



Bullying & Harassment Prevention Policy

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Staff Handbook

1. POLICY STATEMENT AND PURPOSE

Bullying is an issue that all schools must be able to identify and address. Bullying is a form of abuse that can seriously affect the health, wellbeing and educational outcomes of children. This includes those being bullied, those bullying others, families and the whole school community. The impact of bullying can be tracked to adulthood in many individuals.

Georgiana Molloy Anglican School is committed to working with families to establish a culture that rejects bullying and harassment in all forms. Staff are entitled to perform their roles and students are entitled to learn in an environment free from humiliation, oppression and abuse, where individual differences are appreciated. GMAS will not tolerate bullying, harassment or violence, and we are committed to following a restorative pathway to prevent harm from bullying, which incorporates conflict resolution strategies rather than retributive justice.

GMAS explicitly forbids the use of any form of child abuse, corporal punishment or other degrading punishment. Please see Definitions below for a description of these terms, as defined in the Guide to Registration Standards for Non-Government Schools

The majority of this document focuses on bullying behaviour exhibited by students towards other students. Claims of adults bullying students are treated as child abuse. Further information on this can be found in the Child Safe Policy and Behaviour Management Policy (see [Supporting Documentation](#)).

In addition, bullying can also occur in the workplace. Such bullying can occur between peers as well as between a 'supervisor' and their subordinates. Bullying in the workplace is covered by the GMAS Staff Code of Conduct (see [Supporting Documentation](#)).

2. SCOPE OF POLICY

This document applies to the whole GMAS community. At GMAS a whole-school approach is taken, which we believe is the most effective way of developing a positive school culture.

3. DEFINITIONS

Bullying

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.

Child abuse

Four forms of child abuse are covered by WA law:

1. Physical abuse occurs when a child is severely and/or persistently hurt or injured by an adult or a child's caregiver.

2. Sexual abuse, in relation to a child, includes sexual behaviour in circumstances where:
 - (a) the child is the subject of bribery, coercion, a threat, exploitation or violence
 - (b) the child has less power than another person involved in the behaviour; or
 - (c) there is a significant disparity in the developmental function or maturity of the child and another person involved in the behaviour
3. Emotional abuse includes:
 - (a) psychological abuse; and
 - (b) being exposed to an act of family and domestic violence.
4. Neglect includes failure by a child's parents to provide, arrange or allow the provision of:
 - (a) adequate care for the child; or
 - (b) effective medical, therapeutic or remedial treatment for the child

Corporal punishment

Any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light; typically involving hitting the child with the hand or with an implement; can also include, for example, forcing the child to stay in an uncomfortable position. It does not include the use of reasonable physical restraint to protect the child or others from harm. (From UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, General Comment No. 8 (2006), paragraphs 11 and 15: CRC/C/GC/8, 2 March 2007.)

Degrading punishment

Any punishment which is incompatible with respect for human dignity, including corporal punishment and non-physical punishment which belittles, humiliates, denigrates, scapegoats, threatens, scares or ridicules the child. (From UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, General Comment No. 8 (2006), paragraphs 11 and 16: CRC/C/GC/8, 2 March 2007).

GMAS/The school

Georgiana Molloy Anglican School

Harassment

Unwanted, unwelcome aggressive pressure or intimidation

4. WHAT CONSTITUTES BULLYING?

Bullying can take many forms, some examples being:

- **Physical:** pushing, kicking, hitting, tripping, spitting
- **Psychological/Emotional:** threatening to or taking someone's food, money or possessions, stalking, manipulation and intimidation, refusing to sit next to someone, deliberately excluding others from a group
- **Verbal:** using offensive names, spreading rumours, ridiculing, teasing

- **Non-verbal:** offensive notes or graffiti, rude gestures or facial expressions,
- **Cyber:** offensive emails, text messages or social media posts, threatening images
- **Property:** hiding, stealing or damaging property

5. WHAT IS NOT BULLYING?

Normal interpersonal conflict or differences of opinion, such as:

- Mutual conflict where there is no imbalance of power
- Social rejection where there is no deliberate, repeated attempt to cause distress
- Random 'one-off' acts of meanness, intimidation, violence

These issues will be dealt with through counselling and the School's Behaviour Management Policy and Codes of Conduct (see [Supporting Documentation](#)).

6. SCHOOL COMMITMENT

- GMAS takes a proactive stance on this issue. Once an act of bullying or harassment at the School is reported, the School will act swiftly
- The School will inform parents of the action taken on the offender to the innocent. It is important that justice not only has to be done, but has to be seen to be done
- The School encourages students to speak out if they are being bullied or harassed
- The School encourages bystanders to speak out if they witness an act of bullying or harassment on School grounds
- Degrees of bullying need to be taken into account when the school decides its response to a bullying incident. The school therefore reserves the right to assess each situation on its merits and respond via the most appropriate pathway (see Bullying and Harassment Prevention Procedures under [Supporting Documentation](#)).
- The Principal reserves the right to modify a pathway response in relation to any incident.

7. SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

ASC Child Safe Policy

Behaviour Management Policy

Bullying and Harassment Prevention Procedures

Staff Code of Conduct