be given a warning and notified that the complaint has been recorded.

They will be advised that any further complaints will result in disciplinary measures which could include:

- detention
- warning of suspension
- suspension

The complaint will be recorded on ‘Academy’ and the complaint form filed in the central files.

In severe cases, the Principal may decide to dispense with a warning and apply other disciplinary measures.

Accessing help and support

Where it is considered to be appropriate, the Principal or Deputy Principal will access support to assist the victim and/or the bully. This support could include the student’s Year Adviser, Head Teacher Welfare, Counsellor, teacher mentor and other DEC services.
Monitoring and Evaluating
This policy will be reviewed annually, utilising data gathered from ‘Academy’ and Harassment / Bullying Report Forms. Students and caregivers will be surveyed periodically to measure the effectiveness of these strategies.

Professional learning
Staff will be provided with support in implementing this policy through regular training at staff development days and staff meetings.

Resources
College ‘Maintaining Positive Relationships – Bullying in Focus’ Brochure.


Policy reviewed Term 3 2013 by the college SWAT team.

Appendix 1

Building a Safe and Supportive College

Increase the participation of the college community in school events. By empowering the voice of the whole school a sense of belonging and mutual responsibility will be achieved.

An inclusive college culture and ethos will be developed that supports all students and values diversity within the college community in terms of gender, ethnicity, culture, sexual orientation, physical ability and economic status.

Initiative A - College Improvement and Innovation Forum

All stake holders are invited to identify issues and suggest alternatives solutions.
The forum could take the form of surveys, school leader meetings (ie. SRC, Junior AECG, etc), roll call meetings each fortnight and P and C presentations. The students would be intimately involved in the dissemination and analysis of surveys and wider college discussions.

**Initiative B – Parade of Positives**

Increase positive feedback to all students at all levels, ie. in assemblies, within class and during playground interactions.

examples

**Other Initiatives**

*Indicators of success of these initiatives:*

1. Repeat surveys and compare results
2. Fewer discipline referrals at every level
3. Increased participation of students in SRC discussions during roll call meetings
4. Improved student / staff morale in general
No Blame Approach

- The aim of this approach is to encourage empathy on the part of the bully.
- The teacher is both the facilitator and the intermediary between the parties involved.

**Sequence of Steps:**

1. Meet with the victimised person and provide support (in an empathetic rather than emotional way). Explain the process and collect material on the impact of the bullying/harassment on the victim.

2. Consult with other teachers who know the involved students well enough to establish a balanced group consisting of the main perpetrator and his/her supporters, friends of the victimised person and two assertive peers who have not attempted to prevent the bullying/harassment.

3. Convene a structured meeting of this group (without the targeted student present) to develop a shared responsibility without blaming, to elicit suggestions for solving the problem, to encourage shared action and to establish a subsequent meeting (in a week or so) to discuss progress (victim does not attend this meeting either).

4. Support the victimised person through daily meetings and check progress.

5. Monitor over the next two weeks to ensure sustained results. When appropriate, use the Principles of Restorative Justice (see Appendix 4) to conclude proceedings.
### What to do about Cyber Bullying

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<tr>
<th>Guard your contact information.</th>
<th>- Only give your cell phone number, instant messaging name or e-mail address to trusted friends, and keep a note of who you’ve given it to. Consider using caller ID blocking to hide your phone number when making calls. Similarly, don’t leave your name on your voicemail. Don’t give your details to people you don’t know – or don’t want to know!</th>
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<tr>
<th>Take a stand against cyber bullying.</th>
<th>- Speak out whenever you see someone being mean to another person online. Most people respond better to criticism from their peers than to disapproval from adults.</th>
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### Action

**If you are being harassed online, take the following actions immediately:**

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<th>Tell an adult you trust.</th>
<th>- This can be a teacher, parent, older sibling or grandparent – someone who can help you to do something about it.</th>
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<tr>
<th>Leave the area or stop the activity.</th>
<th>- People who bully get their kicks from knowing they’ve upset their target. Don’t let them know they’ve upset you, and you’ve taken away half their “fun”. Easier said than done when it’s face-to-face, but if it’s on your mobile or the Internet — easy!</th>
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<tr>
<th>Block the sender’s messages.</th>
<th>- If you are being bullied through e-mail or instant messaging, block the sender’s messages. Never reply to harassing messages.</th>
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<th>Keep a record.</th>
<th>- Save any harassing messages and record the time and date that you received them.</th>
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<tr>
<th>Advise your Service Provider.</th>
<th>- Most service providers have appropriate use policies that restrict users from harassing others. They can respond to reports of cyber bullying over their networks, or help you track down the appropriate service provider to respond to.</th>
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<th>Report to police.</th>
<th>- If the bullying includes physical threats, tell the police. Some people think that they can get away with it because they believe it is anonymous. They are wrong. Most can be traced and it’s a criminal offence to use a mobile phone or any form of communication to menace or harass or offend another person.</th>
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