



Green Point Christian College

Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedures

Approved by Board – November 2012

Read by Principal – March 2013

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► INTRODUCTION

The Anti-Bullying Policy of Green Point Christian College is an essential aspect of student welfare and pastoral care with the College, and augments the College's Behaviour Management and Code of Conduct policies. This policy is intended to provide students, staff and parents with appropriate mechanisms to address the issue of bullying. Green Point Christian College does not tolerate bullying in any form.

► RATIONALE

As a Christian school, our God-given mandate is to create an environment that develops an ethos of care and encouragement, and an environment where all students and staff feel safe; one in which their right to be respected and treated as individuals is to be protected.

The purpose of this policy is to promote consistency of approach and to create a climate in which all types of bullying are regarded as unacceptable. It is to provide a structure and strategies by which students, who believe they are bullied, are counselled sensitively and effectively. It is also to provide structure and strategies by which students that are identified as bullies are dealt with promptly and the outcomes achieved are in the best interests of the student and the College.

► AIMS

- To promote a secure and happy environment free from threat, harassment and any type of bullying behaviour.
- To take positive action to prevent bullying from occurring through a clear College policy.
- To show commitment to overcoming bullying by practicing zero tolerance.
- To inform pupils and parents of the College's expectation and to foster a productive partnership which helps to maintain a bully free environment.
- To make staff aware of their role in fostering an environment of care and develop in them an appropriate knowledge and attitudes which will assist to achieve the above aims.

► BIBLICAL GUIDELINES

At Green Point Christian College, we follow the guidelines that are laid out to us in the Bible:

1. Bullying is never acceptable behaviour and will not be tolerated.
"Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, brawling and slander along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other." Ephesians 4:31
2. The Bible tells us that each member of Green Point Christian College is made in the image of God and that we are His precious creation, which we need to honour.
"Let us make man in our image, in our likeness." Genesis 1:26
"But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God."
1 Peter 2:9

3. Therefore all students, parents and teachers have the right to feel and be safe going to and from the College as well as in the playground and classroom.
“Live in harmony with one another be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble, do not repay evil for evil or insult with insult, but with blessing because to this you were called so that you would inherit a blessing. 1 Peter 3:8-9
4. Each member of the College community has a responsibility of assuring the safety of other members of the community.

► SCOPE OF POLICY

- The Principal will ensure that the College has appropriate policies, training and procedures in place to regulate a safe and supportive school environment and that these policies and procedures are regularly monitored.
- The College will have and enforce responsible use of technology guidelines;
- The Principal will provide regular opportunities for all College staff to be trained to recognise and respond effectively to bullying. This training must include the key elements of digital citizenship;
- Anti-bullying training and familiarisation with the College’s Policy and Procedures are to be addressed in new staff and student induction processes;
- College staff will regularly review their processes for identifying and responding to bullying;
- Records of incidents of bullying will be kept systematically by the College and regularly analysed to identify patterns and proactively support student well-being;
- Students will receive regular explicit instruction on the College’s Policy and Procedures dealing with incidents of bullying;
- Students will be educated on the meaning and application of this policy and the College’s procedures at an age appropriate level;
- Parents/carers will receive regular advice on the existence of the College’s Policy and Procedures for dealing with incidents of bullying, and details on how they can access assistance if they have concerns in relation to bullying;
- This Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedures will be placed on the College website.

► DEFINITION OF BULLYING

The following definition of bullying reflects the position of the College:

Bullying is when someone or a group of people with more power repeatedly and intentionally causes hurt or harm to another person or group of people who feel helpless to respond. Bullying can continue over time, is often hidden from adults and will probably continue if no action is taken.

The key features of bullying are that it causes hurt and distress, is repeated and involves the use of power in an unfair way.

Bullying is not:

- *single episodes of social rejection or dislike or*
- *single episode acts of nastiness or spite*
- *random acts of aggression or intimidation*
- *mutual arguments, disagreements or fights.*

A helpful resource is “The National Centre Against Bullying” <http://www.ncab.org.au/>

This policy specifically deals with bullying amongst students, but the College recognises that bullying may occur at all levels and in all relationships.

