



Anti-Bullying Policy

Related Document

Child Protection
Pastoral Care and Well Being (School)
Exclusion, Expulsion and Transfer of Students
Legal Responsibilities and Authority
Restraint of Students
Suspension of Student

Purpose

This policy provides details and procedures for the management of instances of bullying. Our Catholic ethos requires that all students, their families and employees within the Mt Carmel community have the right to a learning and work environment free from intimidation, humiliation and hurt. It is the responsibility of the school community to build a culture of love where bullying is viewed counter-productive to this endeavour.

Policy

Bullying is completely against the mission and purpose of Mt Carmel School. The School is committed to providing an educational environment in which students feel valued, safe and happy. To achieve this end, the School will seek to create a school-wide culture that:

- Allows students to flourish free from discrimination, harassment or any form of bullying.
- Does not tolerate, condone or trivialise bullying behaviours
- Is aware of what constitutes bullying behaviour
- Provides support to the victims of bullying
- Deals firmly with bullies so that they either stop their bullying or leave the School

Definitions

Bullying According to the National Safe Schools Framework (NSSF): *Bullying is a pattern of repeated physical, verbal, psychological or social aggression that is directed towards a specific student by someone with more power and is intended to cause harm, distress and/or create fear. Bullying may be carried out overtly (e.g. face-to-face) or covertly (e.g. through repeated social exclusion or via technology). It is a sub-category of aggression and is different to, but also related to, harassment and violence. It is not the same as conflict or social dislike even though, in some cases, the outcome of both can be bullying.*



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Face-to face bullying (direct bullying) involves physical actions such as punching or kicking or overt verbal actions such as name calling and insulting.

Covert bullying (indirect bullying) is a subtle type of non-physical bullying which is not easily seen by others and is conducted out of sight, and often unacknowledged by adults.

Cyber bullying occurs through the use of information or communication technologies such as Instant Messaging, text messages, email and social networking sites. It has many similarities with offline bullying but it differs in that the student(s) who is/are bullying can be anonymous.

**The Catholic Education Commission (CEC) recommends the above National Schools Safety Framework (NSSF) definition be adopted*

Procedures

Strategies to Prevent Bullying

- Moral education in the context of religious education, prayer services and assemblies where the value of the individual is affirmed and the importance of qualities such as forgiveness, compassion, kindness, reconciliation, tolerance, respect and justice are encouraged.
- Across the curriculum values incorporating Kids Matter strategies into all Key Learning Areas.
- Recognition that bullying is a concern for all sections of the school community.
- Education of staff, students and parents regarding bullying
- Teaching more positive ways of resolving conflict, such as working cooperatively within the classroom and the playground. Staff and students as role models, particularly those in leadership positions such as school captains, house captains and student representative council members.
- Provision of school counsellors or other support services.
- Provision of support for the parent/guardians through the school's pastoral care structure.
- Restorative Practice strategies
- Peer Support
- Positive Behaviours
- Recognising National Day of Action Against Bullying
- Informing all stakeholders – staff, students and parents

Suggestions for Parents/Caregivers

If their son/daughter is alleged to have been bullied or to have bullied another Student, Parents/Caregivers should:

- Reassure their child and encourage them to speak with a trusted member of staff



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- Contact the school as soon as possible
- It is counter-productive for Parents/Caregivers to contact the Parents/Caregivers of other student/students involved
- Understand that resolution of the situation may take time
- Monitor their child's progress
- Encourage their son/daughter to speak openly with them and to look at positive strategies to deal with their feelings

Anti-Bullying Procedures

The purpose of the following procedures is to provide a framework of reference for the school community where there are reasonable grounds to believe that a student is being bullied or is involved in bullying. Depending on the nature of the incident, the following steps may be taken in dealing with an allegation of bullying.

1. Notification and Information Gathering

School is notified of bullying



The victim meets with Classroom Teacher, Coordinator, Assistant Principal or Principal. The anti-bullying policy is discussed with the student and reassurance is given that the matter will be investigated, strategies to be put in place to ease the situation for the alleged victim and appointment made to meet again in a few days



Background information is collected from various sources and documented



Parents/Guardians contacted at this stage is discretionary

2. Consultation and Investigation

- The victim meets with Classroom Teacher, Coordinator, Assistant Principal or Principal as planned in above
- If the situation has improved a follow up meeting is planned for ongoing monitoring of the situation
- If the situation has not improved then the bully/bullies are interviewed by Classroom Teacher, Coordinator, Assistant Principal or Principal and parents/caregivers from both sides are contacted
- The allegation and school's anti-bullying policy are discussed
- Students are given the opportunity to respond to the allegation
- Possible suggestions to deal with the situation are generated
- Follow up meetings are made to see all parties involved. Restorative Practices are used to repair relationships:



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- What happened?
- What were you thinking of at the time?
- What have you thought about since?
- Who has been affected?
- What do you think you need to do to make things right?
- Record of the meetings are kept by the Coordinator
- Opportunity to see the School Counsellor is offered to one or both parties

3. Review

- Within a reasonable time frame, the situation is re-assessed
- If the situation has settled or been resolved then appointments are made for follow up meetings if necessary
- If the situation has not settled or has worsened then the matter is referred to the Principal. Students are required to meet with the Principal
- Parents/Caregivers are kept informed
- Records of the meetings are kept with the Coordinator/ Principal

4. Further or Additional Review

- Students are interviewed as planned
- If the situation has settled or been resolved then follow up appointments are made if necessary
- If the situation has not settled or has worsened then the Parents / Caregivers of the student/students are asked to come to the school for an interview with the Principal, Assistant Principal or Coordinator.
- Sanctions may be implemented depending on the severity of the situations
- Strategies to be put in place to ease the situation for the alleged victim and an agreement reached with the other parties about how the parties will interact with each other
- Review the situation within a reasonable time frame
- Records of the meetings to be kept with the Coordinator/ Principal

5. Sanctions

After giving all students involved in a situation the opportunity to have their say and the balance of evidence suggests that an incidence of bullying has occurred any of the following sanctions may apply. Classroom teachers should also be informed to allow follow up at that level.

a) Playground Duty

At the discretion of the teacher who observed the incidence of bullying:

- Offending student/students can be asked to clean up certain areas of the playground during lunch and or recess under supervision



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- Offending student/students may be removed from the playground or have playground movement restricted

b) Detention

At the discretion of the Principal, Assistant Principal or Coordinator:

- Offending student/students may be given a lunchtime detention, after school detention or a Saturday morning detention, where they will be required to complete set work and a self-evaluation form which gives them the opportunity to reflect on their behaviour.

c) Suspension

Depending on the circumstances, and at the discretion of the Principal, Assistant Principal or Coordinator, offending student/students may be given an in-school suspension or out of school suspension. Following an out of school suspension, the student and his/her parents are required to attend a re-entry meeting with the Principal.

d) Exclusion

Depending upon the circumstances, and at the discretion of the Principal, the Principal may recommend to the Director of our Catholic Education Canberra Goulburn Archdiocese for a student or students to be excluded from attending school. This action would be in accordance with the Catholic Education's Exclusion Policy.

References

National Safe Schools Network

Forms

Behaviour Referral Report

Student Incident Report

Approved by:	Mt Carmel School Yass Executive
Implementation Date:	November 2014
Review Date:	November 2017
School Contact Officer:	Gaye McManus