



CENTRAL COAST
GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Anti-Bullying Policy (Students)

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1. Scope and Purpose

Central Coast Grammar School (CCGS) rejects all forms of bullying. All students and staff have the right to be treated fairly and with respect in a manner consistent with the School's ethos of striving for excellence in all endeavours in a happy, caring and supportive environment.

This requires the establishment and maintenance of policies and procedures to ensure that all persons at the School can be free of intimidation, harassment, discrimination and victimisation.

This Policy applies to all members of the Central Coast Grammar School community, including employees, volunteers, parents and caregivers, students and visitors. It applies to student behaviour during all school activities, including those that occur outside normal school hours.

Preventing and addressing bullying is a shared responsibility of the whole school community. Students, staff and families are expected to model and promote respectful relationships and appropriate behaviour. All instances of bullying should be reported and will be responded to in a timely and appropriate manner.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Student Code of Conduct (A Community of Respect) guideline and other relevant School policies.

For instances of workplace bullying, please instead refer to the Discrimination, Harassment and Bullying Policy for Employees, Contractors and Volunteers Policy, the Grievance Procedure (Staff) and the Professional Standards Policy.

2. Definitions

Bullying

In determining whether behaviour constitutes bullying, the School applies the definition outlined in the NSW Anti-Bullying Framework.

- Bullying behaviour is typically:
- ongoing and deliberate
- a misuse of power in relationships
- repeated covert/overt verbal, physical and/or social
- online and/or offline
- individual or group-based
- intended to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm
- difficult for the target to stop it from happening to them
- a violation of the right to dignity, safety, and education.

Bullying may occur face-to-face or through digital technologies, including online platforms and mobile devices.

Bullying is distinct from other forms of inappropriate behaviour. Single concerns of conflict, disagreement, or unkind behaviour, while not acceptable, do not generally constitute bullying unless they form part of a repeated or patterned misuse of power.

Anti-Bullying Policy (Students)

Bullying can take many forms including:

Physical bullying: Where it aligns with the definition of bullying above, involves physical actions or interference with another person's property that are intended to hurt, intimidate or threaten. This may include hitting, pushing, obstructing, damaging property, stealing belongings or hiding personal items.

Verbal bullying: Where it aligns with the definition of bullying above, involves words used to hurt, intimidate, humiliate or diminish another person. This may include name-calling, insults, offensive language, verbal abuse, teasing, put-downs, threats or negative remarks about a person's race, gender, religion, appearance, sexuality or other personal characteristics.

Social bullying: Where it aligns with the definition of bullying above, involves behaviour intended to damage a person's relationships, reputation or sense of belonging. This may include exclusion, encouraging others to exclude another person, spreading rumours, creating or sharing harmful digital content, humiliating jokes, mimicking or comments intended to shame or diminish another person.

Bullying may occur in person, online or through a combination of both. It may be:

Direct: Involving overt or face-to-face behaviour that is visible to the person being targeted. This may include physical or verbal actions such as hitting, pushing, name-calling, insults or threats.

Indirect: Involving covert, discreet or anonymous behaviour that may not be immediately visible to the person being targeted. This may include social actions such as exclusion, spreading rumours, encouraging others to exclude someone or creating or sharing harmful digital content.

Online: Involving the use of information and communication technologies to hurt, threaten, humiliate, exclude or distress another person. This may include creating, sending, posting or sharing harmful messages, images, videos or other digital content.

Bullying is not:

Mutual conflict or disagreement between peers where there is no misuse of power. This may include arguments, disputes or one-off disagreements where those involved have a relatively equal ability to respond.

Social rejection or dislike where there is no repeated or deliberate attempt to cause distress, isolate a person or encourage others to exclude them. Not all students will be close friends or choose to spend time together. This is not bullying unless the behaviour becomes targeted, repeated and involves a misuse of power.

Challenging behaviours that fall below the bullying threshold. Single acts of nastiness, meanness, aggression or intimidation are not acceptable and will be addressed by the School, but they are not defined as bullying unless they are repeated, targeted and involve a misuse of power.

3. Discouraging Bullying

Central Coast Grammar School promotes a safe and supportive learning environment through a whole-school approach to preventing bullying.

Anti-Bullying Policy (Students)

The School's approach is informed by the NSW Anti-Bullying Framework and recognises that preventing and addressing bullying requires the active involvement of students, staff, parents and carers. Through a coordinated and proactive approach, the School seeks to foster a culture of respect, inclusion and belonging where all members of the community feel safe, valued and supported.

The School's anti-bullying actions are guided by four key areas:

Prevent

The School works proactively to prevent bullying by promoting positive relationships, respectful behaviour and a strong sense of belonging. Students are provided with age-appropriate learning opportunities that develop social and emotional skills, resilience, empathy and responsible use of technology. Expectations for behaviour are explicitly taught and reinforced through curriculum programs, wellbeing initiatives, assemblies and everyday interactions.

