CYBER BULLYING POLICY

A GUIDE FOR PARENTS

(to be read in conjunction with the school’s Policy for the Prevention of Bullying and Teasing and Information About Bullying and Resilience)

WHAT IS CYBER BULLYING?

Cyber bullying includes but is not limited to the following misuses of technology: harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening or terrorising another student by way of any technological tool.

This includes sending or posting inappropriate or derogatory email messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images or website postings, including Facebook, Tumblr, Instagram and blogs), which have the effect of

- Physically, emotionally or mentally harming a student
- Causing a student to fear physical, emotional or mental harm
- Causing a student to fear damage to or loss of personal property
- Creating an intimidating or hostile environment that significantly interferes with a student’s educational opportunities.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL DO TO PREVENT CYBER BULLYING?

- Students are made aware of the dangers of the Internet and issues like Cyber Bullying through their Information Technology classes in Years 7, 8, 9 and 10.
- Students are required to sign an Acceptable Use Policy for the Audrey Jackson Learning Technologies Centre and for the Internet. (Parents receive copies of these.)
- Boarders have policies for the use of computers and mobile phones in the boarding house. (Parents receive copies of these.)
- Students attend performances such as “Cyberbusters”.
- There is strict enforcement of the school’s policy regarding student use of mobile phones.
- Regular advice to parents, through the school newsletter or at parent meetings, regarding the monitoring of their daughters’ use of technology at home.
- Students and parents attend presentations by guest speakers, such as Susan McLean, who raise awareness of the dangers of the Internet and the ways young people can misuse it.

Incidents of Bullying can be reported online: http://www.stmarys.wa.edu.au
HOW DOES THE SCHOOL RESPOND TO INSTANCES OF CYBER BULLYING?

Bullying in any form needs to be dealt with according to the individual issues that arise. Incidents of bullying might be brought to our attention by parents, staff, students or bystanders. The Dean of Students is normally the recipient of this information and confers with the counsellors to work out the best strategy to address that particular incident. The consultation process is usually handled by the counselling staff and can include:

Responses to the “victim(s)"
- talking with the student(s) experiencing the bullying
- talking with parents, staff or friends of the student(s)
- counseling and giving the student(s) strategies to effectively manage the bullying

Responses to the perpetrator(s)
- talking with the individual or group doing the bullying and directing them into a more positive and caring way of behaving
- talking to parents regarding their daughter’s bullying behaviour
- implementing appropriate consequences from a range of sanctions
- alerting staff to the negative patterns of behaviour for purposes of monitoring, preventing further occurrences and promoting positive patterns amongst the students concerned
- supporting the student over a period of time to ensure that the bullying has stopped

There is a range of sanctions for students who are bullies. The issue is taken seriously in the school and in the community and continuing perpetration could result in a student being expelled.

WHAT CAN PARENTS DO?
1. Learn about and understand how the new technologies work.
2. Talk to your child and find out what technologies she is using and what she does on them.
3. Develop a relationship with your child so that she will be comfortable and confident to come to you if she is being bullied, or someone she knows is being bullied.
4. Watch out for signs such as suddenly not going online as much as before, or conversely, going online more frequently, or unwillingness to go to school.
5. Contact the school to talk about the issue, even if the bully (bullies) are from a different school.
6. Report online harassment or threats to the police or internet service provider (ISP).
7. If the bullying is occurring through mobile phone, contact police or the phone service provider. You may also want to change your child’s telephone number and try to have her understand that she shouldn’t widely give out her number.
8. Teach your child to behave in a moral and ethical way when using the technologies. She shouldn’t post or message anything that she wouldn’t want you, or her teachers or the whole world to see.
WHAT IS CYBER BULLYING?
Cyber bullying involves the misuse of technology (computer, iPAD, mobile phone) to harass, tease, intimidate, threaten or terrorise another student.

This includes sending or posting inappropriate or derogatory email messages, instant messages, text messages, digital pictures or images or website postings, including Facebook, Tumblr, Instagram and blogs), which

- Physically, emotionally or mentally harm a student.
- Cause a student to fear physical, emotional or mental harm.
- Cause a student to fear damage to or loss of personal property.
- Cause a student to be afraid to come to school.

The school does not tolerate bullying in any form.

WHAT CAN STUDENTS DO?

Watch your own online behaviour.

- Never post or message anything that you would feel ashamed of or embarrassed by if your parents, your grandparents or one of your teachers should see it.
- Remember that once you have sent it, it is almost impossible to get it back.
- Remember that once you have sent it, you have lost control of that material. You don’t know who might forward your message to others.

What should you do if you are being bullied in cyber space?

- Respond and tell the bully to stop. State clearly that the behaviour is not right, and that you find it offensive.
- Make no further responses from this point.
- Keep copies of any offensive messages or images.
- Tell your parents.
- Report it to your Link Teacher, another teacher, the Dean of Students, the Chaplain or one of the school counsellors.
- Do not be afraid that reporting it will only make the bullying worse. It won’t get better if you don’t do something about it.
- Report it online: http://www.stmarys.wa.edu.au/report-bullying

What should you do if you know someone else is being bullied?

- Care enough to do something about it, even if it does not affect you personally.
- Tell someone – your Link Teacher, another teacher, the Dean of Students, the Chaplain or one of the school counsellors.
- Report it online: http://www.stmarys.wa.edu.au/report-bullying