



Anti-Bullying Policy

Document name:	Anti-Bullying Policy
Applies to:	Whole College
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Introduction

The College and all its staff and students continually seek to reduce bullying and take consistent actions to minimise it. While a complete absence of bullying may be unrealistic, our shared goal is to minimise its occurrence and impact. Bullying is a school and community issue that requires partnership and shared responsibility.

Masada College's Rationale

The College seeks to promote and affirm each person's worth, dignity and vocation. Bullying behaviour strikes at the heart of these values and may prevent students from reaching their potential. Our school community does not condone bullying or harassment in any form.

Staff are entitled to work free from humiliation and offensive abuse. Students are entitled to receive their education free from humiliation, oppression and abuse.

Bullying affects everyone, not only those directly involved. It also impacts students who witness intimidation or distress, damaging the atmosphere of the class, the playground, and the overall climate of the school.

Masada aims to be proactive rather than reactive in its approach to social interaction. The College is focused on the development of each student's wellbeing and growth, intellectually, socially, emotionally, spiritually and morally. We continually emphasise education for socialisation, and the development of the values of respect and kindness.

Masada Encourages

Students and staff to take on the responsibility of providing:

- A strong foundation in Jewish values
- Leadership opportunities
- Encouragement of sound standards of personal conduct, consideration and respect for others
- An environment that provides good role models from all members of the school community
- Service to others
- A sense of shared responsibility

Bullying: What Is It?

Bullying is “repeated oppression, psychological or physical, of a less powerful person by a more powerful person or group of persons” (Rigby, 1996).

There are three critical points in this definition:

Power: Children or staff who bully may acquire power through various means such as physical size and strength, status within a peer group, or recruitment within a peer group to exclude others.

Frequency: Bullying is not a random act; it is characterised by its repetitive nature. Those who are bullied must not only endure the humiliation of the attack but live in constant fear of its recurrence.

Intent to harm: Bullies often deny any intent to harm and may not be fully conscious of the impact of their actions. However, causing physical or emotional harm is typically deliberate and places the victim in a position of oppression.

Forms of bullying include but are not limited to:

Physical: Kicking, punching, pushing, shoving, spitting, fighting, damaging or destroying others’ property, jostling, pinching, touching, or any unwelcome physical intimidation.

Verbal: Offensive or abusive language, sarcasm, crude jokes or comments, ridiculing appearances, actions or beliefs, obscene or threatening phone calls or emails, teasing or putting others down.

Social: Exclusion, spreading rumours or gossip, racial or sexual comments, graffiti, notes, emails, text messages or chat room posts about others.

Emotional: Victimisation, instilling fear in others, extortion (forcing students to hand over money, food or possessions), or coercing students to do others’ work.

Online or cyber bullying: Using digital technologies or social media to harass, threaten, exclude or spread harmful content about others.

Rights and Responsibilities

Within the Masada community, all students and staff have rights and corresponding responsibilities.

All students and staff have the right:

- To feel safe, cared for and respected at Masada
- To be free from threat and intimidation
- To have a healthy and safe environment

All students and staff have the responsibility:

- To consider the impact of their actions on others
- To respect the property and rights of the school community
- Not to accept bullying but to report it
- To follow the College ethos, policies and rules

All staff members have the further responsibility:

- To strive for a safe, secure learning environment free from bullying, harassment, intimidation and abuse
- To engender a culture where ignoring bullying is seen as condoning it
- To model respectful behaviour in word and action at all times

- To follow College policy and conditions of employment

What We Are Doing at Masada College to Prevent Bullying

- Providing explanations of and reference to this policy during assemblies, classes and through publications to parents
- Running sessions that promote positive peer interactions in PDHPE lessons, during Peer Support, Patron meetings and other peer-related programs
- Using the curriculum to examine aspects of bullying and its effects
- Promoting messages around being an *upstander* rather than a *bystander*
- Expecting vigilant teacher observation of students in and out of class
- Providing ongoing professional learning for staff in line with their professional development journeys
- Documenting all incidents of bullying
- Holding Patron meetings to discuss individual and group dynamics, provide opportunities for counselling, and facilitate meetings with the Head of Wellbeing and Academic Care
- Offering counselling for anyone affected by bullying