Respond

The School responds promptly, consistently and appropriately to reports of bullying. Concerns are taken seriously, investigated fairly and addressed in accordance with the School's policies and procedures. Responses focus on ensuring student safety, supporting those affected, addressing harmful behaviour and restoring positive relationships wherever possible.

Partner

The School recognises that preventing and responding to bullying is a shared responsibility. Strong partnerships with students, parents and carers, staff and the wider community are essential in promoting respectful relationships and supporting student wellbeing. The School encourages open communication and collaboration to address concerns and strengthen protective factors for students.

Implement

The School regularly reviews its policies, procedures, practices and data to ensure its anti-bullying approach remains effective and responsive to the needs of the community. Staff are supported through professional learning and guidance to promote consistent practice and build capacity to prevent, identify and respond to bullying behaviour.

4. Identifying and Reporting Bullying Concerns

Bullying concerns may be identified by students, staff, parents or caregivers. While some bullying behaviours are overt and observable, others may be subtle and difficult to detect. Signs that a student may be experiencing bullying can include changes in behaviour, mood, friendship groups, attendance patterns, engagement in learning or overall wellbeing.

Central Coast Grammar School encourages all members of the school community to play an active role in identifying and reporting bullying concerns.

Anti-Bullying Policy (Students)

Students who experience bullying, or who believe they are being bullied, are encouraged to report their concerns to the School as soon as possible. Students who witness bullying behaviour, or who are aware of bullying involving another student, are also expected to report their concerns to the School.

Parents and caregivers who suspect that their child, or another student, may be experiencing bullying are encouraged to contact the School promptly so that concerns can be investigated and appropriate support provided.

Bullying concerns may be reported through a range of channels, including:

- speaking directly with any member of staff
- submitting a 'Report Bullying' form via MyCCGS
- contacting the School by telephone
- contacting the School by email.

A report may be made to any member of staff. All staff have a responsibility to ensure that reported bullying concerns are appropriately referred and addressed in accordance with the School's Anti-Bullying Procedure.

Staff should refer to the Anti-Bullying Procedure for detailed guidance regarding the identification, documentation, escalation and management of bullying concerns.

5. Responding To Bullying Concerns

Central Coast Grammar School responds to bullying concerns in a manner consistent with the NSW Anti-Bullying Framework. Every concern is taken seriously and responded to through appropriate processes.

- The School's response to bullying concerns is guided by the following principles:
- every concern is taken seriously
- the confidentiality of affected students will be protected to the extent possible
- appropriate processes will be implemented to review concerns raised about bullying and determine appropriate responses
- responses and consequences will be determined on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the seriousness of the conduct
- affected students and parents or carers will be kept appropriately informed about who is handling the matter and the School's progress in responding to the matter
- records of reported concerns about bullying will be maintained in the School's wellbeing system in MyCCGS.

When a bullying concern is reported, the School will take appropriate steps to follow up and document the matter. This may include:

- undertaking a risk assessment to determine what, if any, immediate action should be taken to support affected students
- communicating with affected students and parents or carers, as appropriate
- collecting additional information, as appropriate
- escalating the matter to a formal school based inquiry where needed

Anti-Bullying Policy (Students)

- reporting the matter to external agencies where required, including Police, the eSafety Commissioner or the Department of Communities and Justice
- documenting the concern, actions taken and relevant communications in MyCCGS.

The School will determine appropriate responses based on the circumstances of the matter. This may include:

- access to psychological services and other types of support for students affected by bullying to help them feel safe and prevent further harm
- access to psychological services and other types of support for students who engage in bullying behaviour to help them understand the impact of their behaviour, learn alternative ways to behave, be accountable for their actions and address the underlying motivation for the bullying
- disciplinary action in accordance with the School's Discipline Policy
- reporting the matter to external agencies where required, including Police, the eSafety Commissioner or the Department of Communities and Justice
- The outcome of the matter will be communicated to affected students and parents or carers, as relevant and within privacy requirements.

6. Monitoring, Reporting and Review

The School's wellbeing and leadership teams regularly review the implementation of this Policy to ensure it remains effective and aligned with current requirements. Staff are expected to be familiar with the Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedure documents.

This Policy does not extend the School's responsibilities beyond those required by law. The School reserves the right to review and amend this Policy as necessary, with updated versions published on the School website.

Associated Documents

This Policy should be read in conjunction with the following School policies and documentation:

- Complaints Handling Policy
- Discipline Policy
- Student Wellbeing procedures
- Child Safe Policy
- Student Code of Conduct (A Community of Respect)
- Parent and Guardian Code of Conduct
- Staff Code of a Conduct

Anti-Bullying Policy (Students)

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