



PARENTS – YOU CAN HELP!

As parents you are the most influential models for your son.

Show interest

- in what your son does at school
- in your son's social, sporting and cultural life.

Build a welcoming and tolerant home environment

- encourage your son to bring friends home
- accept and tolerate differences in others
- don't permit bullying within the home.

Encourage your son's self-esteem

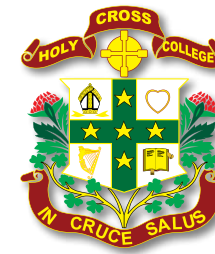
- value your son for who he is
- be positive in the things you say and do
- nurture your son's positive qualities.

Discuss social, community and relationship issues openly

- discuss the College's expectations about behaviour
- discuss how your son could best respond if bullied
- discuss what your son could do if he witnessed bullying

Be observant. Look out for tell-tale signs such as:

- unwillingness to attend school
- declining academic performance
- loss of self-confidence
- loss of interest in social events.
- Your son may be reluctant to talk over such matters with parents because he fears that decisions will be taken out of his hands. It is important to create trust by respecting your son's right to judge what action to take.



Holy Cross

College, Ryde

Positive relationships and a sense of welcome are a cornerstone of our Patrician heritage and mission at Holy Cross College.

We recognise the development of meaningful relationships with God and with all God's people as central to the growth of the whole person. Our Patrician heritage compels us to see the face of Christ in others and it is within this belief that we build our relationships.



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Because our College is founded in the tradition of the Patrician Brothers, every member of the College community has a right to feel protected, nurtured and valued. The basis of the Patrician charism is hospitality, and so therefore each member of the College community has the responsibility of ensuring that this tradition is honoured.

It is through this understanding of an inclusive environment that the core values of Holy Cross College were established. One of these values is 'Looking after each other'. This seeks to reinforce the values of care and consideration for others, respect for each individual, and witness to these Christian values, not only within the College community, but also in the broader community.

The Holy Cross College community therefore believes that any form of conflict or bullying is unacceptable. Engaging in conflict with another member of the community or bullying is a breach of the student code of rights and responsibilities.

WHAT IS CONFLICT?

Conflict is a disagreement between two or more parties. Conflict involves all parties involved behaving unacceptably towards each other through verbal, physical or cyber interactions.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is a pattern of repeated physical, verbal, psychological or social aggression that is directed towards a specific student by someone with more power and is intended to cause harm, distress and/or create fear. Bullying may be carried out overtly (eg face-to-face) or covertly (through repeated social exclusion or via technology). It is a sub-category of aggression and is different from, but also related to, harassment and violence. It is not the same as conflict or social dislike even though, in some cases, the outcome of both can be bullying. [The National Safe Schools Framework]

BULLYING AND CONFLICT: A SERIOUS ISSUE

Conflicts are not "OK". Bullying is not "OK". Do not tolerate – it is too important to ignore. A tradition of silence is a barrier to be broken down. As a student of Holy Cross College it is not only your right, but also your responsibility to report it, whether it happens to you or to someone else. **TALK TO SOMEONE.**

Conflict and bullying take many forms and can include:

- picking on others
- making hurtful and racist comments
- any form of physical violence such as hitting, pushing or spitting
- making suggestive comments or other forms of sexual abuse
- forcing others to act against their will
- verbal threats of aggression against property or possessions
- using put-downs; belittling others' abilities and achievements
- using offensive names; teasing or spreading rumours about others or their families
- acts of vandalism
- via a cyber environment
- exclusion or alienation
- covert or indirect aggression and/or harassment which may not be apparent to others, conducted out of sight, and often

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO ADDRESS CONFLICTS BETWEEN STUDENTS?

Conflicts between human beings are normal; not everyone is expected to get along all the time. It is important, though, that issues are addressed and relationships given the chance to rebuild after a conflict occurs. Ignoring the underpinning reasons for conflicts can lead to further issues developing and often to feelings of isolation or resentment.

WHO ARE THE BULLIES?

Anyone can be a bully – all of us. We all have the capacity and, occasionally, the inclination to be hurtful.

WHY BULLYING IS NOT TOLERATED AT HOLY CROSS COLLEGE

As a caring Christian community, the College:

- expects a high standard of behaviour at all times
- is committed to striving to provide a safe and caring environment for everyone where the right of every person to be free from all forms of bullying is observed
- encourages and positively reinforces behaviour which is courteous and considerate
- has a policy for detecting, preventing and dealing with bullying
- is educating its students about issues related to bullying behaviour
- offers support to all students through our pastoral care system and the pastoral care role of all teachers.

WHAT CAN YOU DO IF YOU ARE A WITNESS TO BULLYING?

There is a risk that you can become a victim, or be labelled a 'dobber'; but we need to work together if we are to be effective.

- we hope that you care enough to want to do something
 - if possible, you could intervene as the bullying occurs by simply saying "cut it out", "leave him alone", "quit it". This is very useful if you have influence with the bully: eg, are older, a friend, a College prefect, or team captain
 - if you cannot act immediately, it is helpful to report the incident to someone you trust as soon as you can. You may need to establish that you want privacy and confidentiality. Alternatively you may wish to make an anonymous report that will advise of a trouble spot, a bully or a victim
 - offer support and friendship to the victim.
- Encourage the victim to get help through staff, family or a prefect.

WHAT CAN YOU DO IF YOU ARE BULLIED?

As the victim, you are the one who should take action most strongly.

- Laugh it off, use humour
- DO NOT retaliate by becoming a physical or verbal bully yourself and by engaging in conflict with the person
- tell the bully to "quit it" or "get lost" or "cut it out"
- don't be afraid to talk about it with your friends or family
- leave the area and go directly to a responsible adult
- talk to your Homeroom Teacher
- talk to some of the other students at school – your Year Captain, House Captain or Class Counsellor. They may help you decide how to handle the situation
- establish a friendship network
- be smart about avoiding high-risk places and times.

There are many adults at school who want to help you too. You could talk to your Homeroom teacher, subject teachers, your Year Co-ordinator or the College Counsellor. They can help you decide how to handle the situation and they can take action.

*Remember, we are on your side.
We take bullying seriously
and want to stop it.*

CONSEQUENCES

There must be clear consequences for bullying. If a student is found to be bullying, he could expect some of the following responses or sanctions:

- written records being kept on the student's file
- stern warnings accompanied by a formal letter to the student and parents
- monitoring behaviour by use of the Student Levels
- a restorative process put in place
- consultation with parents
- reparations for any damage caused
- detentions and community service
- referral to the Year Co-ordinator, Assistant Principal or Principal
- counselling and behaviour modification programs
- exclusion from privileges including, but not exclusive to, representing the College in sports
- suspension from school, resuming only on the condition that a formal contract is signed undertaking to cease all bullying behaviour
- expulsion.

Those who bully or harass others are themselves in need of help. This could be by way of assistance with behaviour modification strategies, counselling and the setting of very clear boundaries.

