



St Helena

Mutual Respect Policy

ST HELENA MUTUAL RESPECT POLICY

1. INTRODUCTION

St Helena students and staff have the right to a safe and caring environment which promotes learning, personal growth and positive self esteem. The College is committed to providing this and each student and teacher has the responsibility to ensure this occurs.

2. RATIONALE AND DEFINITION

The College aims to create and maintain a culture of positive student relationships that refuses to accept bullying or harassment as part of school life.

Bullying and harassment are passive or aggressive acts causing embarrassment, pain or discomfort to another. They can take many forms: physical, verbal, gesture, extortion, exclusion, electronic and via ICT. They are an abuse of power. They can be planned and organised, or can be unintentional.

Bullying includes:

- Name calling and teasing – verbally, in writing, via SMS, chat rooms, emails or websites
- Sexual comments eg. about someone's appearance, or sexuality
- Unwanted sexual touching
- Offensive graffiti and note writing
- Threats
- Interference with or theft of the possessions of others
- Spreading rumours
- Physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, slapping or punching
- Exclusion
- Any behaviour designed to make someone else feel uncomfortable
- Repeated put-downs eg. sighing when someone asks questions in class
- "Prank" telephone calls

Bullying and harassment can be by an individual or by a group, by a student against a student, a teacher against a student, and a student against a teacher.

Bullying and harassment can cause long lasting harm to an individual's personal development and well-being.

If we are bullied or harassed,

- We may feel frightened, unsafe, embarrassed, angry or unfairly treated
- Our work, sleep and ability to concentrate may suffer
- Our relationships with family and friends may be affected
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3. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

At St Helena, it is the right and responsibility of all staff and students to report bullying and harassment.

Staff are required to:

- Be role models in word and action at all times
- Be observant of signs of distress or suspected incidents of bullying
- Make efforts to remove occasions for bullying by active patrolling during yard duty
- Arrive at class on time and move promptly between lessons
- Take steps to help victims and remove sources of distress without placing the victim at further risk
- Act on incidents of bullying and harassment or report suspected incidents to the appropriate staff member, and complete a bullying report form
- Treat all reports of bullying and harassment seriously
- Be consistent and assertive in dealing with all forms of bullying

Students are required to:

- Refuse to be involved in any bullying situation
- Take some form of preventative action, if present, when bullying occurs
- Report the incident or suspected incident if present when bullying occurs

The College Management Team is required to:

- Provide and support activities, programs and policies which promote a safe school environment and healthy relationships
- Ensure, on an ongoing basis, that all students, parents and staff are aware of their rights and responsibilities in regard to bullying and harassment
- Review the effectiveness of the Mutual Respect Policy on a regular basis
- Where appropriate, liaise with other bodies such as College Council, the Department of Education, and other relevant committees in regard to incidents of bullying and harassment
- Address issues of bullying and harassment, and in particular racial and sexual harassment, through the curriculum
- Formulate and implement policies which are inclusive of all students and staff, and which recognise and value diversity
- Induct new staff members in the implementation of the Mutual Respect Policy.

The College appreciates parental support of our efforts to promote a safe environment, and recommends that parents:

- Watch for signs of distress in their child
- Take an active interest in their child's social life and acquaintances
- Advise their child to tell a staff member about a bullying incident
- Inform the College if they suspect their child is being bullied or is bullying others
- Encourage their child not to retaliate

- Communicate to their child that parental involvement, if necessary, will be appropriate for the situation
- Be willing to attend interviews at the College if their child is involved in any bullying incident
- Be willing to inform the College of any cases of suspected bullying even if their own child is not directly affected
- Be supportive of and involved in strategies implemented to address bullying and harassment issues.

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IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Students are required to report a bullying incident to a member of staff they feel comfortable talking to, or directly to their Year Level Manager or Form teacher.

Staff members should report a bullying incident involving another staff member or a parent to a member of the Principal Class.

WHEN IT HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED THAT A STUDENT HAS HARASSED OR BULLIED ANOTHER STUDENT
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- The incident should be dealt with *as soon as possible* after a report has been made.
- While teachers have a range of options, action must be taken to ensure the bullying stops.
- Once a teacher has established that the bullying or harassment has occurred, she/he must check whether the incident is a 'first offence'. To do so, the staff member handling the incident must check the "Bullying and Harassment Report" folder, located in each mini-school office, for any previous incidents regarding the same alleged bully.

(i) ***Where the incident is the first offence***

The incident should be handled by the teacher who is made aware of the problem.

