



# Holy Trinity

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## **POLICY: ANTI-BULLYING**

### Introduction

**Holy Trinity Catholic Primary School is a faith community inspired by the love of God, within the Parish of St Francis Xavier. We strive to create a positive and collaborative learning community that inspires all to reach their full potential living justly and compassionately within a global community.**

**Be involved (live), be inclusive (love), be enlightened (learn) and embrace God's Word.**

At **Holy Trinity** we hold the care, safety and wellbeing of children and young people as a central and fundamental responsibility of our school. Our commitment is drawn from and inherent in the teaching and mission of Jesus Christ, with love, justice and the sanctity of each human person at the heart of the Gospel

### **POLICY RATIONALE:**

Pastoral care of students in the context of this policy refers to action taken within a school by its leaders and community members to promote and enhance student wellbeing of a personal, social, physical, emotional, mental or spiritual nature. Key elements of student wellbeing are positive self-regard, respect for others, positive relationships, responsible behaviours and personal resilience. CEOM Policy 2.26 - Pastoral Care of Students in Catholic Schools

### **Declaration of the Rights of All Individuals and Groups to be Free from Bullying**

1. Everyone has the right to access a safe and inclusive learning environment free from harassment, bullying, discrimination or threat or acts of violence.
2. Everyone has the right to be accepted and respected.
3. Everyone has the right to be happy about coming to school.
4. Everyone has the right to have their concerns taken seriously and appropriate action taken.

5. Everyone has the right to have concerns dealt with in private.

## **AIMS**

1. To reinforce within the school community what constitutes bullying, and the fact that it is unacceptable.
2. To empower the school community to be alert to signs and evidence of bullying and the responsibility of all members of the community to report it to staff, whether as observer or victim.
3. To ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are followed up appropriately and that support is given to both victims and perpetrators.
4. To seek parental and peer-group support and cooperation at all times.

**Definition:** The national definition of bullying for Australian schools states:

“Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening.

Bullying can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time (for example, through sharing of digital records)

Reference: <https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/WhatsBullying/DefinitionOfBullying>

### **Types of Bullying:**

There are some specific types of bullying behaviour:

- **verbal or written abuse** - such as targeted name-calling or jokes, or displaying offensive posters
- **violence** - including threats of violence
- **sexual harassment** - unwelcome or unreciprocated conduct of a sexual nature, which could reasonably be expected to cause offence, humiliation or intimidation
- **homophobia** and other hostile behaviour towards students relating to gender and sexuality
- **discrimination** including racial discrimination - treating people differently because of their identity

- **cyberbullying** - either online or via mobile phone.

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

### **What is not bullying?**

There are also some behaviours, which, although they might be unpleasant or distressing, are not bullying:

- mutual conflict - which involves a disagreement, but not an imbalance of power. Unresolved mutual conflict can develop into bullying if one of the parties targets the other repeatedly in retaliation.
- single-episode acts of nastiness or physical aggression, or aggression directed towards many different people, is not bullying
- social rejection or dislike is not bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.

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

### **Cyber Bullying –**

Cyberbullying is bullying that is carried out through the internet or mobile phones.

(Reference: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers/Pages/cyberbullying.aspx>)

Like the traditional definition, cyber bullying usually involves systematic communication over a period of time.

### **Types of cyberbullying**

Cyberbullying is bullying using digital technologies including mobile phones, email and social media tools. Cyberbullying includes:

- **Pranking** - Repeated hang ups, anonymous, mocking or threatening phone calls.
- **Image sharing** - Forwarding or sharing unflattering or private images without permission.
- **Sexually explicit images** - People of any age, who forward or share images of a sexual nature of a person under 18 need to be aware that this is a criminal offence (child pornography) that may result in prosecution.
- **Text and email** - Sending insulting or threatening text messages or emails.

