STUDENT ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Effective from	March 2021
Approved by	The Principal
Policy Owner	The Principal
Policy Administrator	Heads of School
Application	All Staff, Students, and Parents/Caregivers
Last review date	March 2025
Next review date	March 2027
Version	2.0
Published externally	Yes
Related Documents	Bullying, Discrimination & Harassment Policy. Discipline Policy Student Anti-Bullying Protocol (Shortland School) Student Anti-Bullying Protocol (Tuncurry School)
File/Functional reference	College Community
NESA reference	B8 Safe and Supportive Environment, B9 Discipline

Margaret Jurd College provides an alternative education setting dedicated to supporting young people who find mainstream schooling challenging.

Our schools are each designed to meet the needs of students requiring tailored support:

Special Schools

Our Special Schools (Shortland and associated campuses) provide specialised support for students who:

- *Live with diagnosed mental health conditions and associated challenging behaviours as defined by the Department of Education and Training;*

- *Have histories of complex trauma; or*

- *Have Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).*

Special Assistance Schools

Our Special Assistance Schools (Tuncurry and associated campuses) provide targeted support for students who:

- *Live with mental health conditions and associated challenging behaviours.*

Our Commitment

The College is committed to delivering education that is trauma-informed, inclusive, and individually responsive, ensuring every student has the opportunity to complete their secondary schooling with dignity and support.

1   Purpose

The purpose of Margaret Jurd College's (the College) Student Anti-Bullying Policy is to clearly outline our commitment to identifying, addressing, and reducing bullying within the College community.

The College is dedicated to maintaining a safe, respectful, and positive environment for all staff, students, and visitors, actively working to prevent bullying through proactive education, clear behavioural expectations, and timely intervention.

2   Scope

This policy applies to all students, employees, volunteers, contractors, and visitors involved in delivering or participating in educational programs or activities at the College. It addresses bullying behaviours occurring through any medium and should be read in conjunction with the College's Bullying, Discrimination, and Harassment Policy.

3   Policy Statement

Margaret Jurd College recognises and upholds the right of every young person to learn, develop, and grow in a secure, supportive, and respectful educational environment, free from bullying in all its forms. All instances of bullying behaviour identified under this policy will be promptly addressed through appropriate disciplinary measures and wellbeing interventions.

4   Application of Policy

Definitions

4.1   While there is no universally agreed-upon definition, bullying is generally recognised as behaviour containing these key elements (Rigby, 2002):

   a)   A desire or intent to cause harm;

   b)   Hurtful actions (physical, verbal, psychological, or relational) occurring within a context of power imbalance;

   c)   Unjustified and typically repeated behaviour, causing distress or oppression to the targeted individual or group.

Bullying Behaviour

4.2   Bullying is a pattern of ongoing, unwelcome behaviour directed by an individual or group with greater perceived power towards another person or group with lesser power. Such behaviours may intentionally or unintentionally harm, injure, embarrass, or distress others.

Forms of Bullying

4.3   Bullying can take many forms and includes, but is not limited to:

- **Physical**: Hitting, pushing, kicking, tripping, spitting.

- **Extortion**: Threatening to take possessions, money, or food.

- **Verbal**: Teasing, name-calling, ridicule, or spreading rumours.

- **Non-verbal**: Offensive notes or graffiti, rude or intimidating gestures, facial expressions, staring deliberately.

- **Exclusion**: Deliberately excluding individuals from groups or social activities.

- **Property**: Stealing, damaging, hiding, or destroying personal belongings.

- **Sexting**: Sending or distributing sexually explicit images or messages, especially without consent.

- **Cyberbullying**: Using digital technology (eg emails, social media, SMS, chatrooms) to harm, intimidate, threaten, or spread rumours about others.

Key features of Bullying

4.4 Bullying typically:

    a) Causes emotional, psychological, or physical distress to victims and others (including families);

    b) Is persistent and repetitive;

    c) Reflects an abuse of power or authority;

    d) Compromises individuals' feelings of safety, security, and wellbeing within the College community.

