



**KINGSWAY**  
CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

Cricos Provider #01855M

## COLLEGE POLICY

# BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY

VERSION  
3.1

Document and Version Management

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## **BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY**

Kingsway Christian College aims to minimise bullying behaviours at the College through ongoing education, peer support, and other proactive initiatives.

All staff of the College have a duty of care to students, ensuring a safe and non-threatening environment for all. Likewise all students have a duty of care to one another as well as to staff to ensure a safe and on-threatening environment for all.

The College believes everyone has the right to be safe.

Kingsway Christian College explicitly forbids the use of any form of child abuse, corporal punishment or other degrading punishment. See below for definitions of these terms.

### **Child abuse**

- 1) Physical abuse occurs when a child is severely and/or persistently hurt or injured by an adult or a child's caregiver.
- 2) Sexual abuse, in relation to a child, includes sexual behaviour in circumstances where:
  - a. The child is the subject of bribery, coercion, a threat, exploitation or violence;
  - b. The child has less power than another person involved in the behaviour; or
  - c. There is a significant disparity in the developmental function or maturity of the child and another person involved in the behaviour.
- 3) Emotional abuse includes:
  - a. Psychological abuse; and
  - b. Being exposed to an act of family and domestic violence.
- 4) Neglect includes failure by a child's parents to provide, arrange or allow the provision of:
  - a. Adequate care for the child; or
  - b. Effective medical, therapeutic or remedial treatment for the child.

### **Corporal Punishment**

Any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light; typically involving hitting the child with the hand or with an implement; can also include, for example, forcing the child to stay in any uncomfortable position. It does not include the use of reasonable physical restraint to protect the child or others from harm.

### **Degrading punishment**

Any punishment which is incompatible with respect for human dignity, including corporal punishment and non-physical punishment which belittles, humiliates, denigrates, scapegoats, threatens, scares or ridicules the child.

### **Definition of Bullying**

The Department of Education defines bullying as:

- 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. However, these conflicts still need to be addressed and resolved.
- Harassment is behaviour that targets an individual or group due to their identity, race, culture or ethnic origin; religion; physical characteristics; gender; sexual orientation; marital, parenting or economic status; age; ability or disability and that offends, humiliates, intimidates or creates a hostile environment. Harassment may be an ongoing pattern of behaviour, or it may be a single act. It may be directed randomly or towards the same person/s. It may be intentional or unintentional (i.e. words or actions that offend and distress one person may be genuinely regarded by the person doing them as minor or harmless).
- Violence is the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against another person(s) that results in psychological harm, injury or in some cases death. Violence may involve provoked or unprovoked acts and can be a single incident, a random act or can occur over time.

Additionally, the College defines bullying as “Mean on Purpose” behaviour – key indications to assess the presence of bullying are:

- A gain (or feeling of gain) in power or control over an individual or a group of individuals; and/or
- A loss (or feeling of loss) of power or control by an individual or a group of individuals due to the act/behaviour

Therefore bullying behaviour could involve a once-off incident or be multiple incidents occurring over a period of time.

Bullying may occur physically, verbally, or emotionally and may also include the use of digital technologies such as cameras, phones, the internet etc – often referred to as Cyber Bullying.

<b>Physical</b>	e.g. hitting, punching, kicking the victim, taking or damaging someone's property.
<b>Verbal</b>	e.g. name calling, constant teasing, insults, racist comments, sexist comments.
<b>Emotional</b>	e.g. excluding peers from groups, spreading rumours, stalking, interference with, or damage to personal property.
<b>Cyber</b>	e.g. publication of photos, spreading rumours, damaging reputations

Possible reasons a person engages in bullying ("Mean on Purpose") behaviour:

- For attention
- For popularity or to fit in
- Others support the behaviour (or no one condemns the behaviour)
- Sees the behaviour as acceptable
- Lacks social skills
- Learned behaviour from home or other environments

Possible reasons a person becomes a target (or "Victim") of bullying ("Mean on Purpose") behaviour:

- Lacks social skills
- Lacks confidence
- Believes the bullying ("Mean on Purpose") behaviour is their fault
- Others support the behaviour (or no one condemns the behaviour)
- Person being "Mean on Purpose" may be jealous, feel insecure, or feel threatened by the "Victim"
- Person being "Mean on Purpose" may be targeting the appearance, religion/culture, sexual orientation or any other feature that causes the "Victim" to stand out or be different

It is important to note that most children will be exposed to bullying "Mean on Purpose" behaviour at school at some time in their school years.