What You Can Do if You Are Being Bullied

- Let the bully know that you are not okay with their behaviour
- Any student who feels they are being bullied is encouraged to report it immediately. Bullying usually continues if those responsible believe they can avoid detection and consequences
- Staff who feel bullied should refer to the Employee Grievance Procedure
- Approach your Class Teacher/Year Patron, Head of School, classroom teacher, College Psychologist/Counsellor, parents or any trusted adult
- Any report of bullying made to the College will be followed up sensitively and all actions documented
- Try not to show that you are upset; try to appear confident. Bullies often gain satisfaction from seeing distress
- If bullying continues, students and parents are encouraged to report it again. It is essential that bullies understand that their behaviour will not be tolerated
- Consider speaking with the College Psychologist/Counsellor for support and practical strategies to help you set limits and communicate effectively with a bully

How You Can Help Someone Who Is Being Bullied

- Remember that nobody deserves to be bullied. The person being bullied may be too scared or upset to tell anyone
- If you are aware of bullying, report it to a member of staff who will refer the matter to the appropriate person, such as the Class Teacher/Year Patron, College Psychologist/Counsellor or Head of School. Reporting bullying is not '*dobbing*'

- Tell the bully clearly that their behaviour is not acceptable. A statement such as “You need to stop doing that. It is not okay” may often be enough to deter the behaviour
- Offer support to the person being bullied and reassure them that they are not alone

Signs and Symptoms of Bullying in Students

Parents, staff and peers should watch for the following signs:

- Fear of walking to or from school
- Reluctance to travel on the school bus or a preference to be driven instead
- Changes to normal routines
- Unwillingness to attend school (school phobia)
- Truancy
- Withdrawal or anxiety
- Loss of confidence
- Threats or attempts of self-harm or suicide
- Running away from home
- Continuous crying or nightmares
- Decline in academic performance
- Coming home hungry (possibly due to anxiety or stolen food)
- Loss of appetite
- Fear of disclosing what is wrong
- Implausible excuses for concerning behaviour
- Fear of using the internet or mobile phone
- Nervousness when receiving a message
- Bullying other children or siblings

Advice for Parents

- Watch for signs that your child might be experiencing bullying
- If you believe your child is being bullied, contact your child’s Class Teacher/Year Patron, College Psychologist/Counsellor or Head of School
- Do not encourage your child to retaliate verbally or physically
- Support your child in developing their talents and participating in activities that build confidence
- Please do not take matters into your own hands by contacting the parents of the alleged bully. The College has a range of supports and processes in place to manage these situations sensitively and effectively

Masada’s Response to Bullying of Students

As our school community does not condone bullying or harassment in any form, a clear process has been established to address such behaviour should it occur. This process is implemented in defined stages. Depending on the form, severity and impact of the incident, the College may commence the process at any stage deemed appropriate.

Each incident will be documented using the College's student management system, ensuring consistency and transparency in the process.

The Class Teacher/Year Patron initially leads the process under the guidance of the Head of Academic Care. As matters become more serious or ongoing, responsibility transitions to the Head of Academic Care and Head of School, with involvement of the College Psychologist/Counsellor and, if required, the Principal. Parents will be kept informed of all actions and decisions at appropriate stages.

Step 1: Initial Investigation and Guided Response

When concerns are raised regarding bullying of a student:

- The Class Teacher/Year Patron, under the guidance of the Head of Academic Care, clarifies what has occurred.
- The College Psychologist/Counsellor may be consulted for advice or immediate support.
- All students involved are interviewed.
- If the incident is substantiated, the behaviour is addressed directly with the student(s) involved.
- A record of the incident and actions taken is entered into the student management system.
- Parents are informed of the incident and the College's response.
- In the Senior School, if the incident warrants a formal response, a Warning Letter may be issued and placed on the student's file.
- In the Junior School, the incident will be recorded internally with a focus on guidance and education.
- Counselling or restorative conversations may be recommended for those involved.

Step 2: Ongoing or Repeated Behaviour

If the behaviour continues or a further incident is substantiated:

- The Head of Academic Care and Head of School assume leadership of the response, working closely with the Class Teacher/Year Patron.
- The College Psychologist/Counsellor provides additional support, counselling, or mediation for the students involved.
- Parents are informed and a meeting may be arranged with the Head of Academic Care or Head of School.
- A Behaviour Support Plan is created, with clear expectations and follow-up dates.
- All discussions and interventions are documented.

