

Student Bullying and Harassment Prevention Policy

School Context

Doxa School Bendigo is a Child Safe community committed to providing an environment that is true to the values of our schoolwide expectations: being **Safe, Kind** and **Curious**. We promote care for all individuals in the school community and this is reflected in our support of students to learn to understand and regulate their own behaviour.

All of Doxa School's policy and procedural documentation is underpinned by our **5 key Pillars of the Doxa School Model: Student-Centred Approach, Trauma Sensitive Practice, Social and Emotional Literacy, Choice Theory and our Catholic Identity** and complies with the requirements of Catholic Education Sandhurst Ltd. This Policy can be found on our school website www.doxabendigo.catholic.edu.au and applies to all community members of Doxa School Bendigo.

These pillars inform the **Basic Beliefs** we have regarding this Bullying & Harassment Policy, that:

- The dignity of the human person, who is created in the image and likeness of God, is the foundation of Catholic Social Teaching
- Bullying or harassment in any form is unacceptable behaviour at Doxa School
- It is our duty to provide a safe, supportive and secure environment that promotes respect and care and values diversity
- We have a moral and professional obligation to protect all members of our school community from Bullying and Harassment
- Bullying and Harassment is best managed through a 'whole-of-community' approach that involves students, staff and parents/families
- Bullying and Harassment prevention strategies be implemented within the school on a continuous basis with a focus on teaching age-appropriate skills and strategies to empower staff, students and parents/guardians to recognise bullying and respond appropriately
- Bullying and Harassment response strategies are tailored to each circumstances/incident
- Staff must act as positive role models emphasising our anti-bullying culture
- Bullying and Harassment school strategies must be reviewed regularly against best practice
- Inclusivity reflects a culture of hope, faith and belonging for staff, students and their families

- Effective record-keeping is a crucial component of our response to the issue of bullying and assists in forming a clear understanding of the issue and the plans developed to address it
- It is sometimes necessary to collaborate with outside agencies on matters concerning bullying and we commit to do so where necessary to ensure everyone's health and safety

Scope

This policy applies to all students and should be read in conjunction with other school documents (see 'Positive Behaviour Support Policy', 'Child Safety Policy' and 'Wellbeing Policy'). It is important that all staff and members of the Doxa School community have a sound knowledge of this policy.

This Student Bullying and Harassment Prevention Policy applies to the behaviour of students either as individuals or collectively, during school hours or at school events. When Doxa School becomes aware of out-of-school hours bullying that has the potential to impact members of the school community, we will assist those involved to resolve the issue in the most suitable way. At times this may involve discussing the matter with students, parents/carers/families, other agencies or the police, to ensure that there is safety for everyone involved.

This policy also relates to Doxa School's complaints process (see '**Complaints Management Policy**' and '**Procedures for Making a Complaint**') but specifically refers to Bullying or Harassment and can include situations that are:

- Student-to-student
- Student-to-staff member
- Staff member-to-student

Definitions

Bullying is defined as an ongoing misuse of power in social relationships (by an individual or group) involving repeated verbal, physical, or social behaviour that causes harm towards one or more people. Conflict between equals and single incidents are generally not defined as bullying.

Bullying can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert) and can happen in person or online (cyberbullying). It can have long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders.

Cyber-bullying is bullying, which is enabled, enhanced or transmitted through digital technologies. It may include:

- sending abusive texts or emails
- posting negative, inappropriate or private messages or images on social networking sites

- assuming the identity of a target and representing them in a way that causes harm or distress

Cyber-bullying can have significant implications due to the ability of digital information to be:

- rapidly duplicated, distributed, and accessed
- stored in multiple locations (with varying levels of ‘discoverability’)
- created and communicated automatically
- permanent in effect (eg. photos posted on the internet)

Harassment is behaviour that targets an individual or group due to their identity, race, culture or ethnic origin, religion, physical characteristics, gender, sexual orientation, ability or disability.

Key School Practices

Bullying or Harassment Prevention Measures

Doxa School Bendigo places a strong emphasis on the education of staff, students and broader school community about respectful relationships and the issues associated with bullying. Students are regularly reminded of the school’s anti-bullying stance and the procedures to follow should anyone believe that they have been targeted in any way.

Formal education support regarding bullying and harassment occurs within a range of Social and Emotional Learning Support (SELS) practices run by Doxa School. These include our school-wide behavioural expectations, as part of curriculum-based Personal Development class sessions, targeted small group sessions, and individual support for students.

Bullying or Harassment Intervention Strategies

Doxa School Bendigo promotes a safe and supportive learning environment that aims to be bullying and harassment-free. Students are regularly reminded of their rights and obligations to seek assistance from a trusted adult if they become aware of, or are involved in, a bullying or harassment incident. Doxa School will then use the procedure (outlined in **‘Procedures for Making a Complaint’** – available via the Doxa School Website) to ensure their safety and that of others.

Reported Incidents of Bullying or Harassment

Any reports of bullying or harassment must be responded to and investigated in a timely manner that respects the dignity and the privacy of those involved. Doxa School will adhere to this procedure (**‘Procedures for Making a Complaint’** – available via the Doxa School Website) to ensure due process and procedural fairness are applied to the situation for all parties involved. This procedure is consistent with the Catholic Education Sandhurst Ltd ‘Complaints Management Framework’ (available via the Doxa School Bendigo website) for managing complaints and grievances. When assessing an appropriate response to

potentially criminal acts, or alleged acts, advice from Victoria Police may be sought.

Documenting Incidents of Bullying

Doxa School Bendigo manages carefully the privacy of staff, students and community members involved in a bullying or harassment issue. As part of this process, and at a suitable time, some or all staff may be made aware of the issue to ensure that the appropriate level of support can be provided to those involved. (See Doxa School Bendigo 'Privacy Policy' for further information).

Doxa School keeps records of incidents related to bullying or harassment and the interventions/supports provided to resolve the issue. This information is stored confidentially and used only to identify individual, group or whole-of-school patterns and trends.

Further Resources:

Bullying No Way	bullyingnoway.gov.au/
Kids Helpline	kidshelpline.com.au/teens/issues/bullying
Student Wellbeing Hub	studentwellbeinghub.edu.au/
eSafety Commissioner	www.esafety.gov.au/