MORETON BAY BOYS’ COLLEGE (MBBC)
STUDENT ANTI-BULLYING POLICY AND PROCEDURES

A. POLICY STATEMENT
Moreton Bay Boys’ College is committed to providing a learning environment in which all of its students feel safe, valued and supported and where bullying of students is not tolerated. All members of the College community are required to honour and support this commitment.

B. RATIONALE

1. The College community rejects bullying of students in any form.
2. All bullying of students is dealt with seriously.
3. Students are actively encouraged to support each other and report when possible all instances of bullying.
4. Both students who bully and students, who are bullied, are offered appropriate intervention and support. This may include family involvement, counselling and mediation.
5. The College reserves the right to discipline students, which may include suspending or expelling any student whose behaviour is considered unacceptable.
6. Examples of acceptable student behaviour are recognised and promoted.
7. The College will educate students about the effects of bullying and encourages them to be aware and asks them to help the victim.

C. AIMS

The aims of this Policy are:
1. To raise awareness of the existence and nature of bullying;
2. To eliminate negative social behaviour;
3. To counter the view that bullying is an inevitable part of school life;
4. To create a supportive school climate and to break down the secrecy surrounding bullying;
5. To provide staff, students and parents with options to use when responding to instances of bullying of students.

D. SCOPE

1. Some forms of bullying of students may constitute criminal offences and are therefore not governed by this document.
2. This policy extends beyond the immediate school grounds and extends beyond school hours to include travel to and from the College and other out of school activities or contact among students and/or staff.
3. This Policy will be supported by the Code of Conduct, Enrolment Agreement, Network Use Policy and Behaviour Management Policy.
4. This Policy must be read in conjunction with the Moreton Bay Boys’ College Child Protection Policy. If bullying amounts to harm as referred to in the Child Protection Policy then the matter will be dealt with under the Child Protection Policy.
5. This policy has application to incidents of bullying of a student by another student.

E. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Within the Moreton Bay Boys’ College community all students, have certain rights and responsibilities as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GROUP</th>
<th>RIGHTS</th>
<th>RESPONSIBILITIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STUDENTS</td>
<td>All students have the right:</td>
<td>All students have the responsibility:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. To feel safe, cared for and treated with dignity and respect</td>
<td>1. To respect the property and rights of others</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. To be free from threat and intimidation</td>
<td>2. To consider the impact of their actions on others</td>
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<td>3. To enjoy a pleasant, healthy and safe working and learning environment</td>
<td>3. Not to accept bullying, but to report it</td>
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<td>4. To follow the College policies, procedures and rules</td>
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Within the Moreton Bay Boys’ College community, in order to support this policy, staff and parents have the following responsibilities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GROUP</th>
<th>RESPONSIBILITIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STAFF</td>
<td>All staff members have the responsibility:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. To provide a safe, secure learning environment for our students</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. To strive to provide an environment free from bullying, harassment, intimidation, and abuse</td>
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<td>3. To recognise that to ignore bullying is to condone it</td>
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<td>4. To be role models at all times</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5. To follow College policy, procedures and conditions of employment</td>
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<tr>
<td>PARENTS</td>
<td>All parents have the responsibility:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. To support the College in providing a safe, secure learning environment</td>
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<td></td>
<td>2. To teach and model appropriate behaviour</td>
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<td></td>
<td>3. To encourage their children to respect and to consider the impact of their actions on others</td>
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<td>4. To communicate with the school any issues or concerns</td>
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<td></td>
<td>5. To be role models in word and actions at all times</td>
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<td></td>
<td>6. To follow College policy and conditions of enrolment</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

F. DEFINITION

1. WHAT IS BULLYING?

A frequently cited definition of bullying is the “repeated intimidation over time of a physical, verbal or psychological nature of a less powerful person by a more powerful person or group of persons” (Rigby). Three important points in this definition are:
1. **Power** – Children who bully may acquire power through various means: physical size and strength, status within a peer group, and recruitment within the peer group so as to exclude others.

2. **Frequency** – Bullying is not a random act. It is characterised by its repetitive nature whereby the children who are bullied not only have to survive the humiliation of the attack, but live in constant fear of its re-occurrence.

3. **Intent to harm** – Bullies usually deny any intent to harm others and may not always be conscious of the harm they cause. Causing physical and emotional harm however, is a deliberate act. It puts the child who is bullied in a position of oppression by the child who bullies.

