Macquarie College

Antibullying Policy

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Date reviewed	June, 2026
Monitored by	Executive/Principal
Review by	Assistant Head of Senior and Junior School: Mr Nate Miller and Linda Breese

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1. Rationale

Macquarie College is committed to providing a safe, inclusive, respectful, and Christ-centred learning environment in which every student is known, valued, and protected from harm. Bullying undermines student wellbeing, safety, belonging, and learning, and is inconsistent with the College's Christian values and behavioural expectations.

The College rejects all forms of bullying, including cyberbullying, and is committed to a whole-school, evidence-informed, and multi-tiered approach to prevention, identification, response, and ongoing support. This policy reflects the NSW Anti-Bullying Framework and aligns with the College's Student Management Guidelines, wellbeing practices, and restorative approach to behaviour support.

Macquarie College recognises that effective anti-bullying practice is not limited to responding to incidents after they occur. It requires proactive teaching, strong relationships, clear reporting pathways, timely intervention, family partnership, accurate record keeping, and regular review of school data and practice.

This policy aims to:

- prevent bullying through a positive and inclusive school culture
- provide clear definitions and expectations
- ensure bullying is reported, recorded, and responded to promptly
- support students affected by bullying and students displaying bullying behaviour
- promote accountability, restoration, and behaviour change
- strengthen partnerships between school, families, and community supports.

2. Purpose and Scope

This policy applies to all students (K-12) enrolled at Macquarie College and covers bullying behaviour:

- at school
- during school-related activities
- during travel to and from school where it impacts the school community
- online or through digital platforms where the behaviour affects a student's safety, wellbeing, or participation in school
- outside school where the conduct has a clear and significant connection to the College or brings the College community into harm or disrepute.

This policy applies alongside the College's behaviour management, wellbeing, child safety, ICT, and pastoral care processes.

3. Definition of Bullying

Bullying is the ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in a relationship through repeated verbal, physical, social and/or digital behaviour that intends to cause, or could reasonably be expected to cause physical, social, or psychological harm.

Bullying may:

- be overt or covert
- occur in person or online
- involve an individual or a group
- exploit an actual or perceived power imbalance
- be repeated, or have the potential to be repeated over time, including through the sharing of digital content.

Bullying includes, but is not limited to:

- verbal abuse, threats, name-calling, humiliation, or intimidation
- physical aggression, coercion, or damaging possessions
- social exclusion, gossip, rumour-spreading, or public embarrassment
- cyberbullying through messages, posts, images, videos, fake accounts, or online harassment
- harassment targeting personal characteristics, including disability, race, ethnicity, religion, sex, gender, or sexual orientation.

Behaviours that are not bullying

The following are not automatically defined as bullying, though they may still require intervention and resolution:

- mutual conflict or disagreement between equals
- a single act of meanness or spite

- one-off social rejection
- isolated aggression or intimidation
- fights between students of equal power.

Macquarie College recognises that even where behaviour does not meet the definition of bullying, it may still breach College expectations and require restorative and disciplinary action.

4. Guiding Principles

Macquarie College's anti-bullying approach is guided by the following principles:

- **Christ-centred practice**: Every student is created in God's image and worthy of dignity, compassion, accountability, and restoration.
- **Student safety and wellbeing**: The safety and wellbeing of students is the primary consideration in all prevention and response processes.
- **Whole-school approach**: Bullying prevention and response is the responsibility of all staff and is embedded across school culture, teaching, wellbeing, and leadership.
- **Evidence-informed and multi-tiered support**: The College uses proactive, targeted, and intensive supports matched to student need.
- **Procedural fairness**: Students and families will be treated fairly, respectfully, and transparently.
- **Timely and coordinated response**: Reports of bullying will be acted on promptly, with appropriate triage, follow-up, and communication.
- **Restorative practice**: The College seeks to repair harm, rebuild trust, restore relationships where appropriate, and promote behaviour change.
- **Partnership with families**: Families are vital partners in both prevention and response.
- **Inclusion**: Responses will consider developmental stage, disability, trauma, culture, and other individual needs.

5. Whole-School Prevention

Macquarie College will implement a proactive and prevention-focused anti-bullying approach that promotes safety, belonging, inclusion, and respectful relationships.

5.1 Positive and inclusive school culture

The College will:

- promote a culture of kindness, dignity, responsibility, and respect
- maintain clear behaviour expectations across classrooms, playgrounds, co-curricular settings, and online conduct
- actively discourage discrimination, harassment, exclusion, and intimidation
- foster an environment in which students feel safe to speak up and seek help.

