



POLICY TITLE: INTERNATIONAL STUDENT HARASSMENT POLICY

DEVELOPED / REVIEWED BY

Policy Committee
Director of Business Services and Advancement
Deputy Principal Wellbeing and Strategy
Head of Admissions
Risk and Compliance Manager
Human Resources Manager

REVIEW SUMMARY

Policy to be presented to the Policy Committee for the first time at the May 2024 meeting. Policy to be reviewed in the first twelve months to ensure accuracy to current legislative components.

The Dominican Ideals are a commitment to truth explored in dialogue, a vibrant preaching of the Gospel, a critical appreciation of culture and cultures, and a love of the beautiful. Our goal in each of our Educational Ministries is to foster these values, together with a spirit of prayer and contemplation, respect for the dignity and uniqueness of each individual, and the pursuit of excellence. (Dominican Education Australia)

At Siena College the dignity of the human person is the foundation of all Catholic social teaching and is intrinsic to our education ministry. Consequently, the principle that the person is made in the image and likeness of God is central to the mission of our College.

This policy identifies the interconnectedness of the characteristics of quality Catholic learning and teaching. It is intended to value, respect, and promote the self-esteem and dignity of each student, regardless of their cultural or linguistic background. The College will actively promote anti-bullying messages, alerting students and staff of the need to be vigilant.

It is essential that we create and maintain a respectful, safe and supportive learning environment that promotes student wellbeing, personal growth and positive self-esteem amongst our diverse range of learners ([eXcel: Wellbeing for learning in Catholic school communities](#)).

The prevention of and responses to incidents of bullying, inappropriate use of technology and disrespectful behaviour are more readily achieved in a caring and supportive environment that promotes positive relationships and reflects Gospel values. Bullying, cyber-bullying, harassment, aggression, and violence disregard core values of our faith, including dignity, respect, justice, equity, compassion, trust, and courage. Importantly, such actions can adversely affect the wellbeing of our students and are therefore unacceptable.

DOCUMENT DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

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This document was first developed by Director of Business Services and Advancement and the Head of Admissions in 2024.

RATIONALE

This policy:

- reflects that the College does not tolerate bullying or harassment of any form
- articulates how bullying or harassment is defined and addressed
- supports the College Mission and Vision Statement and guidelines of Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools (MACS) and Dominican Education Australia
- actively promotes anti-bullying and harassment messages, alerting students and staff of the need to be vigilant.
- is communicated to the College community via the College website and College intranet portal, Siena Central

PRINCIPLES / GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The College does not tolerate any form of bullying or harassment. This policy is grounded in the belief that:

- every person has the right to be treated respectfully and feel safe from any form of verbal, physical and emotional abuse, including those from diverse backgrounds and cultures (such as Aboriginal culture)
- the College is committed to building and nurturing a community that values diversity
- identification and reporting of bullying is essential to the effective implementation of this policy
- complainant(s) will be protected from victimisation
- learning technologies are used ethically and responsibly in the classroom environment, and in a way that minimises the opportunity for children, young people, and students to be harmed
- communication is respectful and human dignity is valued

The Policy has been written in a manner that is student-friendly to ensure it is accessible and age-appropriate.

POLICY

Your Rights and Responsibilities

We believe:

- We have the RIGHT to feel safe and comfortable at Siena College.
- We have the RESPONSIBILITY to keep ourselves and our learning environment safe.
- We have the RESPONSIBILITY to show respect for ourselves, for others and for property.

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Sienna is a College community which values:

- every person's self-worth
- friendship among all of its members
- and the dignity of each individual

Any form of harassment is against our values and in some cases, unlawful.

What is harassment?

Harassment is behaviour which is unwelcome and often repeated. It may come from an individual or a group. Harassment makes you feel uncomfortable or fearful.

IT MUST NOT BE ALLOWED TO CONTINUE.

