SECONDARY SCHOOL POLICY ON DEALING WITH BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

(Abridged version for students and parents)

Sources
- Original Draft: 2003
- Reviewed: 2008
- Review: 2010

2. "Dealing with Bullying and Harassment (Students)" - Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia: Policy Statement 2002 (2007)

COLLEGE OBJECTIVE

In the spirit of John XXIII, Mary Ward and Ignatius Loyola, our College seeks to develop people of competence, conscience and compassion who are committed to God and the service of others.

This policy exists to support the College Code of Behaviour which states that every person has the right to:

- Be treated with respect and dignity
- Live within the College community free of verbal, physical and emotional hurt
- Work in a safe and positive learning environment
- Have property respected.

Bullying and harassment challenge these rights. As a College community, staff, parents and students, we do not accept, condone or support bullying.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying involves:

- A desire to hurt
- An imbalance of power
- An unjust use of power
- Repetitive behaviour
- Hurtful behaviour (physical, verbal or relational)
- Aggression experienced by the person who is a target and enjoyment by the perpetration.

Examples of bullying behaviour

- Name calling, put downs
- Threats (spoken, written or electronic)
- Comments about someone’s gender or race
- Hitting, tripping, punching, throwing objects, stealing, teasing
- Ignoring or excluding individuals
- Following someone, glaring, spreading rumours
- Touching someone inappropriately, sexual jokes, drawing of someone’s body, unwanted sexual overtures
- Graffiti, offensive notes, damaging other people’s property
HOW CAN YOU HELP?
Bullies have power not only because they are bigger or stronger but because others side with the bully to protect themselves. Do not show signs of approval to a bully.

- If you know the bully or have influence over him intervene and ask the bully to stop.
- If you feel you cannot speak to the bully then report the incident to a staff member.
- Tell a parent, older student or an older sibling. They may be able to advise or help you.
- Offer support to the student who is bullied. Encourage him/her to report the incident and get help. Invite him/her into your group.

DO NOT PRETEND IT IS NOT HAPPENING.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU ARE BEING BULLIED
How you react depends upon the nature of the bullying behaviour. Consider working through these steps.

- Initially try to ignore the bully. If you show others you are not upset, the bullying might stop.
- Speak firmly and forcefully telling the bully to stop the bullying behaviour.
- Talk to your parents, an older brother or sister or another student. They can help you decide what to do.
- Avoid the places and times where a bully can approach you without a staff member noticing.
- Report these places and times to a staff member.
- Speak to your Teacher, Tutor Teacher, House Coordinator, College Counsellor or College Nurse. They can help you.
- Make a wider circle of friends.
- Think about what you might be doing that attracts the bully. You are not at fault but a change in your behaviour may lead to a change in the bully’s behaviour.
- Report any physical contact immediately to your House Coordinator or the Deputy Principal.

WHAT DO I DO AS A PARENT?
"Many parents do get angry, quite understandably, and want to go to school and sort it out NOW!

This might not be the best first step. For one thing, the child will almost certainly be reluctant to involve the school straightaway because something they would rather keep quiet could be spread around. The child might also feel at risk of the bully taking revenge.

As a first step, it is usually best to:

- encourage the child to talk it through as far as he or she wants to, so you get the basic facts straight;
- try to keep an open mind, remembering you are hearing one part of the story only;
- ask questions gently;
- help the child reflect on what has been done so far; and
- help the child work out what might be done.
It is important to find out:

- what happened;
- who was involved;
- where;
- when; and
- did anybody else see it, and, if so, who?

It is a good idea to write down what you find out.

Once you have a clear picture of the situation, and some idea about how you and the child would prefer to handle it, contact the House Coordinator, Year 7 Coordinator, Year 8 Coordinator or Deputy Principal, Pastoral Welfare.

SILENCE HELPS NO-ONE - NEITHER BULLY NOR BULLIED- AND NOTHING CHANGES.