5.2 Teaching social and emotional skills

The College will explicitly teach and reinforce:

- self-awareness
- self-management
- social awareness
- relationship skills
- responsible decision-making
- help-seeking and bystander action
- respectful online behaviour and eSafety.

This may occur through wellbeing programs, PDHPE classes, pastoral care, assemblies and chapels, classroom and homeroom instruction, focus weeks, and targeted interventions.

5.3 Staff visibility and positive relationships

Staff will:

- build positive, respectful relationships with students
- supervise actively in classrooms and playgrounds
- identify early signs of conflict, distress, exclusion, or repeated peer issues
- intervene early to reduce escalation and prevent harm.

5.4 Student voice and participation

Students will be encouraged to contribute to a safe school culture by:

- reporting concerns
- participating in wellbeing and anti-bullying initiatives
- acting as respectful bystanders
- contributing feedback on student wellbeing and school safety where appropriate.

5.5 Professional learning

Macquarie College will provide professional learning and guidance for staff to strengthen their ability to:

- identify bullying, including covert and online forms
- respond in trauma-informed, culturally aware, and empathetic ways
- apply restorative and disciplinary processes consistently
- document incidents accurately
- engage effectively with students and families.

6. Reporting Bullying

Macquarie College promotes a culture in which students, staff, and families are encouraged to report bullying concerns early.

6.1 How students can report bullying

Students may report bullying to:

- a Classroom/Homeroom Teacher
- House Leader
- Stage Coordinator or Head of Department
- Assistant Head of School (Wellbeing)
- School Counsellor, Chaplain or Wellbeing staff
- another trusted staff member
- by email or other approved school reporting pathway.

6.2 How parents and carers can report bullying

Parents and carers may report concerns by contacting the student's:

- Homeroom/Classroom Teacher
- House Leader or Stage Coordinator
- Assistant Head of School (Wellbeing)
- relevant school office or leadership contact.

6.3 Staff responsibilities for reports

Any staff member who becomes aware of bullying or suspected bullying must:

- take the concern seriously
- act promptly to ensure immediate safety
- pass the matter to the appropriate leader for triage
- ensure accurate documentation is entered into SEQTA
- maintain appropriate confidentiality and restricted access where required.

REPORTING BULLYING

Working together to keep our school *safe, respectful* and *supportive.*

6.1 HOW STUDENTS CAN REPORT BULLYING



Students may report bullying to:

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- House Leader
- Stage Coordinator
- Head of Department
- Assistant Head of School (Wellbeing)
- School Counsellor or Wellbeing staff
- another trusted staff member
- by email or other approved school reporting pathway.

6.2 HOW PARENTS AND CARERS CAN REPORT BULLYING



Parents and carers may report concerns by contacting the student's:

- Homeroom Teacher
- House Leader or Stage Coordinator
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- relevant school office or leadership contact.

6.3 STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES FOR REPORTS



Any staff member who becomes aware of bullying or suspected bullying must:

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- act promptly to ensure immediate safety
- pass the matter to the appropriate leader for triage
- ensure accurate documentation is entered into SEQTA
- maintain appropriate confidentiality and restricted access where required.

SPEAK UP. WE LISTEN. WE SUPPORT. | *Together, we build a culture of respect and care.*

7. Responding to Bullying

All bullying concerns will be responded to in a timely, coordinated, fair, and proportionate manner. Macquarie College will make reasonable efforts to begin support and response promptly, typically within **1-2 school days** of becoming aware of the matter.

7.1 Initial response

When a bullying concern is raised, the College will:

1. assess immediate safety and wellbeing needs
2. separate students where necessary/possible
3. gather initial information
4. notify the relevant House Leader, Stage Coordinator, and/or Assistant Head of School
5. record the matter in SEQTA as a restricted welfare or behaviour note as appropriate, as well as our AntiBullying register
6. determine the level of response required.

7.2 Triage and investigation

The College will use a structured triage approach to determine:

- whether the behaviour meets the definition of bullying
- the seriousness, frequency, and context of the behaviour
- any power imbalance
- whether there are immediate safety concerns
- what support is required for the students involved
- whether related concerns exist, such as attendance, wellbeing, learning, safeguarding, or online safety issues.

Investigation may include:

- speaking with the student who reported the behaviour
- speaking with the student alleged to have engaged in bullying
- interviewing witnesses
- reviewing digital evidence, where relevant
- consulting staff records and prior incident history
- communicating with parents or carers.

