



ST CATHERINE'S CATHOLIC COLLEGE

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ANTI-BULLYING POLICY FOR STUDENTS

Responsible Officers	College Principal Assistant Principals
Effective Date	January 2013
Superseded Documents	Nil
Review Date	2019
Associated Documents	CSO Anti Bullying Policy for Students 2012 Pastoral Care Policy 2013 CSO Pastoral Care Policy 2003 Grievance Policy 2011

1. PREAMBLE

Catholic schools have the responsibility to promote cultures of trust, co-operation and respect in the lived experience of the Catholic Christian setting. Bullying in a school mitigates such a culture and inhibits the development of positive relational outcomes for the common good of students, teachers and caregivers.

It is the goal of every Catholic School to promote a safe environment where individuals may grow and develop. Well articulated, understood and implemented policies and procedures facilitate such a goal and minimise the risk of inappropriate behaviours becoming accepted, tolerated or even endemic.

“.....(Catholic) schools will have as their goal the formation of Christian disciples, with appropriate world view, character and behaviour.” (Catholic Schools at the Crossroads , p14)

The modelling of positive behaviours and anti bullying strategies in schools has become an important aspect of student learning and parent reporting. There have been recent court precedents that have brought to light the dangers to students and schools in relation to bullying. What is clear for schools, as an outcome of the research and recent court judgements, is the critical issue for careful and well documented implementation of school policy. It is also necessary for students to be involved in the evaluation of processes, for regular policy review and dialogue at staff level and for easy policy access for parents and the community.

“We now know that students’ social and emotional learning facilitates their academic learning (Zins, Weissberg, Wang & Walberg, 2004) and that a student’s level of social competence and their friendship networks are predictive of academic achievement (Caprana, Barbaranelli, Pastorelli, Bandura & Zimbardo, 2000). The goals of anti bullying initiatives also align with the teaching in schools of socio-moral values such as respect, support/care, cooperation, acceptance or difference and inclusion (McGrath & Noble, 2003). In summary, there are significant moral, social, emotional and educational advantages to addressing bullying problems in schools.” (McGrath and Noble 2006, Bullying Solutions Evidence-based approaches to bullying in Australian schools p.xvii)

2. DEFINITIONS

Whilst there is no definitive and universally accepted definition of bullying, the most influential research in the area of what constitutes bullying has been proposed by Olweus (1993):

“...bullying may be defined as a student being exposed, repeatedly and over time, to intentional injury or discomfort inflicted by one or more other students. This may include physical contact, verbal assault, making obscene gestures or facial expressions, and intentionally excluding the student.”

The *National Safe Schools Framework* (2011) defines bullying as repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons.

“...Bullying is thus conceived largely in behavioural terms, that is, it involves negative actions on the part of the perpetrator.” [Rigby (2006) from *Bullying Solutions* p.4]

It is important to note that cyber bullying has become a significant area of concern and action in recent years. Cyber-bullying may be defined as:

“..... any form of bullying that utilises technology such as instant messaging, online chat rooms, online bulletin boards and email. In many ways this is a more insidious form of bullying since it may reach into a victim’s home.”
In other words, technology now allows the bully to inflict psychological harm on his or her victim anywhere and any time without respite. (Schools and the Law - Des Butler and Ben Matthews p.46)

The Commonwealth Code sets as an offence the use of a carriage service (such as a mobile or internet) in a way that is menacing, harassing or offensive. The maximum penalty for committing the offence is 3 years imprisonment.

‘Sexting’ is an occurrence that may be considered bullying. Under present legislation perpetrators place themselves in the serious position of making, viewing and or sending inappropriate and unlawful material.

Conflict or fights between students or single incidents are not usually defined as bullying.

3. RATIONALE

The role of the Catholic school, in partnership with parents and caregivers, is to nurture young people by providing optimum levels of support in learning, positive interpersonal relationship experiences and social support networks. The culture and atmosphere of the school plays a significant role in students developing a balanced approach to life and learning. With this in mind, bullying behaviour is in conflict with the core values and purpose of a Catholic school. Bullying needs to be recognised, named and addressed to ensure all schools work towards an authentic Christian school culture.

