



Dignity at Work Policy for Sancta Maria College

The Sancta Maria College policy on Dignity at Work is based on the values of justice, truth, life-enhancement and forgiveness.

The policy fulfils the requirements of Section 8 (1) of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005, which states:

Every employer shall ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the safety, health and welfare at work of his or her employees.

RATIONALE AND OBJECTIVES OF THIS POLICY

The rationale for this policy is that all members of the school staff (including Principal, Deputy Principal, teaching staff, assistants and ancillary staff) are entitled:

- To carry out their work in an environment in which they feel respected and supported
- To have their dignity as valued members of the school community recognised and protected
- To discharge the responsibilities associated with their role in a positive environment.

THE OBJECTIVES OF THIS POLICY ARE:

- To help nurture among the members of the Sancta Maria College community a culture of mutual respect in a supportive environment
- To recognise and to protect the dignity of each individual and her/his right and duty to discharge the responsibilities associated with her/his role
- To sustain and promote a positive working environment for teaching and learning in the school
- To fulfil the statutory requirements under the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act, 2005, and any other relevant legislation.

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE POLICY MEANS THAT, INTER ALIA:

- There is mutual goodwill among all staff and students. For example, actions are interpreted as being well motivated
- There is respect for teachers acting in “loco parentis” and in good faith in making judgements on matters of educational and personal development of their students
- Staff and students are free of constant criticism
- Exchanges of views/approaches/opinions occur with respect for diversity and willingness to listen
- There is reciprocal support among staff, students, parents
- Learning and teaching are carried out in an environment that is safe and conducive to growth for everyone
- There is recognition that workplace interpersonal conflicts do not lessen individual dignity

- There is respect for school management staff in the reasonable conduct of their duties
- Complaints made by staff regarding students are addressed according to the Code of Behaviour
- Complaints made by students/parents regarding staff are addressed under appropriate guidelines and/or other agreed Codes of Practice
- There is no tolerance for frivolous, vexatious, false or anonymous complaints
- The school environment is free of bullying or harassment.
- Forgiveness of difference, mistakes, failings is real.

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

“Workplace bullying is repeated inappropriate behaviour, direct or indirect, whether verbal, physical or otherwise, conducted by one or more persons against another or others, at the place of work and/or in the course of employment, which could reasonably be regarded as undermining the individual’s right to dignity at work. An isolated incident of the behaviour described in this definition may be an affront to dignity at work but as a once off incident is not considered to be bullying.”

APPENDIX 1

Bullying can take a number of forms and may include:

- Repeated aggressive behaviour/attitude/body language, for example:
 - Shouting and uncontrolled anger
 - Personal insults
 - Verbal abuse
 - Offensive language directed at an individual
 - Continually shouting or dismissing others
 - Public verbal attacks/criticism
 - Domineering behaviour
 - Open aggression
 - Offensive gestures and unwanted physical contact.
- Intimidation, either physical, psychological or emotional, for example:
 - Treating in a dictatorial manner
 - Ridicule
 - Persistent slagging
 - Deliberate staring with the intent to discomfort
 - Persistent rudeness in behaviour and attitude toward a particular individual
 - Asking inappropriate questions or making inappropriate comments regarding one's personal life/social life or work
 - Pressure to join a committee, to conform to a particular opinion or to support a decision against one's wishes.
- Undermining/Public or Private Humiliation, for example:
 - Condescending tone
 - Persistently undermining authority in front of students/colleagues
 - Deliberately withholding significant information and resources
 - Writing of anonymous notes
 - Malicious, disparaging or demeaning comments
 - Malicious tricks/derogatory jokes
 - Knowingly spreading rumours
 - Belittling others efforts, their enthusiasm or their new ideas
 - Derogatory or offensive nicknames
 - Disrespectfully mimicking a particular individual in her/his absence
 - Deliberately refusing to address issues focussing instead on the person.
- Ostracising or isolating, for example:
 - Deliberately marginalizing an individual from relevant discussion or groups (whether overt or subtle)
 - Deliberately preventing a person from joining a group
 - Wrongly insisting on confidentiality re Professional matters.