



Workplace Bullying Prevention Policy



1. Introduction

Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd (**MACS**) is a company limited by guarantee established in 2021 by the Archbishop of the Catholic Archdiocese of Melbourne to assume the governance and operation of MACS schools across the Archdiocese of Melbourne. MACS subsequently established Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Specialist Schools Ltd (**MACSS**) to provide educational services to children with special needs and Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Early Years Education (**MACSEYE**) to provide early years care and education services.

The [Statement of Mission](#) in the MACS Constitution, and the constitutions of its subsidiaries, MACSS and MACSEYE, sets out the Archbishop's expectations of Catholic schooling in the Archdiocese and provides an important context and grounding for the company and the direction which the MACS Board must always observe in the pursuit of the company's objects.

The Board must ensure that all policies and procedures concerning the operations of MACS, and its subsidiaries are consistent with the Statement of Mission and company objects, as well as any directions issued by the Archbishop from time to time.

2. Purpose

This policy seeks to ensure Melbourne Archdiocese Catholic Schools Ltd (**MACS**) including specialist schools operated by MACSS, provide working environments that are free from all forms of bullying consistent with legislative requirements and the principles and traditions of the Catholic Church.

The Code of Conduct for MACS Staff sets out MACS' commitment to building and nurturing workplaces that are free from bullying and the expectation that all Staff uphold professional standards of conduct, and do not engage in or condone bullying behaviours and practices.

3. Scope

This policy applies to all MACS staff except MACSEYE staff.

4. Expectations of MACS Staff

MACS expects that MACS Staff should treat each person with dignity, courtesy and respect and comply with this policy. These expectations are outlined in the Code of Conduct for MACS Staff. All MACS Staff are entitled to a workplace which is free from bullying, and to be able to raise issues or make an enquiry or complaint in a reasonable and respectful manner without being victimised.

In applying this policy, MACS leaders undertake to:

- model appropriate standards of behaviour
- take steps to educate staff on their obligations under this policy
- intervene quickly and appropriately when they become aware of inappropriate behaviour
- act fairly to resolve issues and enforce workplace behavioural standards
- ensure appropriate action is taken in respect of complaints.

When a complaint is made, MACS will:

- aim to resolve complaints of bullying promptly and endeavour to ensure that any unacceptable behaviour stops
- respond to complaints or reports of bullying in a sensitive, fair and timely manner.

MACS encourages the reporting of behaviour which is perceived to be in breach of this policy and will endeavour to ensure protection of the complainant(s) from any subsequent victimisation.

5. Bullying in the workplace

Bullying at work occurs when:

- a person or a group of people behaves unreasonably towards a worker or a group of workers at work and
- this happens more than once and
- this creates a risk to health and safety.

Within this definition, 'unreasonable behaviour' means repeated behaviour that would threaten, humiliate, harass, embarrass, victimise or undermine a person.

Bullying can take the form of both direct and indirect bullying. Examples of **direct** bullying include:

- verbally abusing someone
- putting someone down
- spreading rumours or innuendo
- interfering with a person's property
- sending inappropriate emails or communications.

Examples of **indirect** bullying include:

- making unjustified criticisms or complaints
- deliberately excluding someone from meetings/workplace activities
- setting timelines that are difficult to achieve
- deliberately changing work arrangements e.g. rosters/refusing or approving leave to deliberately inconvenience.

6. What is not workplace bullying

Many things occur in the workplace that are not considered to be bullying. Reasonable management action carried out in a fair way is not bullying. For example:

- setting reasonable performance goals, standards and deadlines
- allocating work to an employee in a transparent and appropriate way
- fairly rostering and allocating working hours
- transferring an employee for reasonable and explained reasons
- deciding not to select an employee for promotion following a reasonable selection process
- providing an employee with feedback about unsatisfactory work performance.

Note: Serious cases of bullying may constitute a criminal offence.

7. Procedures

Refer to the Workplace Bullying Prevention Procedures for information on implementation of this policy across MACS.

8. Definitions

Definitions of standard terms used in this Policy can be found in the [Glossary of Terms](#).

MACS staff or staff member

The term Staff or staff member refers to all people who carry out work in any capacity for MACS or its subsidiaries, and includes MACS Board Directors, board committee members, employees, volunteers, consultants, contractors and School Advisory Council members.

Workplace

For the purposes of this policy, the 'workplace' may include any location or circumstance where an employee is undertaking work-related activities. This may include the office, school or usual location of the employee's work, work-related travel or official work-related event outside the office/school, or outside normal working hours, online or via social media.

9. Related policies and documents

Supporting documents

Workplace Bullying Prevention Procedures

Related MACS policies and documents

Code of Conduct for MACS Staff
Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy
Whistleblower Policy

Resources

Fair Work Commission

Level 4, 11 Exhibition Street, Melbourne VIC 3000

The Fair Work Commission is a statutory body set up to deal with various workplace matters and includes a jurisdiction to deal with complaints of bullying.

Phone: 1300 799 675

Website: www.fwc.gov.au

WorkSafe Victoria

1 Malop Street, Geelong VIC 3220

WorkSafe Victoria is a statutory body set up to, among other things, enforce Victoria's occupational health and safety laws and assist injured workers back into the workforce.

Phone: 1800 136 089

Website: www.worksafe.vic.gov.au

10. Legislation and standards

Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth)

Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic)

Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic)

Policy information

Responsible executive	Director, People and Culture
Policy owner	General Manager, Employee Relations
Approving authority	MACS Board
Assigned board committee	People and Culture
Approval date	26 June 2025
Risk rating	Extreme
Review by	June 2027
Publication	Gabriel, CEVN

POLICY DATABASE INFORMATION

Assigned framework	Employment
Supporting documents	Workplace Bullying Prevention Procedures
Superseded documents	Anti-Bullying Policy – MACS Employees – v1.0 – 2021