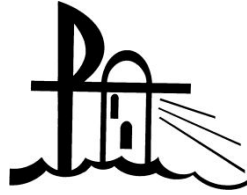


Catholic Schools Office
Diocese of Broken Bay



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY OUR LADY STAR OF THE SEA CATHOLIC SCHOOL

PROMOTING SAFETY, POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR AND SOCIAL INCLUSION
FOR
OUR LADY STAR OF THE SEA CATHOLIC SCHOOL (OLSOS)

June 2017



Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic School

1. STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

At Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Primary School, we believe that all members of the community have the right to a learning and work environment free from intimidation, humiliation and hurt. We all share a responsibility to foster, promote and restore right relationships. We believe that bullying is unacceptable and we [students, staff and parents] all share a responsibility for preventing it. This policy builds on the school's Pastoral Care and Behaviour Management Policies to provide clear procedures and strategies to prevent, reduce and respond to bullying.

2. OUR SCHOOL'S MISSION AND VALUES

Our Lady Star of the Sea Anti-bullying policy is underpinned by the school's mission and values:

Respect:

We believe in ensuring respect for others, ourselves and the environment.

Mission:

We aim to encourage the children, through sharing Jesus' "Good News" story with them, to also live out their mission and vocation as a Christian, to enjoy the fulfillment this brings and to put their faith into action by sharing this gift with others.

Belonging:

We share our parish motto of striving to be a welcoming community where all can experience a sense of belonging, no matter where we come from or who we are.

Learning:

We aspire to create a quality learning environment where all children are confident & involved learners, and where parents, as part of their God given vocation, are fully engaged in their loved ones education with us.

Faith:

We are proud to be an active Catholic community of faith where with our children, we can truly "love one another", as well as discover, nurture and share all the wonderful gifts and talents we have been blessed with.

The dignity of the human person is the foundation of all Catholic social teaching and is inherent to the ministry of Catholic education. Essential to the dignity of persons is the creation and maintenance of a respectful, safe and supportive learning environment that promotes student wellbeing and enables school communities to engage a diverse range of learners in an inclusive manner. Bullying and cyber-bullying disregard core values of the Catholic faith including dignity, respect, justice, equity, compassion, trust and courage. Within this context it is vital that learning technologies are used ethically and responsibly, that communication is respectful, and that human dignity is highly valued.

3. WHAT IS BULLYING

3.1 Definition of Bullying

Bullying is 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 can involve: humiliation, domination, intimidation, victimisation and all forms of harassment including that based on sex, race, disability, sexual orientation or practice of religion. Bullying of any form, or for any reason, can have long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders.

Cyber-bullying refers to bullying through the use of information and communication technologies by an individual or group that is intended to harm others, or is undertaken recklessly without concern for its impact on others.

Bullying can happen anywhere: at school, travelling to and from school, in sporting teams, or in the workplace. Bullying behaviour can be:

- **verbal**, eg name calling, teasing, abuse, putdowns, sarcasm, insults, threats
- **physical**, eg hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting
- **social**, eg ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating, making inappropriate gestures
- **psychological**, eg spreading rumours, hiding or damaging possessions, malicious SMS and email messages, inappropriate use of communication technology/mobile devices.

Conflict or fights between equals and single incidents are not defined as bullying. Bullying behaviour is not:

- children not getting along well
- a situation of mutual conflict such as, teasing or disagreement
- single episodes of hurtful words or actions, or random acts of aggression or intimidation.

(Adapted from: National Safe Schools Framework (2011) and DEC NSW Website)

4. OUR SCHOOL APPROACH TO PREVENTING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

Our school has a three tiered approach to preventing bullying behaviour. This approach provides for differences in student responsiveness due to the variations in an individual's risk and protective factors (i.e. self-management and social skill competence). It also includes a shared responsibility with staff, parents/caregivers and the wider community in working together to teach, foster, promote and encourage positive respectful behaviour.

