ANTI-BULLYING AND HARRASSMENT (STUDENT)

POLICY DETAIL	
Revision #	2
Effective Date	June 2023
Review Date	January 2026

CONTEXT

Thomas More College is committed to maintaining a social environment in which everyone feels welcome and safe. We are committed to taking effective action to prevent, minimise and stop incidents of bullying.

PHILOSOPHY

Thomas More College believes that:

- Everyone has the right to feel safe at school
- Bullying damages everyone in the school community in some way
- Everyone has the responsibility to avoid taking part in or supporting bullying in any way
- Everyone has the responsibility to take action to prevent or stop bullying

Bullying

Bullying is

Wanting to do harm to or harass someone, taking action to do this, unjustly using a power imbalance, on repeated occasions. Bullying can happen anywhere, anytime, especially with the use of mobile phones and computers.

Types of bullying

- Verbal: e.g. insults, name-calling, unfair criticism, spreading rumours
- Using gestures: e.g. rude signs, staring, turning away
- Physical: e.g. hitting, throwing things, interfering with belongings
- Social bullying: e.g. excluding someone, ganging up on someone
- Cyberbullying: e.g. using phones or the internet to bully

Effects of bullying

The effects of bullying can be very serious. It can have negative effects on anyone in the school, not just the person being bullied.

Why people bully

Bullying is a negative way to feel powerful by domination over someone who is in a less powerful situation. They have often learned the behaviour from adults. People who achieve sufficient power, status and recognition in positive ways do not need to bully others.

PROCEDURE

Response to Bullying Behaviour

Depending on the nature and frequency of the behaviour, responses to bullying/harassment may include counselling, formal interviews, a restorative conversation, producing a written apology, and disciplinary action including suspension and consideration of enrolment status.

Suggestions for Students and Parents of a Student Being Bullied

- Do your best not to over-react
- Seek support from a wellbeing mentor, year level leader, counsellor, member of the college executive, or any adult you trust. If the situation is not resolved in a timely way, persist with seeking help, from the same or another member of staff. You can email the counsellors for an appointment to discuss supports.
- Kids Help Line ph. 1800 55 1800, or www.kidshelp.com.au or email counsellor@kidshelp.com.au

If You Are a Bystander

- Students usually know more about bullying than teachers and parents do, and students who witness bullying are called *bystanders*
- Everyone is either part of the problem or part of the solution
- Bystanders who do nothing make the situation worse for the person being bullied
- You can help by:
    - Supporting the person being bullied in a safe way e.g. invite them to be with your group.
    - Getting help from a counsellor, teacher or any adult you trust.
    - Speaking up and telling the person bullying to stop (if you feel safe doing this).

Policy Approvals	Signature	Dated
Approved by Principal	Shannon Bertram (per CT)	27 / 09 / 23
Ratified by College Board	Debbie Bittoto	27 / 09 / 23