Sometimes we may not be sure if something is harassment or not. It may not be. For instance, if we are continually doing something wrong, we may be frequently reminded about it, but this may not necessarily be harassment. If you are unsure, seek advice.

Harassment can take many forms, for example:

Sexual Harassment

- Touching or brushing against you when you've asked them to stop.
- Whistling, gesturing or making comments about your body.
- Telling offensive jokes or showing offensive reading matter.
- Making comments about your sexuality.

Racial Discrimination

- Making degrading comments or gestures about your culture or your background.
- Calling you names because of your race.
- Telling offensive jokes or showing offensive material.
- Deliberately excluding you because of your race.

Libel/Slander

- Spreading rumours about you or your family.
- Writing unpleasant notes about you.
- Writing graffiti about you or any groups to which you belong.
- This could occur online / on social media.

Bullying – in person or online

- Physical bullying - hitting, pushing, threatening.
- Hiding, damaging, destroying or stealing work or belongings.
- Verbal bullying - name calling, putting you down, teasing.
- Offensive gestures, pulling faces.

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- Subtle behaviour that targets another.

Other

- Pretending to be friendly while undermining the person.
- Isolating you, not associating with you.
- Not accepting you because you are new or different.
- Not accepting you because you are a high achiever or a low achiever.
- Talking about a person so they can hear.

Internet and Mobile Phone Harassment

- Posting information about people on the Internet.
- Sending inappropriate text messages.
- Constant and unwanted telephone calls.
- Nuisance phone calls.

You can control what happens:

- Do not retaliate to physical or verbal harassment.
- Doing something about it makes a difference.

So, what can you do?

- If you feel safe to do so, tell the person who is harassing you that you do not want them to continue.
- Report the incident to a responsible adult:
 - Talk with your homeroom teacher, Head of House or any teacher with whom you feel comfortable.
 - Talk to the International Student Coordinator or College Counsellors.
 - Talk to your parent.

Talking to your friends or an older student may help you feel better, but it is important that you also talk to a responsible adult.

If a friend talks to you, provide support by encouraging them to report the incident to a responsible adult.

All reported incidents will be dealt with.

Siena College will deal very seriously with those who retaliate against a person for reporting harassment.

Consequences of harassment may include consultation with families, detention, suspension, and even expulsion.

RESPONSIBILITY

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- Principal
- International Student Coordinator
- Deputy Principal Wellbeing and Strategy
- All College Staff
- All Students
- All Parents / Guardians / Carers

RELATED LEGISLATION

- National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018
- Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (Cth)
- Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Regulations 2001 (Cth)
- Migration Act 1958 (Cth)

RELATED POLICIES

- Anti-Bullying Policy

RISK

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In the Committee's deliberations it is important to consider the College's main strategic processes and the identification of associated risks. Some sample questions are included for referral.

Answers are to be documented as part of the policy.

1. **Faith and Catholic Identity.** Identify any risks to Catholic Identity or Dominican charism of the school. How will this policy harm or enhance either?
2. **Reputation.** Identify if there are any reputational risks to the College. How will this policy impact Siena and wider communities?
3. **Financial.** Identify any financial risks to the College. How will this policy impact the financial stability of the College?
4. **Contemporary Learning and Teaching.** Identify any risks to learning and teaching. How will this policy impact the academic performance of the College?
5. **Wellbeing.** Identify any risks to safety and wellbeing. How will this policy impact the mental and physical wellbeing of the College community?
6. **Community Engagement.** Identify any risks to building community engagement. How will this policy impact community relationships?
7. **Governance and Leadership.** Identify any risks to governance and leadership in the College. How will this policy affect the strategic direction of the College?

Do any risks identified above warrant changes to the proposed policy? If so the policy should be referred back to the developer/s.

NEXT REVIEW

May 2025

POLICY LOCATION

<https://sienacentral.siena.vic.edu.au/homepage/3452>

www.siena.vic.edu.au

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