

# **BULLYING POLICY**



**St. Francis Xavier College  
Berwick, Officer & Beaconsfield  
Recommended by College Advisory Board November 2016  
Ratified by Canonical Administrators December 2016**

St. Francis Xavier College is committed to providing and maintaining, so far as is reasonably practicable, a working environment that is safe and without risks to health.

To that end St. Francis Xavier College is committed to providing for all employees, students and other people who, for whatever reason, are in an area under the control of St. Francis Xavier College, a working environment where bullying will not be tolerated and where people can be productive without interference from bullying in all areas under the control of St. Francis Xavier College.

Workplace bullying, amongst other things, may amount to conduct that constitutes a breach of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act (Vic) 2004* (OHS Act) and depending on the circumstances alleged, may have other legal implications. Regardless of the circumstances, bullying is a very serious and sensitive matter and **ALL** allegations of bullying will be dealt with as promptly as practicable and will be treated seriously, sensitively and appropriately.

## Definitions

Workplace bullying is *“repeated, unreasonable behaviour directed toward an employee, or group of employees, or a student or group of students, or toward another person or group of people who are in an area under the control of St. Francis Xavier College, and which creates a risk to health and safety”*. Within the definition, the highlighted words have the following meaning:

- *“repeated unreasonable behaviour”* means repeated behaviour that a reasonable person, having regard to all of the circumstances would expect, and is usually associated with victimisation, humiliation, undermining or threatening behaviour, and
- *“behaviour”* includes actions, or words, of individuals or a group, and may involve using a system of work as a means of victimising, humiliating, undermining or threatening, and
- *“risk to health and safety”* includes risk to the mental or physical health of a person.

Some examples of workplace bullying are:

- verbal abuse, yelling, screaming; or
- excluding or isolating employees/students/other people; or
- assigning meaningless tasks or giving employees/students/other people impossible assignments; or
- continually criticising someone; or
- sabotaging someone’s work or their ability to do their job by withholding vital information and resources; or
- belittling someone’s opinions; or
- unexplained job changes; or
- failure to give credit where it is due; or
- excluding or belittling employees/students/other people due to a medical condition such as allergies
- taking credit for someone else’s work.

The above list is intended to be illustrative and is by no means exhaustive.

However, **reasonable management actions performed in a reasonable way will NOT USUALLY constitute WORKPLACE BULLYING.** Reasonable management actions may include:

- Setting performance goals, standards and deadlines;
- Allocating work to an employee/student or other people;
- Deciding not to select an employee for promotion;
- Informing an employee about unsatisfactory work performance;
- Informing an employee about inappropriate behaviour or providing constructive feedback;
- Implementing organisational changes; or
- Performance management processes.

It should also be noted that a single incident of bullying-style behaviour **may** not constitute workplace bullying. However, this POLICY makes it clear that St. Francis Xavier College acknowledges its general duty to provide a safe workplace and accordingly, such instances of single incident bullying-style behaviour will not be ignored or condoned.

St. Francis Xavier College has a variety of formal PROCEDURES for dealing with bullying depending on the party against whom the allegation of bullying is made. **ALL** reports will be treated seriously and investigated promptly, confidentially and impartially. **ALL** employees, students and all other members of the College community are encouraged to report bullying wherever it occurs in an area under the control of St. Francis Xavier College. Subject to the nature of any bullying incident, St. Francis Xavier College may be required to report that conduct (and person concerned) to the Victorian WorkCover Authority (WorkSafe) for formal investigation under the OHS Act.