► **FORMS OF BULLYING**

- 1 **Physical Bullying** - Includes hitting, kicking, rude gestures, extortion, pushing and shoving, taking or damaging belongings ie any form of physical behaviour that hurts others or their property.
- 2 **Verbal Bullying** – Name calling, insulting, repeated teasing, racist remarks, threatening, sexual harassment and any other form of verbal behaviour designed to hurt another.
- 3 **Social (Covert) Bullying** – Includes spreading lies, slander, rumours, playing nasty jokes, mimicking, excluding someone from the group, isolating someone and isolating others by preventing others from befriending them. Damaging a person’s social reputation or social acceptance.
- 4 **Psychological Bullying** - Includes threatening, manipulative and stalking behaviours.
- 5 **Cyber Bullying** – Cyber bullying is causing hurt via modern technologies such as the internet and other forms of social media, and through the use of smart phones and other mobile devices.

a) Examples of Cyber Bullying

- Sending hateful or threatening comments or pictures via MSN, mobile phone or the internet and by social networking sites such as MySpace and Facebook.
- Using modern technologies to engage in the social exclusion of someone.
- Posting rude, explicit or embarrassing messages or pictures about someone on the internet.
- Stealing someone’s identity in order to harm them in some way.
- Putting pressure on a person to send revealing or compromising pictures of themselves.
- Covertly filming, recording or taking a picture of someone and posting the images on the internet to cause hurt.
- “Outing” and disseminating confidential information about someone.
- “Flaming” and multi-messaging to clog up a person’s electronic system and to cause them distress.
- Using aliases and pseudonyms in chat rooms and on social networking sites in order to harass and upset.
- Engaging in cyber-stalking and the invading of privacy.

b) Sexting

- Another expression of cyber bullying is sexting. Sexting is taking sexually explicit photos and making them available for others to see via a carriage service such as mobile phone or computer. Sending explicit images of anyone, including yourself, is a crime if you are under the age of 18 years. If the person in the picture is under 16 years, it can be a very serious crime resulting in charges of paedophilia.

► **RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

- 1 **Members of the College community have a right to:**
 - Be safe at Green Point Christian College, free from fear of bullying, harassment and intimidation;
 - Know that their concerns will be responded to;
 - Be provided with appropriate support.

2 Members of the College community have a responsibility to:

- Refrain from engaging in bullying behaviours;
- Report bullying of self and / or others;
- Assist in implementing the College's Anti-bullying Policy.

3 College's Responsibilities

- Provide access to the Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedures, and College Code of Conduct to all members of the College community via the intranet, website, hard copies (available on request) and summary statement (via newsletter);
- Involve staff, parents and external support agencies in developing and revising consistent procedures across the College for responding to and documenting bullying;
- Clarify roles of student Support Staff including Year Advisors, Co-ordinators, Home Teachers, Heads of School, College Counsellors;
- Program specific activities in classes, across Stages and for the whole College community which promote values associated with anti-bullying;
- Provide support and guidance to the victims of bullying;
- Provide intervention for individuals who bully others.

4 Teacher Responsibilities

- Model anti-bullying attitudes and behaviour;
- Encourage the teaching of tolerance, respect and valuing of difference and diversity through Key Learning Areas;
- Listen to and respond to reports of bullying. Provide support and refer as needed;
- Implement the College's Code of Conduct and Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedures.

5 Parent Responsibilities

- Model anti-bullying attitudes and behaviour;
- Support the values of tolerance and respect in the home;
- Encourage children to exercise these values in all contexts including at school;
- Report bullying and encourage their child to do so;
- Provide support and encourage their child to seek help;
- Work with the College to resolve bullying issues.

6 Student Responsibilities

- Model anti-bullying attitudes and behaviour;
- Show respect for all members of the College community;
- Speak out against bullying and report it when they see it. Report if you are bullied;
- Support students who are bullied;
- Support the Student Representative Council to assist with anti-bullying suggestions.

