



# Bullying Prevention Policy



## Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand this policy, please contact [info@ae.edu.au](mailto:info@ae.edu.au).

## 1.0 Purpose

AE / Stott's College is committed to providing a safe and respectful learning environment where bullying will not be tolerated.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- explain the definition of bullying so that there is shared understanding amongst all members of the Stott's College community
- make clear that no form of bullying at Stott's College will be tolerated
- outline the strategies and programs in place at Stott's College to build a positive school culture and prevent bullying
- ask that everyone in our school community be alert to signs and evidence of bullying behaviour, and understands the importance of reporting bullying behaviour to school staff
- ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are appropriately investigated and addressed
- ensure that support is provided to students who may be affected by bullying (including targets, bystanders, witnesses and students engaging in bullying behaviour)
- seek parental and peer group support in addressing and preventing bullying behaviour at Stott's College.

When responding to bullying, Stott's College aims to:

- be proportionate, consistent and responsive
- find a constructive solution for everyone
- stop the bullying from happening again
- restore the relationships between the students involved.

Stott's College acknowledges that school staff owe a duty of care to students to take reasonable steps to reduce the risk of reasonably foreseeable harm, which can include harm that may be caused by bullying behaviour.

## 2.0 Scope

This policy addresses how Stott's College aims to prevent, address and respond to student bullying behaviour. Stott's College recognises that there are many other types of inappropriate student behaviours that do not meet the definition of bullying which are also unacceptable at our school. These other inappropriate behaviours will be managed in accordance with our Student Code of Conduct and Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy and Inclusion and Diversity policy.

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions. It also applies to bullying behaviour between students that occurs outside of school hours, where the behaviour impacts on student wellbeing and safety at school.

## 3.0 Regulatory Context

### 3.1 [Child Safe Standards](#)

This policy is framed to comply with the 11 Child Safe Standards and outlines the actions that put in place to keep children and young people safe.

### 3.2 [Ministerial Order 1359](#)

The policy further aligns with the Ministerial Order 1359 that outlines how organisations should manage the risk of child abuse in schools and boarding premises.

To comply to the order the school must:

- develop and put in place risk management strategies.
- record the risks and the actions the school will take to reduce or remove them (risk controls and risk treatments)
- each year, monitor and review child safety and wellbeing risks and assess the effectiveness of risk controls.

### 3.3 [National Code of Practice for Providers of Education And Training to Overseas Students 2018](#)

This policy is compiled to align with National Code of Practice of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2018

3.5.1 Standard 5 of the National Code states all registered providers who enroll overseas students under the age of 18 must meet all obligations under Commonwealth and State child protection legislation to ensure the safety and wellbeing of younger overseas students.

## 4.0 Policy

### Bullying

In 2018 the Education Council of the Council of Australian Governments endorsed the following definition of bullying for use by all Australian schools:

*Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening.*

*Bullying can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time (for example, through sharing of digital records)*

*Bullying of any form or for any reason can have immediate, medium and long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders. Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.*

Bullying has three main features:

- It involves a misuse of power in a relationship

- It is ongoing and repeated, and
- It involves behaviours that can cause harm.

There are four main types of bullying behaviour:

- Physical – examples include hitting, pushing, shoving or intimidating or otherwise physically hurting another person, damaging or stealing their belongings. It includes threats of violence.
- Verbal/written – examples include name-calling or insulting someone about an attribute, quality or personal characteristic.
- Social (sometimes called relational or emotional bullying) – examples include deliberately excluding someone, spreading rumours, sharing information that will have a harmful effect on the other person and/or damaging a person's social reputation or social acceptance.
- Cyberbullying – any form of bullying behaviour that occurs online or via a mobile device. It can be verbal or written, and can include threats of violence as well as images, videos and/or audio.

Bullying can be a form of racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia or other type of social prejudice when the behaviour is targeted at an individual or group because of a personal characteristic, such as race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability.

For further information about bullying, refer to: [Bully Stoppers \(education.vic.gov.au\)](http://BullyStoppers.education.vic.gov.au) and the Department's [Bullying Prevention and Response](#) policy on the Policy and Advisory Library.

### **Other distressing and inappropriate behaviours**

Many distressing and inappropriate behaviours may not constitute bullying even though they are unpleasant. Students who are involved in or who witness any distressing and inappropriate behaviours should report their concerns to school staff and our school will follow our Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy and/or this Bullying Prevention Policy where the behaviour constitutes bullying.

**Mutual conflict** involves an argument or disagreement between people with no imbalance of power. In incidents of mutual conflict, generally, both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution to the issue. Unresolved mutual conflict can develop into bullying if one of the parties targets the other repeatedly in retaliation.