The staff member may choose to implement **one or more** of the following strategies:

- a. issue the offending student with a copy of the "Mutual Respect Policy" and ensure the student understands why their behaviour is unacceptable
and/or
- b. use the Method of Shared Concern
and/or
- c. give a verbal warning
and/or
- d. have the student sign an acknowledgment of the discussion which indicates their awareness of the consequences of further breaking of the rules
and/or

- e. make contact with the student's parents by telephone or letter
 - The appropriate summary form must be completed by the staff member handling the incident and lodged in the "Bullying and Harassment Report Folder"
 - The student who has been harassed or bullied should be notified of the outcome of any action taken, and encouraged to re-report should the harassment continue. Where appropriate, the student who has been harassed or bullied should be referred to support services.
 - Where appropriate, the offending student should be referred to support services.

(ii) *Where the incident is the second offence*

The staff member handling the incident **must** refer the incident to the Year Level Manager by completing a "Bullying and Harassment Summary Form" and forwarding it to the Year Level Manager. The Year Level Manager **must** contact the student's parents and implement **one or more** of the following strategies:

- a. have the student sign an acknowledgment form
and/or
 - b. remove the student's yard privileges for a period of time
and/or
 - c. issues detention/s
and/or
 - d. issue an informal or formal suspension
and/or
 - e. facilitate a change of class
- The appropriate paperwork ("Bullying and Harassment Report Form") must be completed by the **Year Level Manager** and lodged in the "Bullying and Harassment Report Folder".
 - The Year Level Manager should notify the student who has been harassed or bullied of any action taken, and encourage him/her to re-report should the harassment continue.
 - Where appropriate, the student who has been harassed or bullied should be referred to support services.
 - Where appropriate, the offending student should be referred to support services.

(iii) *Further breaches of the "Mutual Respect Policy"*

- The consequences of ongoing bullying or harassment is at the discretion of the College. The Year Level Manager will always discuss multiple breaches with the Mini-School Principal.
- The appropriate paperwork must still be completed and lodged in the "Bullying and Harassment Report Folder".

(vi) **Severe bullying and harassment**

Physical or sexual harassment involving direct physical contact, or a very serious verbal threat or offence, **must** be referred directly to the **Year Level Manager**, who will consult with the **Mini School Principal**. Incidents of this nature will be dealt with as a “second offence”.

NB. Disciplinary action may be taken against any person making a false accusation, as this in itself constitutes a form of harassment.

**In serious cases, teacher confidentiality cannot be guaranteed. Teachers have a Duty of Care and should not maintain confidentiality if a student's physical or mental health is at risk.*

TEACHER-STUDENT AND TEACHER-TEACHER BULLYING

See “Workplace Bullying Policy”.

Allegations regarding teachers bullying students or other teachers **must** be referred immediately to the Mini School Principal.



BULLYING INCIDENT SUMMARY FORM

Teacher: _____

Date: _____

Today I dealt with a bullying/harassment incident involving:

_____ (students).

And

_____ (victim/s)

The action I took involved:

Verbal warning

Parent contact

Method of Shared Concern

Referral to Year Level Manager (please include details of incident)

Student Acknowledgment (please attach)

Other (please specify): _____

Please tick this box if the incident is a second offence or requires referral to the Year Level Manager:



BULLYING/HARASSMENT INCIDENT REPORT FORM
(To be completed by the Year Level Manager)

Name of offending student: _____

Date: _____

Victim/s: _____

Referring teacher: _____

First offence:

Second offence:

Third offence:

Brief description of incident/s:

Action taken: (please circle)

CONTRACT

MEDIATION

WARNING

SUSPENSION

PARENT CONTACT

DETENTION

PARENT MEETING

INFORMAL SUSPENSION

CHANGE OF CLASS

METHOD OF SHARED CONCERN

*REMOVAL OF YARD
PRIVELEGES*

OTHER: _____

Comments:

Year Level Manager Signature _____ Date _____



BULLYING/HARASSMENT ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I acknowledge that:

- a. Following a discussion with the staff member named below, I understand the St. Helena Mutual Respect Policy
- b. I understand what Bullying and Harassment is and why it is unacceptable at St. Helena
- c. I understand that if I am involved in the bullying or harassment of another person, my parent/s will be informed and disciplinary action taken which may involve suspension.

I undertake not to be involved in the harassment of bullying of any person or persons.

Student name: _____ Signature: _____

Teacher: _____ Signature: _____

Date: _____

When it has been established that a student has harassed or bullied another student:

