



ST PATRICK'S COLLEGE

Statement on Bullying

St Patrick's College community takes the view that any form of bullying or harassment is unacceptable. Bullying is a breach of the student code of rights and responsibilities.

As a Catholic school in the tradition of Blessed Edmund Rice, every member of the College community has a right to feel protected, nurtured and valued. The College seeks to reinforce the values of care and consideration for others, to be respectful of each individual and to be a witness to these Christian values not only in the College community but also in the broader community.

The national definition of bullying for Australian schools says:

Bullying is an ongoing misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that causes physical and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power over one or more persons. Bullying can happen in person or online, and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert).

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders.

Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying

Source: <https://bullyingnoway.gov.au>

Bullying is a serious issue

Bullying is not "OK". Do not tolerate bullying – it is too important not to report. A tradition of silence is a barrier to be broken down. As a student of St Patrick's College it is not only your right, but your responsibility to report bullying whether it happens to you or to someone else.

Why bullying is not tolerated at St Patrick's College

As a caring Christian community the College:

- expects a high standard of behaviour at all times
- is committed to striving to provide a safe and caring environment for everyone where the right of every person to be free from all forms of bullying is observed
- encourages and positively reinforces behaviour which is courteous and considerate
- has a policy for detecting, preventing and dealing with bullying
- is educating the students about issues related to bullying behaviour
- offers support to all students through our wellbeing system and the pastoral care role of all teachers

What can you do if you are bullied?

As the victim, you are the one who should take action most strongly.

- try not to retaliate by becoming a physical or verbal bully yourself
- tell the bully to "quit it" or "get lost" or "cut it out"
- laugh it off, use humour
- don't be afraid to talk about it with your friends, family or other students such your SRC representative or the College prefects
- leave the area and go directly to a responsible adult
- establish a friendship network
- be smart about avoiding high risk places and times
- if you cannot act immediately, it is helpful to report the incident to someone you trust as soon as you can. You may need to establish that you want privacy and confidentiality. Alternatively you may wish to make an anonymous report on CANVAS that will provide details of the bully, type, location and possible witnesses.

There are many adults at school who want to help you too; perhaps you could talk to your teachers, your Year Coordinator or the College Counsellors. They can help you decide how to handle the situation and they can take action.

Remember, we are on your side. We take bullying seriously and want to stop it.

What can you do if you are a witness to bullying?

There is a risk that you can become the victim, or be labelled a ‘dobber’, but we need to work together if we are to be effective.

- we hope that you care enough to want to do something.
- if possible, you could intervene as the bullying occurs by simply saying “cut it out”, “leave him alone”, “quit it”. This is very useful if you have influence with the bully: e.g. are older, a friend, a College prefect, or team captain.
- if you cannot act immediately, it is helpful to report the incident to someone you trust as soon as you can. You may need to establish that you want privacy and confidentiality. Alternatively you may wish to make an anonymous report on CANVAS that will provide details on the issue you are witness to.
- offer support and friendship to the victim. Encourage the victim to get help through staff, family or a prefect.

Consequences

There must be clear consequences for bullying and, if a student is found to be bullying, then he could expect some of the following consequences:

- written records being kept on the student’s file and in the College Bullying Register
- stern warnings accompanied by a formal letter to the student and parents
- monitoring behaviour by use of the Student Levels
- consultation with parents
- reparations for any damage caused
- detentions and community service
- referral to the Year Coordinator, Director of Junior School, Director of Wellbeing, Deputy Principal and/or the Principal
- counselling and behaviour modification programmes
- exclusion from privileges
- suspension from school, resuming only on the condition that a formal contract is signed undertaking to cease all bullying behaviour
- expulsion

The College conducts online surveys to support students against bullying behaviours in both Term 1 and Term 4. Students are encouraged to participate in the survey as they can anonymously provide details that can be utilised to assist the College in addressing bullying behaviours.