7.3 Possible responses

Responses will depend on the severity, frequency, and impact of the behaviour and may include one or more of the following:

- restorative conversations
- mediation where appropriate and safe
- reflective tasks

- student conference
- parent/carer meeting
- counselling or wellbeing support
- behaviour support plan
- Check-In Check-Out (CICO) monitoring
- restorative detention
- restricted access to certain spaces or activities
- educational consequences relating to online conduct
- formal caution
- referral to the Student Management Committee
- internal suspension
- external suspension
- police consultation or external agency referral where required
- expulsion in the most serious circumstances.

7.4 Bullying as a Tier 2 or Tier 3 matter

Under the College's behaviour framework:

- **initial bullying concerns** may be managed as **Tier 2**, particularly where early intervention is appropriate
- **serious, repeated, harmful, or complex bullying**, including significant cyberbullying, harassment, intimidation, or targeted behaviour, will be escalated as **Tier 3**
- repeated bullying may trigger referral to the **Student Management Committee**.



8. Support for Students Involved

Macquarie College recognises that all students involved in bullying incidents require support, though the nature of that support may differ.

8.1 Support for students who experience bullying

Support may include:

- immediate safety planning
- pastoral care and wellbeing check-ins
- counselling support
- classroom or timetable adjustments where appropriate
- supervised transitions or playground supports
- parent/carer communication
- ongoing monitoring to ensure the bullying stops and the student feels safe.

8.2 Support for students who engage in bullying behaviour

Support and intervention may include:

- restorative conversations focused on accountability and impact
- behaviour education and goal setting
- counselling, mentoring, or wellbeing referral
- Check-In Check-Out monitoring
- behaviour contracts
- parent partnership
- targeted support to address underlying needs, motivations, or contributing factors.

8.3 Support for bystanders and peer groups

Where appropriate, the College may also provide support or education for:

- bystanders who witnessed bullying
- friendship groups affected by the incident
- classes or cohorts where wider culture or relational issues are present.

9. Recording, Monitoring and Review

Macquarie College will maintain clear and accurate documentation of bullying concerns and responses.

9.1 Recording requirements

All reports, investigations, actions, communications, and follow-up steps may be recorded in **SEQTA** by the Assistant Head of School (Wellbeing) under our AntiBullying Register, with restricted access where appropriate.

Documentation may include:

- who was involved
- what was alleged or observed
- when and where the incident occurred
- action taken
- communication with families
- supports implemented

- follow-up and outcome.

9.2 Monitoring and follow-up

The College will monitor students involved in bullying incidents to ensure:

- the behaviour has stopped
- students feel safe and supported
- agreed actions are being implemented
- patterns are identified early
- further intervention occurs if needed.

9.3 Review of data and practice

The College will regularly review:

- bullying incident data
- patterns by year level, setting, type, or recurrence
- response timeliness
- effectiveness of interventions
- student wellbeing and safety trends
- alignment between this policy and related school procedures.

This review will inform continuous improvement in prevention, reporting, staff training, and response systems.

10. Partnerships with Families and Community

Macquarie College values active partnership with families and relevant community agencies in preventing and responding to bullying.

The College will:

- communicate clearly with families about concerns and responses
- engage parents and carers respectfully and promptly
- work with families to tailor support for individual students
- seek external support where student needs exceed what can reasonably be provided at school
- maintain links with relevant services and agencies, including eSafety-related supports where appropriate.

Macquarie College is accredited as an eSmart school and maintains its association with the eSafety Commissioner to strengthen online safety education and response.

11. Procedural Fairness

Macquarie College will ensure procedural fairness in all bullying matters. This includes the right of students and families to:

- know the substance of the concern or allegation
- understand the process being followed
- respond to the allegation
- have relevant information considered before a decision is made
- expect impartial and unbiased decision-making
- be informed of outcomes and next steps, within appropriate privacy limits
- request a review where a serious disciplinary decision has been made under relevant College procedures.

Responses to bullying must also take account of student age, disability, trauma history, cultural context, and individual needs.

12. Related Policies and Documents

This policy should be read alongside:

- Macquarie College Student Management Guidelines
- Child Safety and Safeguarding policies
- ICT Acceptable Use / Digital Devices policies
- Suspension, exclusion, and expulsion procedures
- Complaints and grievance processes
- Adventist Schools NSW behaviour policies and guidance
- NSW Anti-Bullying Framework.

13. Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed as part of the College's two-year review cycle, or earlier if required by legislative, regulatory, or sector changes.

Evaluation will consider:

- incident and wellbeing data
- staff, student, and family feedback
- effectiveness of reporting and response pathways
- consistency with the NSW Anti-Bullying Framework
- alignment with the College's behaviour and wellbeing systems.

Adopted by: Macquarie College
Date adopted: June 2026