**Bullying is not** one-off acts of nastiness or meanness, or random acts of aggression or intimidation.

### 2. TYPES OF BULLYING

It is important to recognise that bullying can not only be categorised as **direct** (e.g. name calling, hitting) and **indirect** (e.g. exclusion, rumour spreading) but also as:

1. **Physical** – hitting, kicking, pushing, tripping, shoving, fighting, touching, damaging/destroying property, gestures, staring.

2. **Verbal** – teasing, put downs, offensive/abusive comments, ridiculing, sarcasm, rumour spreading, crude jokes or comments, obscene/threatening phone calls and emails.

3. **Social** – exclusion, rumour spreading, gossip, racial/sexual comments, graffiti and notes about others

4. **Emotional** – victimisation, extortion (forcing others to hand over money, food or other possessions), forcing other students to do their work, instilling fear in others.

5. **Cyber (Emails, SMS, Chat rooms, Social Networking Sites i.e. Facebook)** - offensive/threatening images, offensive/threatening/abusive/hurtful comments, rumour spreading.

### 3. SOME COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS

"I was just mucking around, can’t he/she take a joke?"

This is the most common response from the bully. In fact, bullying is not a ‘joke’. It is not funny to ridicule or hurt someone, to make them feel uncomfortable, or to push them around.

"I don’t want to cause trouble."

This misconception comes from the victim, who thinks that he is the cause of the problem. All students have a right to feel safe at school. You are only standing up for yourself when you report being bullied.
“It is just a natural part of growing up.”

This misconception comes from adults, but the truth is there is absolutely nothing ‘natural’ about being victimised. Students have a ‘right’ to feel safe at school and during their travel to and from school.

“No-one can do anything about it.”

Most cases of bullying are sorted out very simply, especially if the bullying is reported sooner rather than later. The College is committed to resolving these sorts of problems, but students must communicate with the College staff if we are to have any chance of helping.

“Dobbing is a bad thing to do.”

Bullying is the bad thing, telling the truth is a good thing. By telling the truth you are standing up for your rights as a human being. It takes character and intelligence to stand up for your rights, which is something that bullies are afraid of. Bullies try to intimidate people into maintaining a ‘code of silence’ because they can then continue to hurt people for as long as they wish. Bullying continues when people fail to report what is happening.

G. FACTS ABOUT BULLYING

Recent research indicates that:
1. Bullying has been reported as occurring in every school in which it has been investigated.
2. One area of growing concern, especially among older students, is cyber bullying. A great deal of it occurs outside the school, although it often involves children who attend the same school.
3. Gender differences have been found indicating that boys are bullied physically more often than girls.
4. Girls are generally more involved in indirect forms of bullying, such as excluding others, rumour spreading and manipulating situations to hurt those they don’t like.
5. There are differences in the nature and frequency of victimization according to age. For younger children bullying is generally more physical, whereas for older children, bullying is more indirect and subtle.
6. Children typically report being bullied less often as they get older, although being victimized tends to increase when children enter secondary school.
7. Being bullied at school typically has negative effects on the physical and psychological well-being of those children who are frequently and severely targeted.
8. Students who are bullied generally feel unhappier and lonelier at school, demonstrate lower academic competence and have higher rates of absenteeism.

H. DEALING WITH BULLYING

What Can You Do If You Are Being Bullied? (The Victim)

1. If you think you are being bullied you are encouraged to report your concerns immediately. Bullying will continue if those responsible think they can escape detection and avoid consequences.
2. Approach your class/form teacher or a parent, support staff, Counsellor/Chaplain or any adult or senior student with whom you feel comfortable.

3. The person receiving the complaint will report it to the Team Leader or Assistant Principal (MBBC).

4. Any report of bullying made to the College will be followed up sensitively and actions taken will be documented.

5. Try not to show that you are upset, try to look and sound confident. Try to be assertive - tell the bully that his or her actions/comments are unwelcome.

6. If the bullying continues it must be reported again. It is important that bullies get the message that their behaviour will not be tolerated.

7. Consider talking to your Class Teacher/Form Teacher, Team Leader, College Chaplain for help in developing skills which can be useful in bullying situations.


Consider doing the following:
1. If you know of or observe instances of bullying, report it to a member of the College staff, who will refer the matter to more senior staff.
2. Tell the bully that you and your friends strongly disapprove of his/her actions (a clear statement such as “You need to stop doing that, it’s not okay.”).
3. The person being bullied may be too scared or upset to tell anyone. Remember that nobody deserves to be bullied.
4. Offer support to students who are bullied. Let them know they can do something about it.

