

Anti-Bullying Policy

Purpose:

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for students so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a TELLING school. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell College staff.

Objectives of this Policy:

- All teaching and non-teaching staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All teaching and non-teaching staff should know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is reported.
- All pupils and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a school we take bullying seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

Definition of Bullying:

Bullying is the use of aggression with the intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic because of, or focusing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumors, teasing
- Cyber all areas of internet such as email and internet chat room misuse, mobile threats by text messaging and calls, misuse of associated technology i.e. camera and video facilities

Why is it important to respond to Bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Pupils who are bullying need to learn different ways of behaving.

Schools have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Signs and Symptoms:

A child may indicate by signs or behavior that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- doesn't want to go on the school/ public bus
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begin to do poorly in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or "go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has lunch or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (money/lunch has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous and jumpy when a cyber message is received

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated.

Implementation:

Schools

The following steps may be taken when dealing with incidents:

- If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident will be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached
- A clear account of the incident will be recorded and given to the Welfare Coordinator
- The Welfare Coordinator will interview all concerned and will record the incident
- Pastoral Care teachers will be kept informed and if it persists the Welfare Coordinator will advise the appropriate subject teachers
- Parents will be kept informed
- Punitive measures will be used as appropriate and in consultation with all parties concerned

Students

Students who have been bullied will be supported by:

- offering an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a Welfare Coordinator or member of staff of their choice
- reassuring the students
- offering continuous support
- restoring self-esteem and confidence

Students who have been bullied will be helped by:

- discussing what happened
- discovering why the students became involved
- establishing the wrongdoing and need to change
- informing parents or guardians to help change the attitude of the students

The following disciplinary steps can be taken:

- official warnings to cease offending
- detention
- exclusion from certain areas of school premises
- minor fixed-term exclusions
- major fixed-term exclusions
- permanent exclusions

Within the curriculum the school will raise the awareness of the nature of bullying through inclusions in RE, PDHPE, Pastoral Care time, assemblies and subject areas, as appropriate, in an attempt to eradicate such behaviour.

Prevention:

We will use the following as and when appropriate:

- writing a set of school rules
- signing a behaviour contract
- writing stories or poems or drawing pictures about bullying
- reading stories about bullying or having them read to a class or assembly
- making up role-plays
- having discussions about bullying and why it matters

Lumen Christi would like to acknowledge Kidscape Australia for information regarding bullying in the formulation of this policy.

References:**Forms:**

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