► NSW POLICE

The Police Local Area Command (LAC) appoints a Schools Liaison Officer to schools. The Liaison Officer can provide advice on a wide range of areas associated with bullying. These could include understanding the best ways to address instances of bullying from the perspective of legal or criminal processes or providing general advice on the burden of proof required for a bullying matter to be progressed through the legal system. Schools have a reciprocal obligation as responsible corporate citizens, to provide the Police with any relevant information they may have on community members engaged in matters of interest to the Police. Schools should keep in regular contact with their Schools Liaison Officer.

Senior Constable Rebecca Armitage/Senior Constable Peter Hughes – 0437 776 727.

► FURTHER INFORMATION

Kids' Helpline

1800 551 800

www.kidshelp.com.au

Cybersafety help

www.cybersmart.gov.au/report.aspx

Australian Federal Police

www.afp.gov.au

Reach Out

www.reachout.com.au

Beyondblue

www.beyondblue.org.au

Bullying. No way!

www.bullyingnoway.com.au

The Australian Psychological Society

www.psychology.org.au

Procedures

► STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING BULLYING

Bullying is a serious issue. For this reason, actions taken in response to a bullying situation need to be **prompt and decisive**. In this way the bully will see that his/her actions are not tolerated, and the victim will see that he/she is protected.

Green Point Christian College has a dual approach to managing bullying - proactive and reactive.

The College takes a **proactive** approach to bullying by encouraging an environment in which bullying does not occur. A **proactive** response to bullying would include:

- Developing a safe environment for the College community;
- Informing staff and students about how to recognise bullying behaviour;
- Informing staff and students on how to respond when bullying behaviour is noticed and reported;
- Training staff and students to manage bullying behaviour;
- Developing and maintaining a commitment to conflict management and dispute resolution across the College.

Examples of proactive strategies, which schools have used to prevent bullying, include:

- Establishment of an email address for students (and parents) to report incidents of bullying, whether to themselves or friends - ineedhelp@gpcc.nsw.edu.au
- Short awareness raising poster campaigns;
- Improve supervision in known problem areas;
- Create activities for students to involve themselves in during lunchtime (eg sporting, chess, music etc);
- Using drama role play novels etc within the formal curriculum to help students empathise with the feelings of bullied children and to learn and practice the skills they need to avoid bullying. For example, the "Rock and Water", "Free 2 Be", "Communication Skills" (Year 4) and "Relationships" (Year 6) programs;

- Units on anti-bullying delivered to Years 1, 3 and 5 in the Primary School, as well as a unit on “Safe Living” which is part of child protection;
- Visiting performances from outside organisations to support these units;
- Peer support and buddy schemes;
- Examples of inappropriate actions, presented in College Chapel times;
- Messages in Chapel that emphasise importance of the kind treatment for fellow students;
- Involvement in “National Anti-Bullying Day”.

The College’s **reactive** response is a punitive response to bullying. Whilst not wanting to distinguish levels of bullying, the College recognises that physical bullying is different to verbal and psychological bullying. The College’s reactive response to bullying is two-fold:

1. For Physical Bullying

- The bullying student and the victim are immediately taken by whoever is in authority to the office. A record of the incident is made;
- One of the following staff members (Year Advisor, Home teacher, Head of School or Counsellor) interviews the students to establish what happened. They advise the bullying student/s that there is no justification for his/her actions;
- Dependant on the severity of the incident, if necessary, through consultation with the Principal or Head of School, the student may be excluded from the College (or its general routine) until an interview is conducted with the parents/carers;
- At the interview with parents/carers, it is made clear that the student must modify their behaviour or leave, as the College has to be a safe place (see further “Response to Bully”);
- The student may be placed on a contract (please also refer to Green Point Christian College Behaviour Management Policy). Further defaults may mean he/she is asked to leave the College;
- The victim is followed up by the appropriate Year Advisor, Home Teacher, Head of School and or the College Counsellor. Records of interviews are kept in written or in digital form (eg TASS.Web).

2. For Verbal or Psychological Bullying

- Class Teacher/Home Teacher/Teacher on Duty/Year Advisor – deal with incident as it occurs and reports the incident;
- The staff member involved notifies the Year Advisor or Co-ordinator. The College Counsellor is also notified, if deemed necessary;
- Repeat offenders should be referred to the relevant Head of School and an interview is conducted with parents/carers;
- At the interview with parents/carers, it is made clear that the student must modify their behaviour or leave, as the College has to be a safe place (see further “Response to Bully”);
- The student may be placed on a contract: (please also refer to the College’s Behaviour Management Policy) further defaults may mean he/she is asked to leave;
- Depending on the circumstances, the victim and or bully/ies may be followed up by the College Counsellor.

