

# Bullying Prevention Policy

<b>Dates Reviewed</b>	15 <sup>th</sup> June 2016, 18 <sup>th</sup> October 2017, 18 <sup>th</sup> November 2020
<b>Date Implemented</b>	10 <sup>th</sup> September 2014
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<b>Approved By</b>	College Council / Policies sub-committee
<b>Approval Authority (Signature &amp; Date)</b>	<i>Gail Hardman 18/11/2020</i>
<b>Responsible for Review</b>	Assistant Principal – Welfare & Wellbeing
<b>Review Date</b>	October 2023
<b>References</b>	DET

## BASIC BELIEFS

Bullying occurs when someone, or a group of people, deliberately upset or hurt another person or damage their property, reputation or social acceptance on more than one occasion.

## RATIONALE

- Seymour College will provide a positive culture where bullying is not accepted, and in doing so, the College community will have the right of respect from others, the right to learn or to teach, and a right to feel safe and secure in their College environment at all times.

## TYPES OF BULLYING

- **Physical Bullying**  
Any intentional and unwelcome use of physical contact or deliberate property damage.
- **Verbal Bullying**  
Use of language to threaten or hurt i.e. Put downs.
- **Exclusion Bullying**  
Deliberately leaving someone out of a friendship group or activity to cause feelings of non-acceptance.  
\* Seymour College will not exclude students with allergies from camps and excursions.
- **Racial/Religious Bullying**  
Antagonism or prejudice directed towards someone on the basis of their race and/or religion.
- **Sexual Bullying**  
Any unwelcome comments, attention, contact or behaviour of a sexual nature that is humiliating, offensive or intimidating.
- **Gesture Bullying**  
Use of non-verbal signs to intimidate or threaten someone.
- **Cyber Bullying**  
Use of technological devices to spread rumours, intimidate, sexually harass or spread fear; for example, the inappropriate use of social media, such as Facebook.

### **Bullying is not:**

- **Mutual conflict:** involves an argument or disagreement between people but not an imbalance of power. Both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution. Unresolved mutual conflict can develop into bullying if one of the parties targets the other repeatedly in retaliation.
- **Social rejection or dislike:** is not bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.
- **Single-episode acts:** Single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression will not be ignored or condoned as these are unacceptable behaviours. However, single episode acts of nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. If someone is verbally abused or pushed on one occasion they are not being bullied. Nastiness or physical aggression that is directed towards many different people is not the same as bullying.

### **Harassment is:**

- Any verbal, physical or sexual conduct (including gestures) which is uninvited, unwelcome or offensive to a person.

### **AIMS**

- To reinforce within the College community what bullying is, and the fact that it is unacceptable.
- To alert everyone within the College community of the signs and evidence of bullying and to ensure bullying is reported to staff whether a person is an observer or a victim.
- To ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are followed up accordingly.
- To recognise the differences in children from Foundation to young adults in Year 12 and reflect the needs of a diverse range in age and abilities in this policy.
- To seek parental and peer-group support and cooperation at all times.

### **IMPLEMENTATION**

- Our College has adopted a zero tolerance position on bullying.
- Our College will adopt a four-phase approach to bullying.

#### **1. Primary Prevention**

- Our College aims to combat bullying to provide a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment, consistently reinforced by the School Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) framework.
- Professional development for staff relating to bullying, harassment and proven counter measures. Each classroom teacher will be able to identify types of bullying, as well as the consequences and impact of bullying.
- The College will have a clear program and response, complemented by clear processes for reporting suspected bullying.
- Our College will work towards Community awareness and work with the relevant outside agencies to educate parents
- Student assemblies will be used to clarify the school policy on bullying.
- The College will provide a staff supervised designated safe and quiet place for children to access at recess and lunch times.
- A start up program will be implemented in all year levels to promote inclusiveness, resilience, assertiveness and classroom expectations at the start of the school year.
- Anti-bullying messages and posters will be displayed around the College.
- The SRC will be responsible for structured activities available to students at recess and lunch breaks.
- There will be a clear process for reporting suspected bullying. (SEE FLOW CHART)
- The Attitudes to School Survey will be conducted and acted on every year.

#### **2. Early intervention**

- All instances of suspected bullying or inappropriate behaviour must be responded to by staff.
- Parents are encouraged to contact the College if they suspect a bullying or behaviour problem.

- The College will reinforce with children the importance of appropriately reporting incidents of inappropriate behaviour involving themselves or others. It is imperative that staff respond accordingly and proportionally to each allegation, including the recording the incident on Compass
- Parents are to be contacted if their child is alleged to have been bullied or experienced inappropriate behaviour, or if their child appears to have behaved inappropriately or bullied someone else.
- Restorative practices and circle time will be used by teacher/Year Level Coordinators to resolve issues.
- Appropriate and proportional consequences may include a verbal or written apology, completing an on line “module of work”, “Beating Bullies” booklet, loss of privileges etc.
- The College will identify programs and resources to build the resilience of their students.
- The College will recognise and reward students for positive behaviour and resolution of problems.

### **3. Intervention**

- Serious incidents and / or repetitive incidents of bullying or unacceptable behaviour must be reported, responded to by staff and documented on COMPASS
- Serious incidents are those that include physical assault, sexual assault, criminal activity involving theft or serious damage of property, serious threats or homophobic bullying and the emotional impact of harassment.
- All such incidents or allegations will be consistently investigated and documented. Depending upon the nature of each incident, they may be also be reported to and investigated by police, reported to the Student Critical Incident Advisory Unit, and / or reported to the Department’s Emergency and Security Management Unit.
- The College may contact support professionals such as Wellbeing Officers or Councillors and / or Student Support Officers, VIC Pol for assistance and support.
- Bullying behaviour of students, staff and parents identified by others will be informed of allegations.
- Both victims and those with bullying behaviour will be offered counselling and support.
- All repetitive or serious incidents must be brought to the attention of the principal class members of the College.
- The most appropriate staff member will contact parents of the targeted child. Principal class members will contact alleged perpetrator unless the police advise not to do so.
- Regional Office will provide support as appropriate, and the principal will monitor the investigation and review the situation until matters are appropriately resolved.
- Consequences of repetitive or serious incidents may include criminal charges, suspension, expulsion, loss of privileges, counselling, conciliation or any other consequences consistent with the **College’s Student Code of Conduct**.
- A management strategy for all parties will be developed in consultation with the students and parents involved.
- Parents or community members who bully, harass or abuse staff will be provided with official warnings, and when necessary referred to the police, and / or have Trespass Notice restrictions placed upon them by the principal consistent with the Summary Offences Act.

### **4. Post Incident**

- It is important that appropriate strategies are put in place after the incident has been resolved for all students involved. Appropriate strategies may include:
  - conciliation meetings between all parties
  - ongoing monitoring of students involved
  - identification of an agreed key contact staff member of each student involved
  - follow-up meetings regarding each child’s management strategy
  - ongoing communication with parents
  - counselling from Wellbeing Staff or Student Support Officers for both parties
  - reinforcement of positive behaviours and appropriate behaviour strategies.
  - Ongoing record keeping on Compass Chronicle.

## EXPECTATIONS

- This policy will be reviewed as part of the College's review cycle.

1. This policy will be made available on the College's website.

2. This policy was ratified by College Council on 

18/11/2020
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### *Child Safe Standards*

*"Victorian government schools are child safe environments. Seymour College actively promotes the safety and wellbeing of all students, and all school staff are committed to protecting students from abuse or harm in the school environment in accordance with their legal obligations including the Child Safe Standards. The College's Child Safety Code of Conduct is available on the school's website."*

# BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