Bullying ("Mean on Purpose") behaviour can lead to mental health problems including anxiety, depression, and low self-worth. In severe cases, children who are repeatedly victimised may see suicide as the only option to fix the bullying.

It is therefore important to the College that bullying behaviour is taken seriously and dealt with immediately and appropriately, with prevention as one of the key strategies.

## **Prevention Policy**

### **Purpose of having a prevention policy:**

- To minimise bullying behaviour at the College
- To equip students to manage and resolve conflict in healthy and positive ways
- To equip staff and students to recognise, report and stop bullying behaviour if it happens

### **Steps taken within the College to minimise and address bullying (“Mean on Purpose”) behaviour:**

- The policy is presented and discussed with students and parents/guardians in their entry interview
- The policy is reinforced through guest speakers that run special programs within the College
- Teaching staff regularly reinforce appropriate behaviour in class and as part of the academic curriculum – eg. Health
- The Pastoral Care Team (Heads of Students, Dean of Christian Formation, College Chaplains, Dean of Secondary/Associate Dean of Primary follow up reported incidents quickly
- The Pastoral Care Team work closely with the people affected by bullying (“Mean on Purpose”) behaviour
- Where appropriate, the College Discipline Policy links in to the Bullying Prevention Policy to ensure people engaging in bullying (“Mean on Purpose”) behaviour are given consequences
- Parents are contacted when there are serious concerns regarding student’s behaviour
- Bullying behaviours are tracked/monitored continually

### **The College aims to build a positive environment within the school setting by:**

- Providing strong pastoral care for all members of the College community
- Acknowledging and rewarding positive behaviours e.g. affirmations, Merit Letters, etc.
- Using a discipline system that is fair, firm and clear
- Providing a variety of additional activities/programs within the school setting for students to enjoy and participate in – eg The Arts, Drama, Music, Sports, Cadets, year group camps and excursions and leadership programs
- Creating a sense of belonging and empowerment for all members of the school community
- The extended Pastoral Care team introduces a “restorative justice model” to students involved in interpersonal relationships which could lead to bullying as an early intervention strategy to equip them with the vocabulary to address and report “mean on purpose” behaviours.

- Reporting of potential bullying behaviours are made easy to report by the continuous education around reporting incidents to KCC staff or by using “Stymie” in the case of students wanting to remain anonymous.

**Response to bullying (“Mean on Purpose”) behaviour:**

- On the report of an incidence of bullying the Head of Students/Associate Dean of Primary will interview the “Victim” in a safe setting away from other students
- The safety of the “Victim” and his/her welfare is the prime consideration at this stage – if a child is distressed a staff member will remain with the child
- Any witnesses are interviewed
- The person accused of the behaviour is interviewed and allowed to speak freely to give their view

**Where bullying (“Mean on Purpose”) behaviour is evident:**

- A verbal warning will be given to the accused person. Depending on the nature of the incident, this student may incur further sanctions consistent with the College Discipline policy.
- The “Victim” is provided with feedback as to how the situation has been dealt with and the implications should any further “Mean on Purpose” behaviour arise
- On going support structures are offered to all affected parties eg. from staff, chaplains, etc
- The “Victim’s” parents may be contacted at this stage.
- A written record documenting the situation and how the College has handled the situation will be maintained in the relevant student files.

**In the case of a second instance of bullying “Mean on Purpose” behaviour by the same student:**

- He/she will be given a contract to sign as part of the College Discipline Policy and/or receive further sanctions consistent with the Discipline Policy
- Parents are contacted
- The written record in student files is updated to reflect the details and the handling of the new situation

**In the case of a third instance of bullying “Mean on Purpose” behaviour by the same student:**

- The student will be asked to withdraw (or be expelled) from the College
- The written record in student files is updated to reflect the details and the handling of the new situation

**NOTE**

In cases of severe bullying, the College’s response may be escalated up to and including cancellation of student enrolment.