### Forms of Bullying

Bullying can occur in different forms and it can occur between any member of the College community and any other member of the College community. For example, bullying can occur between:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Employee and employee; and/or</li><li>- Employee and student; and/or</li><li>- Employee and parent; and/or</li><li>- Employee and contractor or volunteer.</li></ul> | Where bullying allegations involve an EMPLOYEE, the BULLYING PROCEDURE for <b>EMPLOYEES</b> should be followed. |
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Alternatively, bullying can occur between:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Student and student; and/or</li><li>- Student and employee and/or</li><li>- Student and parent; and/or</li><li>- Student and contractor or volunteer.</li></ul> | Where bullying allegations involve a STUDENT, the BULLYING PROCEDURE for <b>STUDENTS</b> should be followed. |
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Alternatively, bullying can occur between:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Parent and parent; and/or</li><li>- Employee and parent; and/or</li></ul> | Where bullying allegations involve a contractor, visitor or volunteer, or a parent or |
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- Parent and student; and/or
  - Contractor and parent; and/or
  - Visitor, volunteer and/or parent.
- member of a student's, employee's, contractor's, visitor's or volunteer's family, the BULLYING PROCEDURE for **OTHER PARTIES** should be followed.

Bullying could also occur between any other people who for a variety of reasons may happen to be in an area under the control of St. Francis Xavier College.

When bullying is, or has been alleged to have occurred in any area under the control of St. Francis Xavier College in any of the above circumstances, those allegations will be dealt with by St. Francis Xavier College according to the identity of the party alleged to have been involved regardless of the role that party is, or has been alleged to have played in the alleged bullying conduct. (The College's) BULLYING PROCEDURE(s) relevant to the identity of the party alleged to have been involved **will** be followed when dealing with the bullying allegations in all areas under the control of St. Francis Xavier College.

### **Responsibilities of Employees in Leadership Positions at the College**

Employees in leadership positions at St. Francis Xavier College have a key role to play in preventing workplace bullying and in responding promptly and dealing fairly with any instances of bullying that (by whatever means) come to their attention. These responsibilities include:

- Ensuring staff and students understand their responsibilities and are made aware of (the College's) POLICY and PROCEDURES in relation to workplace bullying;
- Taking immediate action to stop workplace bullying if he/she observes it;
- Dealing with any reported complaints in accordance with (the College's) relevant bullying PROCEDURE(s);
- Ensuring people are not victimised as a result of lodging a bullying complaint;
- Ensuring that their own behaviour is free from bullying; and
- Monitoring to reduce the risk of bullying occurring or recurring in your area.

### **Responsibilities of Employees**

All employees are required to:

- Treat others fairly and with respect at all times; and
- Comply with St. Francis Xavier College POLICY and relevant PROCEDURE(s) in relation to bullying; and
- Take a firm stand so that what you say or do does not condone bullying by others; and
- Report instances of bullying; and
- Offer support to those experiencing bullying; and
- Promote the importance of acting against bullying among your colleagues.

## Responsibilities of Students and their Extended Family

All students and their extended family are expected to:

- Treat others fairly and with respect at all times; and
- Comply with St. Francis Xavier College POLICY and relevant PROCEDURE(s) in relation to bullying; and
- Not engage in any bullying conduct towards other students, staff or any other person in any area under the control of St. Francis Xavier College at any time; and
- Report instances of bullying to an appropriate person at St. Francis Xavier College.

## Where to go for Further Information

- The Principal; or
- Any other (College) employee you consider appropriate; or
- The Victorian WorkCover Authority's *"Guide to Workplace Bullying – Prevention and Response"* available on their website [www.worksafe.vic.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au), or
- Employee Assistance program (see below)

## Employee Assistance Program

St. Francis Xavier College fosters an environment where employees are able to perform their professional role in a competent and rewarding manner. Each employee is important, valued and respected. However, from time to time, an employee may require information or support to assist in dealing with a personal difficulty. St. Francis Xavier College is a member of Access EAP (assistance to companies caring for their employee's social situations) which provides free assistance to employees and their immediate families. Should an employee require assistance via this program, call 1800 818 728 or visit the website at <http://www.accessseap.com.au/>

**Information about how this Policy is to be implemented is available in the Procedures under the overall Occupational Health & Safety Policy heading in the Policy and Procedure Manual.**

- ❖ Additional information and advice is available from the Deputy Principal – Mission
- ❖ OH&S Act 2004

<b>Status of Policy:</b>	
Manager Responsible: John Fazzino	Date: February 2018
Post Implementation Review:	Date: February 2017
Approved by: College Executive 2016	