

## **POLICY STATEMENT ON BULLYING**

### **WHY A POLICY?**

Everyone has a right to be safe and valued and all members of the school community have a responsibility to ensure this happens.

The rights of all people are to be respected at all times. At Mindarie Senior College, this means that our students and staff are free from all forms of bullying and harassment.

We actively encourage consideration for each other, together with courtesy, kindness and cooperation.

### **BULLYING IS SERIOUS**

Bullying is NOT ok.

It is not an accepted part of 'growing up'.

Mindarie Senior College does not tolerate any form of bullying.

### **WHAT IS BULLYING?**

Bullying is abuse. It involves repetitive, wilful, conscious behaviour intended to hurt another person, either physically or emotionally.

### **WHAT IS NOT BULLYING?**

A situation where two parties are consciously hurting and harming each other. This is a conflict.

### **FORMS OF BULLYING**

Bullying can take many forms and can include:

- ◆ **Harassment:** Offensive, humiliating, threatening, abusive or intimidating behaviours that are directed at individuals or group/s for either perceived or real attributes. It includes gender, religious, age, race and sexually-based harassment
- ◆ **Written and Cyber abuse:** notes, graffiti, phone text messages, email, use of social media
- ◆ **Physical harm:** punching, spitting, kicking, pushing, throwing items
- ◆ **Exclusion:** deliberately leaving someone out of an activity or ignoring him/her
- ◆ **Extortion:** demanding food, money, favours
- ◆ **Interference with, or damage to, personal belongings and stealing**  
*People can be involved in bullying behaviour either as individuals, ringleaders or members of a group.*

**Students should not encourage bullying by being inactive bystanders.**

***If you see it or hear it, DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT!***

## **IF YOU WITNESS A BULLYING INCIDENT**

If you witness someone being bullied or are aware of bullying of another person, we expect that you show social responsibility and want to help.

### **You should:**

- ◆ Offer friendship or support to the person being bullied, encouraging them to get help
- ◆ If possible, intervene while the bullying is happening by saying “leave him/her alone” or “cut it out”
- ◆ Report the incident as soon as you can. Don’t be afraid to come forward. If one person is brave enough to say something, so will others.

We all need to work together if we are going to ensure our College is a safe and enjoyable learning environment for all.

**It is against the law to victimise witnesses or complainants.**

## **THE IMPORTANT ROLE OF PARENTS**

**Parents, be observant. Look out for signs such as:**

- ◆ **Physical:** torn clothing, frequent loss of possessions and/or money, unexplained injury, negative body language, changed eating patterns
- ◆ **Emotional:** personality changes, sleep disturbance, frequent tears, reluctance to attend College
- ◆ **Behavioural:** outbursts of temper, problematic behaviour, loss of interest in sporting or social events
- ◆ **Home:** requesting changes in transport to and from College, demands for extra money for College, unwillingness to leave home, withdrawal from family members, bullying behaviour towards siblings
- ◆ **College:** unwillingness to attend, withdrawal from peer group, truancy, decline in work standards or output, misbehaviour, regular requests to go home early
- ◆ **Health:** health problems stemming from stress, psychosomatic complaints

Bullying is often hidden from adults because of its very nature and dynamics. Parental support and reassurance can assist a person to disclose incidents of bullying and lead to shared problem-solving and empowerment.

**Incidents of bullying need to be referred to the Manager of Student Services, (08) 9304 5818 or the student’s Mentor teacher.**

Student Services personnel will deal with bullying. Strategies involved include individual and/or group counselling (using the ‘no blame’ or ‘shared concern’ methods) with the aim of modifying the bullying behaviour and restoring relationships between students. The situation will be monitored and should there be a repeat of the bullying, then disciplinary processes will be put in place. Online bullying is a crime and victims will be advised of this and supported if they involve the police.

**Please note that any physical assault will be dealt as serious misbehaviour and will result in serious consequences including suspension.**