All bullying incidents should be treated seriously but appropriately – just as much care should be taken not to overreact as to under react. Other examples of reactive strategies, which can be used when dealing with bullying, include:

- Peer counselling (older students trained to help victims and bullies);
- A central place where students can anonymously inform of bullying behaviour;
- Counselling for victims.

► GUIDELINES FOR STAFF

It is imperative that staff: **RESPOND**
 REPORT
 REFER

- All staff have the same viewpoint and are committed to handling the issue immediately and in the same manner;
- The bullying is stopped to ensure the physical, social and psychological well-being of those bullied;
- Staff are vigilant in supervision.

RESPOND: (May involve one or more of the following actions)

- Make sure the bully and victim are protected, safe and are moved to a safe environment;
- Attend to any physical needs that the victim or bully may have eg First Aid;
- Let the victim/s become calm and collected before questioning them over the circumstances;
- Depending on the seriousness of the incident consider having another colleague present when you question the people involved;
- Listen and investigate the issues;
- Meet with and question the bully;
- Meet with and question any witnesses;
- Meet with victim;
- If necessary, meet with friends or advocates of the victim;
- Contact and inform the parents/carers of the bully and victim. If necessary arrange a meeting.

(a) *Response to Bully*

- Make it clear that the bullying behaviour is unacceptable. Disapproval should be unambiguous. Stress that the behaviour is unacceptable (not the person);
- Outline the sanctions that will be imposed if the bullying continues;
- Ask the bully to reflect on how the victim feels (clarify empathy position);
- Support and guide the bully in changing his/her behaviour. Allow the bully to talk freely about the behaviour in the context of change;
- Write down an agreed action. Set a date for review (two days);
- Review. This must be taken seriously, therefore a formal setting should be used.

(b) *Response to Victim*

- Make it clear that the bullying behaviour is unacceptable;
- Be empathetic to the emotional needs of the victim;
- Make a written (or electronic) record of the incident/s.

REPORT

- Complete appropriate record of events;
- Notify the appropriate Home Teacher, Year Advisor and Head of School;
- Please note the provision of privacy laws.

REFER

- To the College's Year Advisor/Head of School the bully and or victim;
- The Year Advisor/Head of School will determine if referral to College Counsellor is necessary for parties involved.

► **BREAKING UP BULLY GANGS**

- Meet the victim/s separately. Ask for a written record of what has happened;
- Do the same with the bullies, starting with the leader. In this meeting make it clear that the behaviour will not be tolerated. This behaviour must stop;
- Make it clear that each person is responsible. There can be no innocent bystanders;
- A game is only a game if everyone enjoys it;
- If it was an accident, did they help? Did they report it? If it was for a laugh - who was laughing?
- Write down agreed action, date for review and send a copy to all parents of children involved;
- Meet the whole group and revise what has been agreed. Pre-empt any bravado by discussing what they will say to each other and the peer group about the meeting;
- File all information. Inform the Police if the matter is serious and define it to the bullies in legal terms ie slander, criminal damage, threat and extortion;
- Keep the review meeting formal to emphasise the seriousness;
- Praise any positive change;
- Use school photographs for identification if the victims do not know the names of the bullies;
- If the bullies are from outside the College, try to make an identification of the people involved. If possible, contact any other institution that can be identified. For example, another school. If necessary and dependent on the severity of the situation, inform the Police of circumstances. Supervise the school gate area and immediate environment.

► **APPENDICES**

WHAT CAN PARENTS DO TO HELP THE CHILD WHO IS BEING BULLIED AT SCHOOL? (ADVICE FOR PARENTS)

What are the signs?