Our three tiered approach to preventing bullying behaviour includes:

- Prevention (Tier 1)
- Early Intervention (Tier 2)
- Specialised Intervention (Tier 3)

4.1 Prevention (Tier 1)

Tier 1 prevention programs are intended to support the vast majority of students, and also to identify students who require more specialised assistance (Tier 2 and Tier 3). All students and staff are explicitly taught about behaving in a safe, respectful and responsible way. The emphasis is on educating students, staff and parents/caregivers about bullying prevention and management, and encouraging positive social skills, resilience and character traits. The school currently targets Term 3 each year (Weeks 1 to 5) for specific whole school approach in anti-bullying education. Classroom and school-wide strategies are employed during, but not limited to this time. We seek to build capacity in the children to understand and respond to bullying appropriately.

4.1.1 Whole School Positive Behaviour Approaches

Our school uses a whole-school positive behaviour approach to prevent bullying such as; promoting a safe and supportive learning environment, school-wide rules and consequences, teacher professional learning, a curriculum focused on social and emotional learning (SEL), conflict resolution training, parent/caregiver education and engagement, and individual counselling. Teaching students the social and emotional learning (SEL) skills (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationships, and responsible decision-making) are essential foundational competencies that students need in order to prevent and to respond to bullying.

Our school prevention strategies include:

- *promotion of the Diocesan Anti-bullying Policy and school guidelines, including on the school website*
- *promotion of safe, positive school communities through the implementation of policies/frameworks such as, pastoral care, behaviour support, and KidsMatter*
- *promotion of safe respectful learner messages in all aspects of school life: assemblies, year meetings, newsletters and in classrooms*
- *professional development for staff*
- *parent and community education relating to bullying: policies and procedures (Appendix B)*
- *provision of programs that promote SEL skills such as resilience, assertiveness, conflict resolution, problem solving, 'be an upstander not a bystander' and Bullying No Way day*
- *classroom teachers clarify the school policy on bullying with students each year (Appendix B)*
- *curriculum includes anti-bullying messages and strategies, embedded in KLAs, through wellbeing programs eg. PDHPE, Religious Education and pastoral care*
- *Student Representative Council (SRC), peer support leaders promote "No Put Downs" and "Hands Off" messages*
- *Vigilant classroom, playground and transition supervision.*

4.1.2 Curriculum strategies

Prevention programs are delivered as part of the curriculum across KLAs and through pastoral care and wellbeing programs. Specifically, students learn about matters related to bullying in PDHPE from Years K-6, such as, positive respectful relationships, negative impacts of violence and aggression, effects on mental health, help seeking skills, resilience, the role of the upstander, conflict resolution, effective communication, cyber-safety, belonging and connectedness, risk and protective factors. Our KidsMatter framework encompasses much of this and is a reference point with other strategies for students.

4.1.3 Pastoral care and wellbeing strategies

A range of anti-bullying initiatives are embedded into our school pastoral care and wellbeing plan, such as:

- *Whole school approach each year as a specific focus in Term 3.*
- *Bully Upstander sessions with a focus on reporting bullying, and the importance of the upstander in stopping bullying.*
- *Whole school Incursion or Focus Day from which parents and teachers can draw strategies. (Usually part of the Term 3 focus).*
- *Public recognition, awards and rewards for positive behaviour*
- *Peer Support program*
- *Rock and Water program in Year 5.*
- *SRC led initiatives*
- *Transition support for students such as, Kindergarten, Grade Handover discussions and Year 6 to Year 7.*

4.2 Early Intervention (Tier 2)

Early intervention is critical to responding effectively to bullying.

Tier 2 students whose behaviours do not respond to Tier 1 supports are provided with additional preventative learning opportunities, including:

- *more targeted social skills instruction*
- *increased adult monitoring and positive attention*
- *specific and regular daily feedback on their behavioural progress*
- *additional academic supports if required.*

Consequences

The management of bullying incidents will be in accordance with the Diocesan Anti-bullying Policy, the Behaviour Support Policy and school anti-bullying and behaviour support guidelines. The consequences for behaviour violations around bullying should include some form of relationship restoration or remediation that helps students understand the incident and develop pro-social behaviour. Refer to Appendix A and B.