What Can I Do If I Find Myself Involved In Bullying? (The Bully)

Consider the following:
1. At times, all of us have behaved in a manner of which we are not proud. In these instances, the important thing is to recognise when our behaviour is inappropriate or upsetting to another, and being prepared to address the issues.
2. This recognition does not absolve you from wrongdoing, but you will be supported in your efforts to bring about change.
3. Speak to an adult you feel comfortable with, perhaps a parent or a member of staff. They will attempt to assist you in managing the situation.
4. You should not be embarrassed to seek assistance for behaviour that you sense is both damaging for you and for others.

Advice for Parents

1. Watch for signs that your child might be bullied. Some of the following might indicate bullying: wanting to miss school, a pattern of sickness (headaches, stomach aches), tension or unhappiness, becoming withdrawn, bruising, damaged clothing or property, disappearance of property.
2. If your child is being bullied, inform the Form/Class teacher immediately.
3. Do not encourage your child to hit back or respond verbally.
4. Support your child in developing their talents and participating in sports or other activities that will build confidence.
5. If bullying involves severe physical abuse, you may consider police action.

I. COLLEGE RESPONSE TO BULLYING

Moreton Bay Boys’ College is committed to providing a learning environment which rejects bullying or harassment of students in any form. The College will therefore respond to every reported incident of bullying of students, always bearing in mind that incidents of bullying often vary widely in severity and seriousness. It is important to differentiate between ‘least severe’ eg. occasional thoughtless teasing, for which an informal “talking to” is often adequate, and ‘most severe’, eg. continual group harassment with threats of physical injury, for which formal procedures are required. These procedures would normally include interviews with perpetrators and parents.

Moreton Bay Boys’ College is committed to working to restore relationships in the first instance and believe that a relationship issue needs a relationship solution. Senior staff at MBBC has been trained in restorative practices. These practices will be used initially; if the behaviour persists punitive consequences may be applied including the possibility of suspension with the worst case scenario being expulsion.

1. Procedures for Reporting

Any student who is bullied or anyone who witnesses an incident of bullying behaviour should report the incident no matter how minor, and follow the procedures below:

- **As a student** – you should notify your class teacher/form teacher, classroom teacher, parent, support staff classroom teacher, parent, or any adult or senior student with whom you feel comfortable.
- **As a parent** - discuss the situation with your child’s Class/Form teacher as soon as possible.
- **As a teacher** - after ensuring the safety of the victim, discuss the incident with the Team Leader or Assistant Principal.

2. Investigation Procedures

All reports of bullying of students will be investigated by the appropriate staff member and documented. More serious or persistent incidents of bullying will involve the Assistant Principal and the Principal. The nature and extent of the investigation will vary with the seriousness of the bullying. As far as is reasonably possible the investigation and its outcomes will be kept confidential although parents of students involved will be informed.

3. Consequences

Following the completion of an investigation into bullying of a student the College will implement such measures as are appropriate which could include one, or more, of the following:
1. Monitoring of the students involved
2. Conflict resolution/mediation with students and/or families involved
3. Counselling/restorative practices
4. Restitution
5. An agreement regarding standards of future behaviour
6. Detentions (lunchtime/afternoon/Saturday)
7. Signed student contracts
8. The involvement of outside agencies
9. Suspension
10. Expulsion

J. PREVENTION STRATEGIES

The College employs the following strategies to circumvent Bullying of students:

1. Responding appropriately to every report of bullying
2. Surveys on the incidence of bullying
3. Through the curriculum, examining aspects of bullying
4. Through the Student Care Programs, raising the awareness of bullying
5. Ensuring the message ‘it is okay to report bullying’ is promoted
6. Involvement of all staff
7. Encouraging positive peer group pressure
8. Explanation of the anti-bullying process during pastoral time, whole school assemblies, year level and gender based meetings and publication to parents
9. Encouraging peer support
10. Teacher observation of students in and out of classes
11. Visual advertising around the school
12. On-going professional development for staff
13. Providing a supportive environment for students
14. Counselling for those affected by bullying

K. POLICY ACCESSIBILITY AND REVIEW

This policy is published in the Moreton Bay Boys’ College Staff Handbook, the Student Diary and on the College Website.

Any policy operating within the constantly changing school environment must respond to the dynamic nature of that environment. Moreton Bay Boys’ College is therefore committed to the evaluation of the Student Anti-Bullying Policy and the practices derived from its implementation. This will ensure that the Policy remains relevant to the College community. The evaluation process may be undertaken as an appropriate response to:

- Changes in the College’s environment
- Research activities (eg. Surveys)
- Global research findings
- A periodic review