

Definitions

Respect - is an important part of healthy relationships, and everyone has the right to be respected. A respectful relationship is characterised by the following:

- people make their own choices and form their own views consistent with their age and developmental level;
- feelings of self-worth are fostered;
- people's points of view and beliefs are valued;
- the rights of a person to be safe, valued and cared for are understood;
- people are accepted;
- people are listened to and heard;
- 'No' is accepted as an answer if someone is being disrespectful;
- a person can make mistakes and still be accepted and respected;
- it is never controlling, and encourages personal growth and fulfilment;
- it nurtures a culture of trust, honesty and happiness.

Bullying (or harassment) – 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. There are three broad types of bullying: direct physical bullying, indirect bullying and Cyber-bullying.

Inappropriate Behaviour - Many distressing behaviours are not examples of bullying even though they are unpleasant and often require intervention and management. Inappropriate behaviour may include:

- Mutual conflict: involves an argument or disagreement between people but not an imbalance of power.
- 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: of nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying

Restorative Practices – Restorative practices is a philosophy that seeks to repair relationships that have been damaged, including those damaged through bullying. It does this by bringing about a sense of remorse and restorative action on the part of the offender and forgiveness by the victim. A core belief is that the wrongdoings and misbehaviours that bring disruptions to the classroom, and the hurtful behaviours that are so often associated with conflict, are primarily not just 'breaking rules', but actually result in harm to individuals, groups and the whole school community.

Policy Statement

At St Peters Lutheran College, the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the means and motivation for inviting, encouraging and developing positive behaviours and attitudes.

God creates each individual with a unique personality and skills. God loves each of us. However, a Christ-centred community is by no means perfect. Individuals reflect this imperfection. At St Peters we are committed to presenting the Christian lifestyle through example and instruction. This occurs in a loving and caring environment that promotes faith, hope, justice and reconciliation.

Our motto, Plus Ultra, meaning Ever Higher, calls out to us to strive for the highest levels of achievement in behaviour, attitudes and dedication. At St Peters we endeavour to grow our students with values that will stay with them for their life journey. Core values such as faith, hope, love, forgiveness, humility, justice and reconciliation are introduced to promote the Christian growth and development of the student. Our vision statement challenges us to create a learning community based on values. Each person is recognised as a unique individual bringing special qualities and gifts to share and hence we all have a right to be respected and a responsibility to respect each other.

Relationships which are not respectful will not be tolerated at St Peters. It is the right and responsibility of every student, staff member, parent and member of the community to report behaviours which are not respectful, whether these happen to them or someone else. We will maintain a climate in the College where students and staff feel that it is their right and responsibility to report disrespectful behaviours and ensure that when incidents are reported, the complainant feels supported. We will provide a variety of ways in which incidents can safely be reported and discussed, both single episodes and repeated. Responding to bullying behaviours can be challenging for students, teachers, school leaders and parents/carers. The best outcomes will occur when all parties work together to manage these situations.

Our Restorative Processes

Restorative Practices, provides students with the opportunity to develop self-discipline and positive behaviours in an environment that is caring and supportive.

Through this practice we aim to:

- Acknowledge that the responsibility to act justly is expected of all members of the College community;
- Recognise that quality relationships are fundamental to effective learning and genuine pastoral care;
- Enable students to be accountable for the real consequences of any wrongdoing.

A restorative approach sees conflict or wrongdoing firstly as an opportunity for students to learn about the consequences of their actions, to develop empathy with others and to seek to make amends in such a way as to strengthen the community bonds that may have been damaged. This is achieved through having high expectations and insisting upon high standards of behaviour, and by providing high levels of support and care for individuals.

When a behaviour or action of a student is deemed to have caused harm, a range of consequences will be applied. At all times the action and the consequence will be viewed and explained as an opportunity for reflection and growth on the part of the student. The aim is to assist the student to make the necessary changes to facilitate his or her wellbeing at the College for the benefit of all.

There are a range of restorative practices that aim to bring about resolution, repair damaged relationships and see a new way forward. They can be seen along a continuum from the informal through to the very formal.

Essentially, restorative practices aim to:

- Involve all who participate to have a sense of dignity, fairness and justice;
- Allow students to gain a greater insight into the impact of their behaviours on others;
- Provide opportunities for healing and repairing the damaged relationships;
- Ensure a sense of community is heightened when students, teachers, and parents are equally valued in the restorative process.

Responsibility

i. Students

Students are encouraged not to stay silent or to retaliate. They should discuss the matter with parents/sibling/significant person in their life and report any bullying or harassment to a staff member, such as:

- Form Class Teacher/Subject Teacher
- College counsellor
- College Chaplain/Pastor
- Year Level Coordinator
- Deputy Head of Sub-School
- Head of Sub-School
- A College Leader
- Deputy Head of College
- Head of College

Any student who observes this behaviour must not join in and is asked to report the incident to ensure that both the victim and the instigator of bullying receive assistance.

ii. Staff

Staff will always investigate the incident and act promptly. Students on both sides of the issue are usually interviewed

- Contact with parents is made if required
- Techniques of a restorative manner will be applied in responding to bullying issues
- Students are usually brought together in serious incidents to establish a mediated plan of action.

iii. Parents

- Parents should encourage their son or daughter to report the incidents. If your son or daughter is unwilling to do so, then the parent should contact the College.
- In the case of cyberbullying, parents are reminded that if a law has been broken then contact with police ought to be considered.

iv. College Response

- All reported incidents will be managed on an individual basis and will be investigated and followed up. The Year Level Coordinator, in consultation with the Deputy Head of Sub-School and Head of Sub-School, will decide if the issue needs any further action. This may include notifying parents, student counselling or reporting to the Deputy Head of College or Head of College.
- Some wrongful behaviours of a serious nature are by definition criminal offences and consultation with police will occur.