**Social rejection or dislike** is not bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.

**Single-episode acts** of nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. However, single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression are not acceptable behaviours at our school and may have serious consequences for students engaging in this behaviour. Stott's College will use its Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy to guide a response to single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression.

**Harassment** is language or actions that are demeaning, offensive or intimidating to a person. It can take many forms, including sexual harassment and disability harassment.

**Discrimination** is behaviour that treats someone unfavourably because of a personal characteristic (for example, race, religious belief or activity, disability, sex or intersex status, gender identity or sexual orientation).

Discrimination, harassment, and any other inappropriate behaviour is not tolerated at our school and there may be serious consequences for students engaging in this behaviour. This includes any form of racism, religious or disability discrimination, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, or any other behaviour that targets an individual or group. Further information about discrimination and harassment, including definitions, is set out in our Inclusion and Diversity Policy

## Bullying Prevention

Stott's College has a number of programs and strategies in place to build a positive and inclusive school culture and relationships to promote wellbeing. We strive to foster a school culture that prevents bullying behaviour by modelling, encouraging and teaching behaviour that demonstrates acceptance, kindness and respect.

Bullying prevention at Stott's College is proactive and is supported by research that indicates that a whole school, multifaceted approach is the most effective way to prevent and address bullying. At our school:

- We have a positive school environment that provides safety, security and support for students and promotes positive relationships and wellbeing.
- We identify and implement evidence-based programs and initiatives that are relevant to preventing and addressing bullying and help us to build a positive and inclusive school climate, such as the Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships program, eSmartSchools framework and Safe Schools practices.
- We strive to build strong partnerships between the school, families and the broader community that means all members work together to ensure the safety of students.
- We participate in the Respectful Relationships initiative, which aims to embed a culture of respect and equality across our school.
- We celebrate the diverse backgrounds of members of our school community and teach multicultural education, including Aboriginal History, to promote mutual respect and social cohesion. For example, unit 3 EAL, movie review on "Higher ground".
- We participate in the Safe Schools program to help us foster a safe environment that is supportive and inclusive of LGBTIQ+ students.
- Teachers are encouraged to incorporate classroom management strategies that discourage bullying and promote positive behaviour.
- Year level incursions and programs are planned for each year to raise awareness about bullying and its impacts.
- We promote upstander behaviour as a way of empowering our students to positively and safely take appropriate action when they see or hear of a peer being bullied.
- We seek to empower students to be confident communicators and to resolve conflict in a non-aggressive and constructive way.
- Students are encouraged to look out for each other and to talk to teachers and older peers about any bullying they have experienced or witnessed.
- A Bullying Statement is included in student orientation slides.

For further information about our engagement and wellbeing initiatives, please see our Student Wellbeing and Engagement policy.

## Incident Response

### Reporting concerns to Stott's College

Bullying is not tolerated at our school. We ensure bullying behaviour is identified and addressed with appropriate and proportionate consequences. All bullying complaints will be taken seriously and responded to sensitively.

Students who may be experiencing bullying behaviour, or students who have witnessed bullying behaviour, are encouraged to report their concerns to school staff or another trusted adult as soon as possible.

Our ability to effectively reduce and eliminate bullying behaviour is greatly affected by students and/or parents and carers reporting concerning behaviour as soon as possible, so that the responses implemented by Stott's College are timely and appropriate in the circumstances.

We encourage students to speak to the VCE Coordinator, Head of School or a member of the Wellbeing Team if they have concerns about bullying. However, students are welcome to discuss their concerns with any trusted member of staff including classroom teachers and Education Support Staff.

Parents or carers who develop concerns that their child is involved in, or has witnessed bullying behaviour at Stott's College should contact a member of the Wellbeing team by email, via: [info@ae.edu.au](mailto:info@ae.edu.au) or contact the Head of School.

## Investigations

When notified of alleged bullying behaviour, school staff are required to:

1. record the details of the allegations in the incident register and
2. inform the VCE Coordinator and/or Head of School, who will inform the Wellbeing Team and CEO as required.

The Student Wellbeing team is responsible for investigating allegations of bullying in a timely and sensitive manner. To appropriately investigate an allegation of bullying, the Student Wellbeing team may:

- speak to the those involved in the allegations, including the target/s, the students allegedly engaging in bullying behaviour/s and any witnesses to the incidents
- speak to the parent/carer(s) of the students involved
- speak to the teachers of the students involved
- take detailed notes of all discussions for future reference
- obtain written statements from all or any of the above.

All communications with the Student Wellbeing team in the course of investigating an allegation of bullying will be managed sensitively. Investigations will be completed as quickly as possible to allow for the behaviours to be addressed in a timely manner.

The objective of completing a thorough investigation into the circumstances of alleged bullying behaviour is to determine the nature of the conduct and the students involved. A thorough understanding of the alleged bullying will inform staff about how to most effectively implement an appropriate response to that behaviour.