“.....the school must be concerned with constant and careful attention to cultivating in students the intellectual, creative, and aesthetic faculties of the human person; to develop in them the ability to make correct use of their judgement, will, and effectivity; to promote in them a set of values; to encourage just attitudes and prudent behaviour; to introduce them to the cultural patrimony handed down from previous generations; to prepare them for professional life, and to encourage the friendly interchange among students of diverse cultures and backgrounds that will lead to mutual understanding. For all these reasons, the school enters into the specific mission of the Church.” (Lay Catholics in Schools: Witness to Faith p.110)

4. AIMS

This policy aims to:

- assist in the prevention, reduction and response to bullying behaviour (including cyber bullying)
- promote a proactive attitude to and clear understanding of processes when addressing allegations of bullying
- facilitate a consistent approach to the management of record keeping processes in relation to bullying investigations
- ensure the right of students and staff to expect a school that is actively promoting a school environment free from the fear of bullying, harassment, intimidation and victimisation.

5. IMPLEMENTATION

St Catherine's Catholic College has developed its own Anti-Bullying Policy for students in accordance with, and using the, Diocesan guidelines. All forms referred to in *italics* are in the Appendix.

Preventative Programs

Programs and strategies that are utilised to support and educate students, which in turn promote positive behaviours and prevent bullying within the school include:

- eSmart
- Better Buddies
- Making Jesus Real (MJR)
- Real (Restorative) Justice
- Values education
- Mind Matters
- Kids Matter
- Rock and Water
- Cool & Friendly

St Catherine's Catholic College is also committed to early intervention strategies when given notice of an enrolment of a student who has been identified as having been bullied or having engaged in bullying behaviour in a previous school.

Reporting and Record Keeping

All staff at St Catherine's Catholic College are trained in the procedures for reporting of incidents by students, parents, and staff. Staff will:

- listen supportively to the complaint and complete the *Alleged Bullying Initial Tool*
- assure the student that the matter is being taken seriously but not, at this stage, commit to any action
- refer the *Alleged Bullying Initial Tool* to appropriate Primary or Secondary Co-ordinator.

Investigations

All allegations of bullying should be treated seriously and investigated. Records of all steps in the procedure must be kept.

The Co-ordinator investigating the allegation should use the *Alleged Bullying Co-ordinators Analysis* to establish:

- what was said and / or done to the alleged victim(s)
- the time and place the incident(s) occurred
- the reaction (if any) of the alleged victim(s)
- whether this is the first time the alleged victim(s) has experienced bullying behaviour and, if not, whether the same person or group was involved
- whether there were any witnesses to the alleged incident(s) and record any statements.

The *Alleged Bullying Initial Tool* and *Alleged Bullying Co-ordinators Analysis* must be kept as a record of the allegation.

Once the basis of the allegation is established, the Co-ordinator will use the *Bullying Assessment and Action Flow Chart* to determine the appropriate course of action. The Co-ordinator will:

- notify the alleged victim's parents that the College is aware of the allegation
- notify the alleged bully of the allegation (and the alleged bully's parents if appropriate)
- hear both sides fairly
- assess the allegation impartially
- notify all parents of student involved, by phone and via formal letter.

Possible Disciplinary Actions

If a student is shown to have engaged in bullying behaviours, i.e. an allegation is substantiated, the student will be managed using the Pastoral Care Policy Behaviour Management strategies.

Police Intervention

If, after using the *Bullying Assessment and Action Flow Chart*, it is substantiated that the bullying involves a possible crime (e.g. weapon, sexting), the bully's parents will be contacted and the School Liaison Police Officer or local Police Station will be contacted.

If an interview is to occur at school, the bully's parents will be informed and will be asked to be present. St Catherine Catholic College's School Liaison Police Officer is Kim Smith, contact: Ph: 02 4934 0200 Mobile: 0437 771 757

Post investigation support services

After the investigation and appropriate response and management of an alleged bullying incident, St Catherine's Catholic College staff will:

- monitor the situation on an ongoing basis
- prevent retaliation
- provide counselling and support for both the victim and the bully

For the victim, as appropriate, support may include:

- counselling, social skills training, better ways of dealing with unwanted behaviours

For the bully, as appropriate, management and support may include:

- social skills training, time-out, punishment, levels of sanction, withdrawal of privileges, counselling, suspension, police referral.

College staff will initiate a repair process with emphasis on restitution and the building of skills consistent with the Diocesan and College Pastoral Care Policies. Repair processes need to support both the victim and the bully.

Potential Programs

Stop – Think – Do
Rock and Water
Mentoring
Building Safe Schools
Resilient Kids

Suggested Support Services

CentaCare
Student Support Team
Community Health
Parenting Ideas
Relationships Australia

The CSO Counselling Team is available to assist schools in implementation.

During and after the investigation, the Co-ordinator who conducted the investigation will advise all parties of the College Grievance Policy.

Communication of Policy/procedures

The Anti Bullying Policy for Students will be explained to all staff at the start of each school year. Any updates during the year will be communicated at the first practicable whole staff meeting.

