



## Cybersafety Statement

### Rationale:

St Mary's College has an obligation to maintain a safe physical and emotional environment for staff and students. This responsibility is increasingly being linked to the use of the Internet and Information, Communication and Learning Technologies (ICLT), and a number of related Cybersafety issues. The Internet and ICLT devices/equipment bring great benefits to the teaching and learning programs, and to the effective operation of the College.

St Mary's College places a high priority on providing Internet facilities and ICLT devices/equipment which will benefit student learning outcomes and the effective operation of the College. However, it recognises that the presence in the learning environment of these technologies (some provided partly or wholly by the College and some privately owned by staff, students and other members of the College community) can also facilitate anti-social, inappropriate, and even illegal behaviour and activities. The College aims, therefore, to maximise the benefits of these technologies, while at the same time, to minimise the dangers and manage the risks.

In order for this policy to be accepted and embraced by the St Mary's College community, it is imperative that all members of the College community provide input into its development. The policy will be monitored by the College Student Protection Officers for the duration of the policy.

### Underlying Principles:

The policy is written in light of the Mission Statement of the College, whereby the College as part of Toowoomba Catholic Education office is challenged to "act justly, to love tenderly and to walk humbly with their God", according to the Vision of Jesus Christ and the Mission of the Church. The community at St. Mary's College Toowoomba is called to live out that challenge authentically.

St Mary's College as an educational community fosters Christian living in the Catholic tradition. The community is committed to developing a welcoming spirit through which all community members are encouraged and challenged to develop as children of God. The College reaches out to students from diverse backgrounds.

Through their experience of community, where social justice is fundamental, all are challenged spiritually, emotionally, intellectually, culturally and physically. In an environment where the giftedness of each individual is recognised and their achievements valued, emphasis is placed on participation and effort above achievement, sportsmanship above winning, and service rather than personal gratification.

Our aim is to form character in a compassionate, respectful, accepting and happy environment. Aware of our own worth and dignity we hope to deepen our awareness of God's unchangeable love for us, which accepts us as we are and forgives our weaknesses, challenging us to grow further. Inspired by this love, we strive to develop relationships through a celebration of our lives together and a commitment to reconciliation.

Proud of our heritage, we reach out to everyone, especially those who need us most, keeping alive the spirit of Blessed Edmund Rice, Founder of the Christian Brothers. Edmund continues to call us to challenge the values of our world and make them more God-centred.

We believe that ...

- God loves us, each and every one of us without exception.
- In Jesus God became man to show us the depth of his love for us and the way to become the best people we can be.
- This is the basis of our relationship with ourselves, others and God.
- It is also the basis of all our educational endeavours, which develop all aspects of our being.
- We are people of prayer.
- We often express to God and to others our thankfulness for their goodness to us.
- We are called to excellence in all that we do.
- The Holy Spirit is ever present, guiding, leading, encouraging, challenging and empowering us.
- Staff members share this task as they assist students to learn and learn with them.
- Our education recognises the worth, the individuality and the different needs of each person and responds positively to these.
- Our teaching is based on a search for quality in content, methods and procedures always open to improvement and seeking what is best for students



# St Mary's College Toowoomba

*Providing quality Catholic education for boys since 1899*

## **Policy:**

*St Mary's College* will develop and maintain rigorous and effective Cybersafety practices which aim to maximise the benefits of the Internet and ICLT devices/equipment to student learning and to the effective operation of the College, whilst minimising and managing any risks.

These Cybersafety practices will aim to not only maintain a cyber-safe College environment but also to address the need of students and other members of the College community to receive education about the safe and responsible use of present and developing information and communication technologies.

Associated issues the College will address include the need for relevant education about Cybersafety for the College community, the need for ongoing funding for Cybersafety practices through inclusion in the annual budget, implications for the design and delivery of the curriculum, the deployment of staff, professional development and training, disciplinary responses appropriate to breaches of Cybersafety, the availability of appropriate pastoral support, and potential employment issues.

Teaching resources will be provided to ensure that teachers have access to current and appropriate curriculum materials. All teachers however have a responsibility to ensure safe online practices within their class and take every opportunity to engage students in relevant dialogue about current Cybersafety issues.

St Mary's College takes seriously its responsibility in providing robust policy, guidelines and education for students in relation to what is deemed acceptable and appropriate online behaviours. The College name, motto, crest, logo and/or uniform must not be used in any way which would result in a negative impact for the College and its community. Students must not post photos of either themselves and/or other students which clearly identify them as a member of the *St Mary's College* community, nor post photos taken during any College sanctioned activity. This includes off campus events such as sports days and camps. Members of the College community also have a responsibility to ensure that all online communications are in keeping with the Colleges expectations in relation to appropriate and respectful interactions with teaching and non-teaching staff.

Students will not post inappropriate comments about individual staff members which if said in person would result in disciplinary action being taken.

Neither the College's network nor the broader Internet [whether accessed on campus or off campus, either during or after College hours, via any application] may be used for any purpose other than that which it was designed. Cyberbullying, harassment, taking, sending and receiving naked or sexually explicit images, (sexting) and other misuses of technology in cyberspace are unacceptable. "Cyberbullying is a way of delivering covert psychological bullying. It uses information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated and hostile behaviour, by an individual or group that is intended to harm others." (Belsey 2007)

Cyberbullying includes, but is not limited to, the following misuses of technology: harassing, teasing, intimidating, threatening, another person by sending or posting inappropriate and hurtful e-mail messages, instant messages, text messages, phone messages, digital pictures or images, or Web site postings (including blogs).

The forwarding of private emails, messages, pictures or videos or otherwise inappropriately communicating personal or private information belonging to another person or logging on and pretending to be someone else as well as sending sexually explicit images ('sexting') and intentionally excluding others from an online group

all constitute Cyberbullying and if this occurs either during College time or after College hours, will constitute a breach of College policy and as such a student will be subject to disciplinary action. Students must be aware that in certain circumstances where a crime has been committed, they may be subjected to a criminal investigation by Police over which the College will have no control. Students who feel that they have been the victims of such misuses of technology should save and store the offending material on their computer, mobile phone or other device. They should then print a copy of the material and immediately report the incident to a teacher. Staff who may have been cyberbullied or threatened online should immediately report such incidences to a member of the College Leadership Team.

Reports of cyberbullying and other technology misuses will be investigated and may result in a notification to Police where the College is legally obliged to do so. Sanctions may include, but are not limited to, the loss of computer privileges, detention, suspension, or expulsion from the College.

## **Duration:**

This policy will be reviewed every 12 months.