How to identify if your child is being bullied. Your child's behaviour can change for a variety of reasons. However, the following signs could indicate your child is being bullied:

- not wanting to go to school or participate in school activities;
- does not appear to have friends;
- is missing belongings;
- has torn clothing;
- seems to have become fearful and anxious;
- has more mood swings, and seems to be crying more;
- seems to have a drop in academic performance;
- has poorer physical health and changes in sleep habits;
- has increased negative self-perception.

The signs of possible cyber bullying can be the same as signs of other bullying, but include certain behaviour with phones and computers, for example:

- being hesitant about going online;
- seeming nervous when an instant message, text message or email appears;
- being visibly upset after using the computer or mobile phone, or suddenly avoiding it;
- minimising the computer screen, or hiding the mobile phone when you enter the room;
- spending unusually long hours online in a more tense, pensive tone;
- receiving suspicious phone calls, emails or packages;
- withdrawing from friends, falling behind in schoolwork, or avoiding school.

What you can do

If your child is bullied you need to:

- Work with the College to support your child;
- Contact the College, not the other child's parents;
- Report the incidents even if your child does not want this to occur;
- Tell your child that bullying is wrong;
- They have the right to attend school without fear;
- The problem is unlikely to stop without adult intervention;
- Do not advise your child to fight with the other child;
- Help your child learn to stand up against bullying behaviour;
- Use the internet, books, and ask the College for resources to support your child;
- Schools must follow privacy laws and may not be able to tell you everything that has taken place, especially about any other children involved. These laws also keep you and your child's information private too.

<http://www.bullyingnoway.gov.au/index.html>

If your child **bullies** another student, you need to:

Discuss with your child why they might be behaving this way

- Sometimes a student who bullies other children in one situation may themselves be bullied in another;
- Try to understand why they may be behaving in this way;
- Think about any issues or problems your child might be experiencing.

Discuss the behaviours with the College

- A consistent and co-operative approach by both the home and school is important;
- Decide if there should be consequences at home too. Explain these to your child and that the consequences are linked to their behaviour;
- Ensure your child does not hear criticism from you about the College's management of the issue;
- Take any issues directly to the staff you have been working with.

Consider what is going on at home

Does your child see good examples of how to deal with issues and resolve differences with others at home?

- Have any major events taken place recently to upset your child (parents separated, death in the family, significant illness in the family, siblings bullying your child)?
- Increase supervision of your child when they are with other children.

Explain why bullying is unacceptable

- Help them understand what it is like for the person being bullied;
- Ask them how they would feel if they were being bullied.

Make clear rules and consequences for their behaviour

- Acknowledge appropriate behaviour and be consistent when dealing with inappropriate behaviour;
- Consider enrolling your child in a group program that helps children to manage their behaviour, learn appropriate social skills and relate in more positive ways with other people;
- Seek professional help and support if you feel that your child's bullying behaviour is part of a bigger behavioural or health problem.

<http://education.qld.gov.au/student-services/behaviour/qaav/docs/toolkit-parents.pdf>

If your child sees **another child bullied by** another student you need to tell them:

- it is wrong and not to support the bully;
- to support a friend who is bullied,
- to report it to a teacher, use the College's welfare email Ineedhelp@gpcc.nsw.edu.au; or
- help them to make an anonymous report by leaving an envelope at the office.
- Pray (with them and for them).

► **HELPING STUDENTS DEAL WITH BULLYING SITUATIONS (ADVICE FOR STUDENTS)**

This information can be found at <http://www.bullyingnoway.gov.au/>

Bullying can happen almost anywhere:

- at school;
- on the way to school;
- in the playground;
- on trips or camps;
- on the phone or the internet
- at the shops;
- almost anywhere.

Bullying might involve repeatedly:

- physically hurting someone;
- leaving someone out;
- saying mean or humiliating things;
- using technology to send nasty messages or images.

A person can be bullied about:

- how they look;
- home or family;
- schoolwork;
- popularity;
- achievements.

To prevent bullying, students need to:

- work to create a happy school environment for all;
- respect yourself and others;
- learn to tolerate and accept individual differences;
- stand up against bullying behaviour;
- support the College policy on anti-bullying.