Staff will be encouraged to regularly reflect on the culture of the College and its community in providing a positive and safe school environment:

- What is the culture of the school?
- What is the culture of the community it serves?
- How can the culture of the College community promote peaceful resolution of conflict?
- How can the College increase awareness of bullying and harassment?

Links to School Policy

This Policy must be read in conjunction with St Catherine's Catholic College Pastoral Care Policy 2012.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The Principal will:

- a) Develop a shared understanding with staff and community members of bullying behaviour that involves all forms of bullying including cyberbullying
- b) Ensure the development, implementation and evaluation of preventative strategies and programs to promote student safety and wellbeing
- c) Provide support to any student who has been affected by, engaged in or witnessed bullying behaviour
- d) Be responsible for the implementation of the school's anti bullying policy and procedures
- e) Initiate police support (Police liaison officers) and or intervention when required
- f) Provide regular updates to parents or caregivers regarding the management of specific incidents
- g) Ensure that an annual communication of the contents of the policy be made to the school community
- h) Maintain an ongoing and annual evaluation process of the policy with students, staff and caregivers
- i) Monitor student understanding and satisfaction of school processes
- j) Identify patterns of bullying behaviour and initiate school action to address them
- k) Engage students in the evaluation of anti bullying processes within the school.

School staff will:

- a) Respond to a student's call for assistance, after his/her reporting of inappropriate behaviours in relation to all forms of bullying. This includes the use of technology (e.g. text messaging or social networking site usage). Failure to take action may indicate a breach in the duty of care owed to the student
- b) Seek advice from their supervisor(s) if they require confirmation or clarification regarding an incident of alleged bullying behaviour
- c) Maintain an up to date knowledge of school policies relating to bullying behaviour.

Students will:

- a) Promote positive relationships that respect and accept individual difference and diversity
- b) Follow the school procedures in reporting and responding to bullying behaviour
- c) Work collaboratively with staff and peers to resolve incidents of bullying
- d) Have an awareness and understanding of what constitutes bullying while being charged with the responsibility of being respectful of one another
- e) Participate in the annual evaluation of school anti bullying processes and procedures.

6. BUDGET

The Catholic Schools Office will make provision each year in its annual budget for professional development opportunities for schools in this area.

St Catherine's Catholic College will budget for anti bullying resources that develop ongoing understanding and ownership of programs.

7. EVALUATION

St Catherine's Catholic College staff will annually revisit the procedures explicit within the Anti Bullying Policy and evaluate their currency.

As part of the College Policy review and development cycle, the Anti Bullying Policy will be reviewed by the Welfare Teams and all staff at regular intervals.

APPENDIX

Page:

9. Alleged Bullying Initial report
10. Alleged Bullying Co-ordinator's Analysis
11. Bullying Assessment and Action Flow Chart
12. Exemplar letter to parents of victim
13. Exemplar letter to parents of bully



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ALLEGED BULLYING INITIAL REPORT

Name of Student: _____ Reporting Teacher: _____

Class/Year: _____ Date/Time of Incident: _____

Names of Alleged Bullies:

Where did the incident occur? Please circle:

On bus transport	In playground	In classroom	Outside school	Other:
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Who reported the alleged incident? Please circle:

The alleged victim(s)	Other students(s)	Parent / Carer	Member of staff	Member of wider community	Other:
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Identify the nature of the alleged bullying incident. Please circle:

Written - notes, letters, writing on book, graffiti, written threats, ridicule through drawings. Other:
Social – lying, spreading rumours, playing a nasty joke, mimicking and deliberate exclusions. Other:
Verbal – name calling, insults, threats, severe sarcasm, abusive comments, racist remarks. Other:
Physical – pushing, shoving, fighting, tripping, hitting, poking, spitting. Other:
Cyber – email, phone call, text, chat room, social networking site. Other:
Psychological – intimidation, manipulation, stalking. Other:
Theft / Damage to property – bag, clothes, money, property, books. Other:
Bystander – encouraging others to bully or witness without taking affirmative action
Briefly outline what occurred in the alleged incident:
Witnesses: (names only)

Action taken by teacher:

Gave this completed form to Student Co-ordinator	Spoke to Student Co-ordinator	Other:
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Teacher's Signature: _____

DATE: _____



ST CATHERINE'S CATHOLIC COLLEGE

ALLEGED BULLYING CO-ORDINATOR ANALYSIS

Name of Student: _____ Reporting Teacher: _____

Class/Year: _____ Date/Time of Incident: _____

Names of Alleged Bullies:

Further information to be added to initial report from teacher:

Is there evidence that this behaviour is deliberate or planned?