The implementation of these guidelines is supervised by the Principal and includes:

- Once identified, each bully, victim and witness, will be spoken with, and all incidents of bullying will be investigated and documented as required by school leadership personnel.
- Both the bully and victim may be offered counselling, depending on the nature of the incident and person(s) involved
- Parents/caregivers should be contacted in cases of continued bullying and restorative support offered. This may include consequences where deemed appropriate.
- Consequences for students will be individually-based, and may involve:
 - o Social skills support
 - o Reinforcement of positive behaviours
 - o Class/Year meetings
 - o Support structures eg. Check in Check Out, Mentor
 - o Ongoing monitoring of identified bullies and victim
 - o Rewards for positive behaviour
 - o Withdrawal of privileges
 - o Community service
 - o Exclusion from playground
 - o In-school suspension
 - o School suspension
 - o Counselling support.

4.3 Specialised Intervention (Tier 3)

Tier 3 students whose behaviours do not respond to Tier I and II supports are provided with intensive preventative strategies, including:

- individualised academic and/or behaviour intervention planning. This will include a monitoring and evaluative phase for parents and school.
- more comprehensive, student-centered and case management/wrap-around processes
- school-family-community mental health supports as required.

5. OUR SCHOOL'S RESPONSE

Bullying may be reported:

- In person by a student to a teacher
- By a parent via phone, email (via school-based email protocols), or in person
- By a teacher to another teacher such as, the class teacher, the Pastoral Care Coordinator, the AP or the Principal.

5.1 Recording Incidents of Bullying

All incidents of bullying that have been reported will be recorded on a confidential database accessed by school leaders, and relevant staff notified. The report will include the type of bullying, number of incidents and the action taken by staff. This information will form the basis of data collection for the review of bullying in the school by the Pastoral Care & Leadership Team. General behaviour and bullying reports will be monitored and reviewed by the School Leaders.

5.2 Evidence based responses

Our school uses a range of evidence based methods to respond to bullying as outlined below. Methods of intervention will vary according to the incident and persons involved. Refer to Appendix A.

- Restorative Justice practice
- Ongoing monitoring with built in supports and accountabilities
- Individual Behaviour Plans
- Formal communication processes
- Counselling referral

5.3 Referral and the School Counsellor

Students will be referred to the AP or Principal and/or the School Counsellor for support, depending on the

nature of the incident and person(s) involved. Contact the school if you require school counselling support for your child or young person. For high risk cases a referral can be made to the CSO Wellbeing or Child Protection Teams for additional support.

5.4 Communication with parents/caregivers

Classroom teachers will make initial contact with parents/caregivers as required in a timely manner for matters deemed appropriate at an early stage. For severe or repeated matters, the Principal or Assistant Principal will make contact. The communication will focus on what the school can do and what the family can do to support the child or young person. When required the family may be referred to community agency/personnel for support.

5.5 Bullying prevention is a shared responsibility

Preventing and responding to bullying is a shared responsibility of all staff, students, parents/caregivers and members of the wider school community. The various roles/responsibilities are outlined in Appendix B and C.

5.6 Incidents involving assault, threats, intimidation, or harassment

Staff are to report these types of incidents to the Principal or AP. They will assess the situation where a decision will be made of the appropriate action to be taken. Reports will be made to the Police Youth Liaison Officer, Local Area Command and the CSO as required.

5.7 Reporting to the CSO Child Protection or Wellbeing Team

Staff are to report concerns of child wellbeing to the Principal, AP. The Principal in consultation with the AP and/or Counsellor will assess the situation and a decision will be made on the appropriate action to be taken and if a referral is warranted to the CSO.

5.8 Complaints handling policy

The Principal deals with formal complaints by following the procedures outlined in the [Diocesan Complaints Handling Policy](#). Parents/caregivers can contact the Catholic Schools Office, Diocese of Broken Bay if dissatisfied with the school's response.

6. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Useful websites

[Department of Education Victoria – Bullying Prevention Resources](#)

[Bullying. No Way!](#)

[Cybersmart website](#)

[Safe Schools Hub](#)

[National Centre Against Bullying](#)

[KidsMatters](#)

[MindMatters](#)

[Positive Behaviour Intervention Support \(PBIS\)](#)

[Social and Emotional Learning and Bullying Prevention](#)

[CSO Pastoral Care & Wellbeing website](#)

Guidelines development

This policy was developed by Catholic Schools Office with the Leadership and Staff

Review date: June 2017

Date of next review: June 2019

7. SCHOOL CONTACT INFORMATION

Enter school details *Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic School*
165 Serpentine Rd, Terrigal NSW 2260
Phone: (02) 4365 6229



Appendix A

Evidence Based Methods for Addressing Bullying

Restorative Practice

Those who have engaged in bullying are induced to feel remorse and to take appropriate steps to restore relationships that have been damaged by the bullying. This method can be used when the bully has already admitted to having offended and is either feeling remorseful or can be induced to feel remorseful by being asked to reflect upon their actions. It is assumed that the problem can be resolved by the bully acting restoratively (i.e. by making an apology which is likely to be accepted by the victim and wider community).

