Context Statement
Saint Mark’s College is a God-centred community where the uniqueness of the individual is valued and the love of learning is fostered. The College strives to nurture the Christian values of love, hope, joy, support, forgiveness, patience, peace and justice and where prayer is an important part of our lives. It is a community in which there is opportunity to learn, grow, search and discover together as well as time and opportunity for listening.

Everyone has the right to work and learn in a safe, enjoyable environment. Bullying and/or harassment and/or discriminatory behaviours destroy this environment. Saint Mark’s College is committed to preserving the dignity of each person and providing an environment in which all students feel safe and are safe.

Description
The National Safe Schools Framework defines bullying as repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons. Cyberbullying refers to bullying through information and communication technologies, e.g. the internet or mobile devices. Conflicts or fights between equals and single incidents are not defined as bullying. Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders.

In short, bullying is a repeated pattern of harmful verbal, physical or social behaviour which involves the misuse of power. Cyberbullying is bullying through the internet or mobile devices.

Not all aggressive or harmful behaviour between people is bullying. While conflicts and aggressive behaviour need to be addressed, it is important to be clear when these behaviours are not actually bullying.

The definition of bullying has three critical aspects - a repeated pattern, the misuse of power within relationships, and behaviour which causes harm; all three aspects need to be present in order for behaviour to be called bullying.

Bullying and harassment may take a variety of forms including:

- Physical (e.g. fighting, pushing, hitting, pinching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting)
- Verbal (e.g. name calling, offensive language, teasing, sarcasm, insults, threats)
- Social (e.g. ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating, making inappropriate gestures)
- Psychological (e.g. threats of reprisal, belittling comments, spreading rumours, damaging/hiding possessions)
- Victimisation (e.g. stand-over tactics, hiding or damaging property)
- Racial (e.g. can include comments about a person’s body, cultural and family background); sexual (e.g. using rude names, sexually orientated jokes, drawings)
- Technological (e.g. using the internet, mobile phones or email).

Sexual misconduct
This may include:

- Touching or brushing against a person after being asked to stop this behaviour
- Unwelcome staring, whistling, gestures, innuendo or comments about a person’s body or sexuality
- Telling offensive jokes or showing offensive material
- Critical remark by gender
- Exclusion by gender.

Racial discrimination
This may include:
• Making degrading comments or gestures about culture, background or language
• Name calling because of race
• Telling jokes or showing offensive material
• Isolation because of race.

Libel/slander
This may include:
• Spreading rumours / information about people or their families
• Writing unpleasant notes, graffiti or cyberbullying through Facebook etc.

Cyberbullying
This may include:
• Defaming or harassing individuals through messaging, emails, posting of blogs, Wikis and/or images, defamatory comments on web-based sites
• Unauthorised use or publication of individuals and organisations
• Sending or receiving offensive text messages
• Writing offensive comments on any online community
• Establishing offensive websites about others and defaming or saying offensive things about the College
• Sharing personal information e.g. names, addresses, phone numbers on electronic technology without consent.

Harassment is defined as behaviour through which the victim feels embarrassed or afraid. It is often repeated and always unwanted and unreasonable. Bullying is defined as behaviour through which the perpetrator seeks power over another and often involves intimidation. Discrimination is defined as unjust and unequal behaviour based on race, religion, age, sexuality, disability or difference.

Rationale
We at St Mark’s College acknowledge that:
• The responsibilities of all parties to explicitly communicate through words and actions that bullying and harassment is unacceptable.
• Bullying and harassment of any kind will not be tolerated.
• Bullying and harassment behaviours need to be addressed and resolved in a manner respectful of the dignity of those involved and restores justice.
• All staff are obliged by law to report suspected physical, sexual or emotional abuse of children and young people under 18 years of age.

Purpose
In implementing this policy, St Mark’s College aims to:
• Explicitly communicate through words and actions that bullying, harassment and discrimination is unacceptable.
• Familiarise all members of the College community with the procedures to be followed in cases of bullying and harassment.
• Promote community building and the anti-bullying/anti-harassment expectations of the College.
• Use procedures and practices which will support the victim and assist the bully to change their behaviour.
• Use procedures and practices to empower by-standers.
• Provide programs to build resilience and self-esteem of students.
• Provide professional development activities to build the capacity of staff to teach programs which build student resilience and self-esteem.

Guidelines
St Mark’s College will:
• Provide all students with written information detailing what bullying and harassment is and the procedures to be followed when someone is bullied or harassed.
• Provide resources to support class activities to deal with bullying/harassment issues.
• Record and file instances and investigations of bullying and harassment in student files and in Academy.

The Principal/Deputy Principal will:
• Ensure a safe learning environment is provided.
• Provide resources and training for students and staff in relation to maintaining a safe school environment.
• Support the anti-bullying/harassment procedures.
• Ensure investigation, counselling, mediation and reconciliation processes are in place.
• Ensure documentation of instances and investigations of bullying and harassment are kept and confidentiality is maintained, as required.

The Staff will:
• Model respectful behaviours and inclusive social interaction.
• Actively work to ensure a safe and respectful learning environment is maintained.
• Encourage students to contribute to a safe College environment and follow the anti-bullying/harassment procedures.
• Follow the anti-bullying/harassment procedures if bullying and harassment behaviour occurs.
• Provide clear guidelines for acceptable behaviour.
• Explicitly teach young people about the impact of bullying and strategies for countering bullying.
• Use positive reinforcement when responsible behaviours are chosen.
• Consistently implement the Development of Personal Responsibility and Anti-Bullying/Harassment policies.
• Work in a manner which encourages reconciliation and ensures the dignity of each individual is preserved.
• Implement strategies to support all students (including the person being bullied, those bullying and any bystanders).
• Communicate and document clearly and promptly with relevant staff members and families when bullying and harassment issues arise.

The Students will:
• Acknowledge and respect each others’ individual differences.
• Accept responsibility for his/her own choices of behaviour.
• Report incidents of bullying (either as a bystander or a person who is bullied).
• Explicitly communicate through words and actions that bullying is unacceptable.
• Practise strategies that build resilience.

The Parents/Caregivers will:
• Model respectful behaviours.
• Have access to and support the College’s policy and procedures regarding anti-bullying/harassment.
• Work with their child’s teacher and/or coordinator if the child is involved in any way in a bullying incident.
• Encourage their child to report any incidents of bullying/harassment so the problem can be resolved in a timely way.
• Bring to the College’s attention any incident of bullying or harassment involving their child.
• Work in a way which encourages reconciliation and ensures the dignity of each individual is preserved.

Basis of Discretion
The Principal has the final decision on any interpretation of this policy.

Resources
www.bullyingnoway.gov.au
Reducing Bullying in Schools – A Professional Development Resource, Department of Children’s Services

Supporting Documents
• SACCS Development of Personal Responsibility Policy 2004
APPROVAL OF ANTI-BULLYING & HARASSMENT POLICY

PRINCIPAL

COLLEGE BOARD CHAIR

Date:

Review Date: June 2017