"Bullying Up"

4.5 Bullying may also occur from individuals or groups perceived as weaker, younger, or smaller ("bullying up"). This can include anonymous bullying or provocative behaviours designed to elicit a negative reaction from the target, thereby misrepresenting the target as the aggressor.

Cyberbullying

4.6 Cyberbullying involves bullying behaviours conducted via electronic communication channels, including but not limited to smartphones, social media platforms, websites, email, and messaging services. Cyberbullying is particularly harmful due to its potential reach, permanence, and the anonymity it can afford perpetrators.

4.7 Although cyberbullying often takes place off-School, it falls within the scope of the College's Anti-Bullying and Discipline Policies. Severe or persistent cyberbullying cases may also involve reporting to relevant external authorities (including police).

4.8 Examples of cyberbullying include:

- Sending threatening, offensive, or insulting texts or messages.

- Forwarding emails or digital content containing hurtful rumours or images.

- Creating fake profiles or impersonating students or staff online.

- Uploading humiliating or inappropriate footage or images of students or staff to online platforms.

Responsibilities and Procedures

Identification and reporting

4.9 Staff will identify and respond to bullying behaviours according to the definitions and guidelines provided within this policy. Each incident will be assessed individually, with consideration given to each student's circumstances and needs.

Intervention and discipline

4.10 Confirmed bullying behaviour will be addressed in accordance with the College Discipline Policy. Consequences for bullying will progressively increase in severity if the behaviour persists, particularly where the same individual or group repeats the same or similar behaviour against the same victim or cohort.

Consequences for ongoing bullying

4.11 Continued and persistent bullying behaviours may lead to severe disciplinary outcomes, including potential exit from the College, as outlined within the College Discipline Policy.

5   Variation

5.1   The College reserves the right to vary, replace or terminate this policy from time to time.

6   Policy Administration

6.1   Definitions, Acronyms & Abbreviations

Nil

References:
Rigby, K. (2002). *New Perspectives on Bullying.* Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

[Attachments …. /over]

[This protocol is to be followed in accordance with the Student Anti-Bullying Policy.]

1   Bullying behaviour is identified, and a safe school / campus is maintained

What	Who	When
Identify a pattern of power based and repetitive events that would constitute bullying under the definitions contained within the College Anti-Bullying Policy	Head of School in consultation with a student's (reported bully or reported victim) Planning Team	Once an identified pattern of concerning behaviour has been reported to or identified by College Leadership.
Data regarding behaviour, including times, places and events is gathered to aid in the decision-making process.	Student's Caseworker	At first possible opportunity
Communication made with the reported bullying perpetrators parents or carers regarding the concerns raised within the College.	Student's Planning Team	Once an identified pattern of concerning behaviour has been reported to or identified by College Leadership.
Risk Assessment updated with a decision made regarding the continued attendance of each involved student whilst the situation is engaged with by the College	Student's Planning Team	Once an identified pattern of concerning behaviour has been reported to or identified by College Leadership.
Mitigating Controls within the risk assessment are communicated to staff and implemented throughout the school/campus	Student's Planning Team and other identified staff members	Once the Risk Assessment has been produced.

2   Bullying behaviour is investigated

What	Who	When
Victim Impact Statements gathered from bullying victim and/ or parents or carers	Head of School or their delegate	Once a safe school/campus has been maintained through the use of mitigating controls within the risk assessment
Statements gathered from the student subject to the investigation	Head of School or delegated Caseworker	Once a safe school/campus has been maintained through the use of mitigating controls within the risk assessment
All evidence is compiled and referred to the Planning Team for decision under the College's Discipline Policy	Student's Caseworker	At first possible opportunity

3   Discipline decision made and communicated

What	Who	When
Discipline decision made within the terms of reference of the College Discipline Policy using all available data	Student's Planning Team	As soon as practicably possible
Decision Communicated to Student and Staff	Head of School or delegated member of the Student's Planning Team	Once a discipline decision has been made

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