If You are Bullied YOU need to:

- Tell the bully to stop;
- Seek help and talk about it to someone you trust; telling shares the problem. It helps you feel supported. Get some helpful advice from others. It is really important to tell someone if the bullying has been going on for a while or the strategies you have tried have not worked;
- Talk to your friends - they can help you tell a teacher or your parents or just to feel better;

- Talk to your parents - tell them the who, what, when and where of what has been happening;
- Talk to your teacher or another staff member - tell them the who, what, when and where. If you do not want to do this in public, make an excuse to see the teacher about something else, for example your homework;
- If you cannot talk to someone face-to-face, go online or call a [Kids Helpline](#) counsellor.

If You Know Someone Who is being Bullied YOU need to:

- Care enough to do something about it, whether it affects you personally or not;
- Step in early as you may help to defuse a situation before it gets out of hand;
- Report it to a teacher or parent (take a friend with you if you want).

If You Have Been Called a BULLY:

- You may feel upset and be confused about why someone has called you a bully. You may have felt pressured into doing this by friends, even when you knew it was not right. Maybe you have been in trouble at school because of this kind of behaviour. Take responsibility and understand why you may have done this;
- If you are not sure whether you have bullied, go to *Bullying: What is it?* <http://www.takeastandtogether.gov.au/over14/facts/what-is-bullying.html> to find out if you have used bullying behaviours;
- Even if your behaviour does not fit the definition of bullying, someone still has a problem with how you are behaving towards them and you have a responsibility to help fix it.

Take Responsibility

- Accept that others do not like the way you behave;
- Follow the rules about respect and behaviour;
- Work with your school and/or parents to work things out;
- Accept any consequences you have been given by the school and/or your parents;
- Accept that the person and their friends may not want to have anything to do with you for a while;
- Learn how to appropriately deal with conflict.

Tell and Stop

- It may be okay to apologise to the person and reassure them that you will not do it anymore. Do not be surprised if they do not trust you or are not comfortable to talk with you about it;
- If they don't want to talk with you, you could try writing them a letter apologising for your behaviour and assuring them that you've learnt and won't behave like that again;
- Tell a parent or teacher that you have been using bullying behaviours and feel bad about it. Ask them to help you repair the damage you have caused to others;
- If you were inappropriate online, remove any offensive images or texts;
- A guidance officer or counsellor may be able to help you to understand why you were using the behaviours and give you some strategies to help you make and keep friends, appropriately deal with conflict and learn about other people's feelings;
- You could speak to a counsellor at Kids Helpline or talk to others on an online forum. Go to [Kids Helpline](#) or call them on 1800 55 1800, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, or use the web or email counselling.

Think About You

Think about how you were interacting with the person.

It is important to understand why you were behaving this way. There is no excuse for the behaviour, but there could be a lot of reasons why you have done this. Did you do it:

- because you were angry with someone;
- to have control over someone;
- to make your friends laugh;
- to get even with someone;
- because you do not think there is anything wrong with it;
- to stop others bullying you?

If you do not know why, talk to someone about it to help you work it out.

Think About the Other Person

How might your behaviour be affecting the other person? They may feel:

- upset or scared;
- that something is wrong with them;
- like they have no friends and that no-one likes them;
- like it is their fault;
- ashamed that this is happening;
- that there is nothing anyone can do to help them;
- that if they report the bullying things could get worse.

Learn About the Difference

Sometimes we are uncomfortable with a difference, but it is our responsibility to accept that everyone is different and be respectful of those differences.

If you do not understand why people are the way they are, learn more about differences.

► FURTHER INFORMATION

Kids' Helpline

1800 551 800

www.kidshelp.com.au

Cybersafety help

www.cybersmart.gov.au/report.aspx

Australian Federal Police

www.afp.gov.au

Reach Out

www.reachout.com.au

Beyondblue

www.beyondblue.org.au

Bullying. No way!

www.bullyingnoway.com.au

The Australian Psychological Society

www.psychology.org.au

Responsibilities

Evidence of Compliance

Principal, Deputy Principal, Heads of School

Ensure the development of this policy within the College

Ensure procedures are maintained that enable compliance with this policy

Operate within his/her delegated authority

Heads of Department

Operate within his/her delegated authority

All staff

Operate within delegated authority