For further information:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers/Pages/methodrestorative.aspx>

Appendix B

Responding to Bullying

What can students do?

If it happens to me:

- Tell the student who is bullying to stop. State quite clearly that the behaviour is against school values/rules and is offensive
- *Ignore* them and walk away
- Seek help. Talk about it to someone you trust
- Report it to a member of staff, a trustworthy friend or buddy. Feel confident that an incident can be solved
- Talk it over openly with your parents/caregivers – they can help you make a decision
- Do NOT retaliate with physical or verbal abuse
- If you are experiencing bullying on the way to or from school, tell your parents/caregivers and walk home with a friend
- Write a description of the event and report it to a teacher.

If it happens to someone else:

- Tell the person to stop bullying – be an ‘upstander’ not a bystander.
- Be a friend to the person being bullied
- Encourage the person being bullied to inform someone
- Seek help. You can decide to do something about it and help to protect others
- Write a description of the event and place it in the class meeting box/wellbeing email or give it to a teacher
- Talk it over with the teacher.

For further information: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers/Pages/students.aspx>

What can parents/caregivers do?

- Be aware of the signs of distress in your child, e.g. unwillingness to attend school, a pattern of illness, missing equipment, requests for extra money, damaged equipment or clothing
- Inform the school of any cases of suspected bullying even if your child is not directly involved or affected
- Take an active interest in your child’s social life and acquaintances
- Assist your child to discuss any incidence of bullying with a teacher. If possible, allow your child to report and deal with the situation. Your child can gain respect and confidence through taking the initiative and dealing with the problem without direct parental involvement
- If your child is being bullied, discourage any planned retaliation, either physical or verbal, by discussing positive strategies they can use
- Be positive about your child’s qualities and encourage your child to be tolerant and caring
- Be willing to attend interviews if your child is involved in an incident of bullying, and work cooperatively with the school
- Do not deal directly with the other children or their parents/caregivers but work through and with the school
- Discuss the school’s expectations about behaviour and how best to deal with bullying.

Adapted from: Friendly Schools and Families

For further information: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers/Pages/parents.aspx>



Appendix C

Bullying Prevention is a Shared Responsibility

Roles and Responsibilities

Preventing and responding to bullying is a shared responsibility of all staff, students, parents/caregivers and members of the wider school community.

The various responsibilities are outlined below.

Staff

School staff have a responsibility to:

- Respect and support students
- Model and promote appropriate respectful behaviour
- Understand the school and system policies relating to bullying, behaviour, responsible use of technology and pastoral care
- Respond in a timely manner to incidents of bullying according to the school's Anti-Bullying Guidelines
- Provide a safe and supportive learning environment
- Provide curriculum and pedagogy that supports students to develop an understanding of bullying and its impact on individuals and the broader community.

Students

Students have a responsibility to:

- Act appropriately, respecting individual differences and diversity
- Act as responsible digital citizens and responsible users of ICT
- Follow the school anti-bullying guidelines
- Act as a responsible 'upstander' rather than a bystander
- Report incidents of bullying
- Seek support if bullied and refrain from retaliating in any bullying incident.

Parent/Caregivers

Parent/carers have a responsibility to:

- Treat all members of the school community with dignity and respect
- Be aware of the school anti-bullying guidelines
- Support their children to understand bullying behaviour, to become responsible citizens and to develop responsible online behaviour
- Support their children in developing positive responses to incidents of bullying
- Report incidents of bullying according to the school anti-bullying guidelines
- Work collaboratively and calmly with the school to resolve incidents of bullying when they occur.

Members of the school community

All members of the school community have a responsibility to:

- model and promote positive relationships that respect and accept individual differences and diversity within the school community.
- support the school's Anti-bullying Guidelines through words and actions.
- work collaboratively with the school to resolve incidents of bullying when they occur.