



Sunbury College Bullying/Harassment Policy

Strategies for Parents and Guardians to deal with Bullying

Sunbury College, in upholding its values of respect, fairness, support and compassion, offers the following information to parents/guardians of our students.

Discovering that your child is being bullied or that your child is bullying others is very stressful and upsetting. Most parents initially experience anger, confusion and guilt. Research indicates that parents overwhelmingly want their child to be safe at school as their first priority.

Sunbury College provides a safe school environment which supports parents in achieving this priority.

How do I know if my child is being bullied?

Some of the signs that a child is being bullied may include:

- ◆ An unwillingness or refusal to go to school
- ◆ Feeling ill in the mornings
- ◆ Wagging school
- ◆ Doing poorly in their school work
- ◆ Becoming withdrawn, starting to stammer, lacking confidence
- ◆ Crying themselves to sleep, having nightmares
- ◆ Asking for money or starting to steal (to pay the bully)
- ◆ Refusing to talk about what's wrong
- ◆ Having unexplained bruises, cuts, scratches
- ◆ Beginning to bully other children, siblings
- ◆ Becoming aggressive and unreasonable

What can I do if my child is being bullied?

Step 1: Listen carefully to your child and show concern and support.

Step 2: Give sensible advice – while encouraging your child to be assertive with a bully would be appropriate, encouraging them to be aggressive will make the situation worse.

Step 3: Assist your child to develop positive strategies including:

- ◆ Saying “Leave me alone” and calmly walking away
- ◆ Avoiding situations that might expose them to further bullying
- ◆ Making new friends

Step 4: Ask your child the following questions to understand if there is a repeated pattern:

- ◆ What happened and where and when did the incident happen?
- ◆ Who was involved on each occasion?
- ◆ Did anybody else see it and, if so, who?
- ◆ What solutions have been tried so far?
- ◆ The names of any teachers who are aware of the problem.

Step 5: Sunbury College recommends parents and guardians speak to a staff member after becoming aware of a bullying incident. The College takes its responsibilities in relation to bullying behaviour very seriously.

Remember, if you were not aware that your child was being bullied then perhaps your child’s teacher(s) did not know about it either.

What should I NOT do if my child is being bullied?

- ◆ Do not directly approach any other student who you believe may have been involved in bullying your child.
- ◆ Do not try to sort the issues out with their parents. This usually doesn’t work and makes the situation much worse.

What if my child is bullying others?

- ◆ Respond calmly and non-defensively, and commit to working with the College to manage the problem in a helpful way.
- ◆ See the situation as an opportunity for your child to learn important developmental lessons.

What should I NOT do if my child is bullying others?

- ◆ Do not directly approach the bullied student or their family or try to get others to take your child’s side.

We suggest you make a phone call to either the form teacher or Sub-School Manager to discuss your concerns.

The College will need time to investigate the situation and to talk to teachers and, perhaps, other students before taking appropriate action. Your contact staff member will advise you of the plan for dealing with the current situation and any future bullying incidents.

Resolution of a bullying problem has a greater chance of succeeding when parents and staff work together. Staff may include Principal Class, Student Wellbeing Team, Chaplain, Sub-School Leaders and Classroom Teachers.

How do I find extra help?

Kid's help line

Phone: 1800 551 800

Visit the following websites:

Sunbury College

www.sunburysc.vic.edu.au

Bully No Way

www.bullyingnoway.com.au

Reach

[Www.reach.org.au](http://www.reach.org.au)