Serious bullying, including serious cyberbullying, is a criminal offence and may be referred to Victoria Police. For more information, see: [Brodie's Law](#).

## Responses to bullying behaviours

When the Student Wellbeing team has sufficient information to understand the circumstances of the alleged bullying and the students involved, a number of strategies may be implemented to address the behaviour and support affected students in consultation with the VCE Coordinator, Head of School, teachers, and CEO where appropriate. Department of Education and Training specialist staff will be contacted for advice and support if required.

There are a number of factors that will be considered when determining the most appropriate response to the behaviour. When making a decision about how to respond to bullying behaviour, Stott's College will consider:

- the age, maturity and individual circumstances of the students involved
- the severity and frequency of the bullying, and the impact it has had on the target student
- whether the student/s engaging in bullying behaviour have displayed similar behaviour before
- whether the bullying took place in a group or one-to-one context
- whether the students engaging in bullying behaviour demonstrates insight or remorse for their



- behaviour
- the alleged motive of the behaviour.

The Wellbeing Team may implement all, or some of the following responses to bullying behaviours:

- Offer wellbeing support, including referral to internal or external support services to:
  - the target student or students
  - the students engaging in the bullying behaviour
  - affected students, including witnesses and/or friends of the target student.
- Facilitate a restorative practice meeting with all or some of the students involved. The objective of restorative practice is to repair relationships that have been damaged by bringing about a sense of remorse and restorative action on the part of the person who has bullied someone and forgiveness by the person who has been bullied.
- Facilitate a mediation between some or all of the students involved to help to encourage students to take responsibility for their behaviour and explore underlying reasons for conflict or grievance. Mediation is only suitable if all students are involved voluntarily and demonstrate a willingness to engage in the mediation process.
- Facilitate a process using the Support Group Method, involving the target student(s), the students engaging in bullying behaviour and a group of students who are likely to be supportive of the target(s).
- Implement a Method of Shared Concern process with all students involved in the bullying.
- Facilitate a Student Support Group meeting and/or Behaviour Support Plan for affected students.
- Prepare an Individual Management Plan restricting contact between target and students engaging in bullying behaviour.
- Provide discussion and/or mentoring for different social and emotional learning competencies of the students involved, including connecting affected students with an older Student Mentor, or referral to external professional services.
- Monitor the behaviour of the students involved for an appropriate time and take follow-up action if necessary.
- Implement cohort, year group, or whole school targeted strategies to reinforce positive behaviours, for example appropriate online behaviour.
- Implement proportionate disciplinary consequences for the students engaging in bullying behaviour, which may include removal of privileges, detention. The Student Learning Coordinator may also recommend that the Principal implement suspension and/or expulsion consistent with our Student Wellbeing and Engagement policy, the Ministerial Order on Suspensions and Expulsions and any other relevant Department policy.

Stott's College understands the importance of monitoring and following up on the progress of students who have been involved in or affected by bullying behaviour. Where appropriate, school staff will also endeavour to provide parents and carers with updates on the management of bullying incidents.

The Student Wellbeing Team is responsible for maintaining up to date records of the investigation of and responses to bullying behaviour.

## Communication

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways

- Available publicly on our school's website and on RTO Manager.
- Included in staff induction processes
- Discussed at staff briefings/meetings as required
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions



- Links to the online policy will be provided to students through the relevant internal communication channels, e.g., Teams
- Links to the online policy will be included in transition and enrolment packs
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

## 5.0 Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years, or earlier as required following an incident or analysis of new research or school data relating to bullying, to ensure that the policy remains up to date, practical and effective.

Data to inform this review will be collected through:

- discussion and consultation with students and parent/carers
- assessment of school-based data, including the number of reported incidents of bullying in each year group and the effectiveness of the responses implemented
- Attitudes to School Survey/Parent Opinion Survey
- Student bullying survey

Proposed amendments to this policy will be discussed with student representative(s), e.g., school captain, relevant staff and approved by the Board of Directors.

## 6.0 Roles and Responsibilities

### Board of Directors

- Ensure the school complies with Child Safe Standards, Ministerial Order 1359, and all legal obligations related to student safety and wellbeing.
- Approve the Bullying Prevention Policy and monitor implementation.
- Oversee risk management processes, including annual review of bullying-related risks and controls.
- Monitor data, trends, and reports relating to bullying, safety, and wellbeing.
- Hold senior leadership accountable for effective policy implementation and resourcing.

### Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

- Ensure the school has appropriate systems, resources, and staffing to prevent and respond to bullying.
- Ensure compliance with all regulatory requirements, including risk management and reporting obligations.
- Support the Head of School/VCE Coordinator and Wellbeing Team in implementing the policy.
- Receive and act on escalated or serious bullying incidents, including those requiring external reporting (e.g., Victoria Police).
- Ensure timely communication with the Board regarding critical incidents and risk issues.

### Head of School / VCE Coordinator

- Lead the implementation of the Bullying Prevention Policy across the school.
- Ensure all staff understand their obligations regarding duty of care and reporting.
- Receive and record bullying reports and notify the Student Wellbeing Team and CEO as required.
- Support investigations and ensure timely, proportionate responses to incidents.
- Ensure students and families are informed about how to report bullying.
- Oversee communication of the policy to students, parents, and staff.
- Monitor school culture and promote proactive bullying-prevention strategies.





## **Student Wellbeing Team**

- Lead investigations into alleged bullying in a timely, sensitive, and trauma-informed manner.
- Maintain accurate documentation of reports, investigations, and outcomes.
- Provide wellbeing support to targets, bystanders, and students engaging in bullying behaviours.
- Recommend and implement intervention strategies such as restorative practice, mediation, behaviour plans, or referrals.
- Communicate with parents/carers regarding concerns, progress, and outcomes.
- Identify trends and provide advice to leadership on school-wide prevention needs.
- Support staff to manage incidents in line with the policy and Child Safe Standards.

## **Teachers**

- Promote positive relationships, inclusion, and safe behaviour in all classrooms.
- Actively monitor student interactions and intervene early when inappropriate behaviour occurs.
- Be alert to signs of bullying and respond in accordance with duty of care.
- Report all suspected bullying to the Head of School/VCE Coordinator or Wellbeing Team.
- Support implementation of classroom-based education and programs that prevent bullying.
- Maintain a safe and respectful classroom environment.

## **Education Support Staff / Administrative Staff**

- Support a safe and respectful school environment in all non-classroom settings.
- Report any suspected bullying to teaching or wellbeing staff.
- Provide support to students who raise concerns or disclose incidents.
- Assist with documentation and communication processes as required.

## **Students**

- Treat others with kindness, inclusion, and respect.
- Report any bullying they experience or witness to a trusted staff member.
- Act as an “upstander” where safe to do so.
- Follow school rules and expectations regarding respectful behaviour.

## **Parents and Carers**

- Support the school in promoting a safe and respectful environment.
- Report concerns promptly to the school (Wellbeing Team or Head of School).
- Work collaboratively with staff to resolve issues and support positive student behaviour.
- Reinforce respectful behaviour and online safety at home.

## **IT Services**

- Support monitoring and management of online safety measures.
- Assist with implementing cyber-safety controls and reporting mechanisms.
- Provide technical support for cyberbullying investigations where required.



## 7.0 Definitions

For the purposes of this policy, readers should refer to the [Child Safe Standards – Definitions](#) provided by the Victorian Government for the definitions of terms used in relation to the Victorian Child Safe Standards and Ministerial Order 1359

## 8.0 Related Documents

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- VCE-POL-02 Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- VCE-CC-03 Child Safety Code of Conduct
- Inclusion and Diversity policy

Our school also follows Department of Education and Training policy relating to bullying including:

- [Bullying Prevention and Response](#)
- [Cybersafety and Responsible Use of Digital Technologies](#)
- [Equal Opportunity and Human Rights - Students](#)
- [LGBTIQ Student Support Policy](#)

The following websites and resources provide useful information on prevention and responding to bullying, as well as supporting students who have been the target of bullying behaviours:

- [Bully Stoppers](#)
- [Report racism or religious discrimination in schools](#)
- [Kids Helpline](#)
- [ReachOut Australia](#)
- [Lifeline](#)
- [Bullying. No way!](#)
- [Student Wellbeing Hub](#)
- [eSafety Commissioner](#)
- [Australian Student Wellbeing Framework](#)

## 9.0 Document Information

Document Name	Bullying Prevention Policy
Document Number	VCE-POL-05
Purpose	Compliance with Child Safety Standards & Ministerial Order
Audience	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Staff   <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Students   <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public
Category	Learning Environment
Subcategory	Child Safety and Wellbeing
Approval Date	18/12/2025
Effective Date	18/12/2025
Last date of endorsement	18/12/2025
Next Review Date	18/12/2027 <b>(every 2 years)</b>
Policy Advisor	Head of School, VCE Coordinator, Homestay Coordinator, Head of Quality and Risk
Approving Authority	Board of Directors



## 10.0 Change Log

Date	Version	By	Notes
01/12/2025	1.0	HQR	Stott's College has undertaken a comprehensive policy review and reset to ensure all policies and procedures are purpose-built for the school and under-18 context and aligned with applicable regulatory requirements, with existing materials consolidated, enhanced, or formalised as necessary.