According to the alleged victim, has he/she experienced other or repeated incidences of bullying from the alleged perpetrator? (If yes, please give dates, who was involved, outcomes, etc.)

Witness statements / information – what do they perceive as happened?

What is required to resolve this situation now and in the future?

Indicate the investigative procedures carried out. Please circle:

Interviewed student/s involved	Contacted parent of victim(s)	Contacted parents of alleged perpetrator(s)	Other:
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After investigation, was the allegation of bullying substantiated? YES / NO

If YES, please sign below and place a copy of this Analysis Tool into student(s) file, make an ALERT on the student (s) MN profile and refer the incident to Assistant Principal Welfare for further action.

If NO, please sign below and place a copy of this Analysis Tool into student(s) file, make an ALERT on the student (s) MN profile and refer to our school’s Pastoral Care and Anti Bullying Policies for further action.

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Name: _____

Bullying Assessment and Action Flow Chart

Interview all students involved in the incident.

- What happened? How did it start? Did you tell him/her to stop? Is there anything you did that might have contributed to this happening?
- Where clarification is required by the school the CSO/ Police Liaison Officer should be contacted.

Was this possibly a crime?

Was there physical contact or injury, use of a weapon, serious threat of injury, stalking, sexting, loss of property or damage to property?

Yes

Contact the police.

Let them investigate and decide whether a crime has occurred.

Notify parents.

Generally speaking, let parents of the targeted student know that you have contacted the police. Where appropriate make contact with the parents of the perpetrator.

No

Was there aggression?

Physical aggression such as hitting, shoving or threatening injury; verbal aggression such as teasing or name-calling; social aggression such as spreading rumours and shunning; psychological aggression such as inappropriate texting, sexting.

No

Not bullying

Consider disciplinary / RJ action from College Pastoral Care Policy.

Was there dominance?

Was the aggressor stronger or dominant over the other? Was one side outnumbered?

No

Not bullying

Would be bullying if behaviour continues. At this point, consider disciplinary / RJ action from College Pastoral Care Policy.

Was there persistence?

Was there more than one incident or did the aggressor fail to stop when asked?

No

Not bullying

Would be bullying if behaviour continues. At this point, consider disciplinary / RJ action from College Pastoral Care Policy.

Yes

Responses to bullying.

1. Provide appropriate support structures for victim.
2. Discipline aggressor for bullying, based on the seriousness and persistence of the behaviour using procedures from College Pastoral Care Policy.
3. Make copies of all meeting notes and anti-bullying plans for Assistant Principal Welfare.
4. Complete MN Live Alerts as appropriate.
5. Send home appropriate letters outlining support and management of bullying incident.
6. Educate and counsel all students, including bystanders, about bullying.
7. Encourage the aggressor to apologise and state their intention to desist from the unwanted behaviour.
8. Ask all students, "What could you do that would keep this from happening again?"
9. Ask all students, "Would you let me know if anything like this happens again?"
10. Monitor and follow-up to make sure that bullying does not recur.
11. Liaise regularly with Police Liaison Officer where possible.
12. Make contact with parents of both victim and aggressor to maintain positive lines of communication.



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(Date)

Dear _____

On (date), a disclosure was made to the school that (insert name) has been involved in a bullying incident.

Careful investigation of this disclosure has confirmed that, unfortunately, (name) has been the victim of a bullying incident.

I would like to inform you of the following support being given to (name), according to the College Pastoral Care Policy and Anti Bullying Policy:

If at a later date you become aware of any incidents of this nature occurring again, I would ask that you alert the school so that further investigation can be undertaken.

Please do not hesitate to call me if you wish to discuss this matter further.

Thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely

Mr Brian Lacey
College Principal

----- (tear here)

I acknowledge receipt of the letter dated (date) regarding (name) and support the school in its actions to address bullying.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Please return to Mrs Southwell by (date)



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(Date)

Dear _____

On (date), a disclosure was made to the school alleging that (insert name) has been involved in a bullying incident.

Careful investigation of this disclosure has confirmed that, unfortunately, (name) has been the aggressor in a bullying incident.

I would like to inform you the following action taken will be taken, according to the College Anti Bullying Policy and Pastoral Care Policy:

I am hopeful that (name) will not take part in any further incidents of this nature.

Please do not hesitate to call me if you wish to discuss this matter further.

Thank you for your support.

Yours sincerely

Mr Brian Lacey
College Principal

----- (tear here)

I acknowledge receipt of the letter dated (date) regarding (name) and support the school in its actions to address bullying.

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Please return to Mrs Southwell by (date)