Step 3: Formal Intervention

If bullying behaviour persists or the impact is serious:

- The Head of School, in consultation with the Head of Academic Care and College Psychologist/Counsellor, meets formally with the parents and student responsible.
- A period of suspension may be implemented, followed by a gradual reintegration plan.
- A Behavioural Contract is signed by the student and parents, outlining expectations and consequences for future breaches.
- Ongoing counselling and monitoring continue under the direction of the Head of Academic Care.

- A full report is placed on the student's file.

Step 4: Principal Review

If the behaviour continues despite prior interventions:

- The matter is referred to the Principal.
- The Principal may determine that the student's ongoing enrolment is not compatible with the College's values and expectations.
- Parents are informed in writing of the decision and any associated conditions for withdrawal or return.

Guiding Principle:

At every stage, Masada's approach prioritises education, pastoral care and fairness. The process aims to support all students involved, repair relationships where possible, and uphold the safety, dignity and wellbeing of every member of the College community.

Masada College has a close relationship with:

- NSW Police Liaison Officer who can be contacted at Hornsby Police Station Tel 9476 9799
- Jewish Care – North Shore Office St Ives 9488 7100; Woollahra 1300 133 660
- KYDS David Citer, Lindfield Tel 9416 9824

Parent Summary Guide: Bullying Prevention and Response at Masada College

Our Commitment

Masada College is a caring, respectful and inclusive community. Every student has the right to feel safe and valued. Bullying in any form is unacceptable.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is when someone repeatedly uses power to hurt, intimidate or exclude another person, either physically, verbally, socially or emotionally.

If Your Child is Being Bullied

- Listen calmly and reassure them that telling you was the right thing
- Contact the Class Teacher/Year Patron, College Psychologist/Counsellor or Head of School
- Do not contact the other child's parents directly
- Encourage your child to stay confident and seek help from trusted adults

If Your Child Witnesses Bullying

- Encourage them to be an *upstander* by speaking out or reporting what they see
- Remind them that reporting bullying is not dobbing — it helps keep everyone safe

What the College Will Do

- Investigate every report of bullying
- Provide support and counselling to affected students
- Apply clear consequences in line with our staged response process
- Keep parents informed
- Record every incident in our student management system

Our Shared Responsibility

Together, staff, students and parents build a culture of kindness and respect — one where every student feels safe to learn, grow and belong.

Responding to a Bullying Incident: Staff Flowchart

Concern or Report of Bullying

A concern is raised by a student, parent or staff member.

Initial Response

The Class Teacher or Year Patron leads the initial response under the guidance of the Head of Academic Care. They clarify what has occurred, consult the College Psychologist or Counsellor if needed, and document the incident in the College's student management system.

Determining Whether Bullying Has Occurred

If the behaviour is not substantiated, support and monitor the situation.

If the behaviour is substantiated, proceed to Step 1.

Step 1 – Initial Investigation and Guided Response

- Behaviour is addressed directly with the student or students involved.
- Parents are informed of the incident and outcome.
- The College Psychologist or Counsellor may be consulted for advice or short-term support.
- A record is created in the student management system.
- In the Senior School, a Warning Letter may be issued if appropriate.
- In the Junior School, the incident is recorded internally with a focus on guidance and education.
- Counselling or restorative conversations may be recommended.

If the behaviour continues, proceed to Step 2.

Step 2 – Ongoing or Repeated Behaviour

- The Head of Academic Care and Head of School take the lead, in consultation with the Class Teacher or Year Patron.

- The College Psychologist or Counsellor provides additional support, counselling or mediation.
- Parents are informed and may be invited to meet with the Head of Academic Care or Head of School.
- A Behaviour Support Plan is developed with clear expectations and follow-up dates.
- All interventions are documented and monitored.

If the behaviour persists, proceed to Step 3.

Step 3 – Formal Intervention

- The Head of School, in consultation with the Head of Academic Care and College Psychologist or Counsellor, conducts a formal meeting with the parents and student responsible.
- A period of suspension and a gradual reintegration plan may be implemented.
- A Behavioural Contract is signed by the student and parents, outlining expectations and consequences.
- Ongoing counselling and monitoring continue under the direction of the Head of Academic Care.
- A full report is placed on the student's file.

If the behaviour continues, proceed to Step 4.

Step 4 – Principal Review

- The matter is referred to the Principal.
- The Principal reviews the case and may determine that the student's ongoing enrolment is not compatible with the College's values and expectations.
- Parents are informed in writing of the decision and any associated conditions for withdrawal or return.