- **Personal online information** - Publishing online someone's private, personal or embarrassing information without permission, or spreading rumours online.
- **Identity theft** - Assuming someone's identity online and negatively representing them in a way that damages their reputation or relationships.
- **Hate sites** - Creating hate sites or implementing social exclusion campaigns on social networking sites.

### **Other types of cyberbullying**

It is also cyberbullying when a student, or students, uses technology to run a multi-step campaign to bully another student. For example, setting another student up to be assaulted, video-recording their humiliation, posting the video-recording online and then sending the website address to others. Reference;

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

## **IMPLEMENTATION:**

At the beginning of each year classroom teachers will clarify the school policy on maintaining a bully free environment and remind children that reporting is not 'dobbing'.

- Parents, teachers, students and the community will be aware of the school's position on bullying.
- Teachers will be regularly reminded of their duty of care regarding protection of students from all forms of bullying.
- Relationships will be restored with respect following the procedures of Restorative Practices
- Bystanders of an incident will be empowered to be proactive in seeking help
- School community support and cooperation will be sought at all times

The school will adopt a four-phase approach to bullying which includes

### **A. Primary Prevention**

### **B. Early Intervention**

### **C. Intervention**

### **D. Post-Violation - Restoring Wellbeing**

## ***A. Primary Prevention – Development of social competencies***

- Provide professional development for staff relating to bullying, harassment and proven countermeasures.
- Build community awareness relating to bullying (including cyberbullying), its characteristics, its effects on victims and the school's programs and response.
- Provide programs such as Resilience, Rights and Respectful Relationships, Values Education, the Berry Street Educational Model and other social and emotional learning programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, self regulation, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving.
- Educate students about what behaviour is acceptable in the school (i.e. Student Code of Conduct, Classroom Codes of Conduct)
- Ensure that each classroom teacher will clarify with students at the start of each year the definition of bullying and the school policy on bullying, including cyber-bullying.
- Encourage student leaders, staff and students to promote the philosophy of 'No Put Downs'.
- Empower the 'bystanders' of an incident to be proactive in seeking help
- Use class meetings using strategies such as 'Circle Time' to help solve problems, which arise
- Provide electives and structured activities available to students at lunch breaks.
- Award students who are recognised for positive behaviours
- Ensure staff supervision of set areas in playground.
- Provide all students with individual computer and network logins and passwords.
- Install firewalls to eliminate outside traffic into the school's network and intranet.

## ***B Early Intervention – Includes the use of restorative language of choice***

The school will

- Use the language of choice to redirect escalated behaviour ( See appendix 7 )
- Encourage and support children to report bullying incidents involving themselves or others.
- Ensure classroom teachers and principal on a regular basis remind students and staff to report incidents of bullying.
- Encourage parents to contact school if they become aware of a problem.

( see Appendix 4 : What to do if you suspect your child is being bullied )

### **C. Intervention –**

The school will implement the following process sequentially:

- Once identified each person who was involved in the incident will be spoken to using language of choice (see appendix 7), and all alleged incidents will be fully investigated.
- The Affective Questioning model will be implemented (see appendix 8).
- Involved students will complete the Holy Trinity Behaviour Reflection sheet (see appendix 10), which will be centrally archived by the Principal. Teachers are to ensure this document is an accurate account of the event.
- The teacher will contact the parents of both parties and inform them of the incident and invite them to be part of the interviewing process.
- Students identified by others as bullies will be included in the Affective Questioning process. (see appendix 8)
- A meeting of relevant persons is to be convened following identification of on-going bullying behaviour. (Principal, class teacher, parents, students, other). All issues relevant to the behaviour of the student are considered.
- Both bullies and victims will be offered counselling and support in line with Restorative Practices Mediation.
- If bullying is repeated then the appropriate stage of Consequences for Repeat Bullying Incidents will be implemented. (see appendix 6).
- The teacher who witnesses the bullying behaviour or who it is reported to will be responsible for investigating the incident.
- Removal of cyber-bullies from access to the school's network and computers for a period of time.

### **D. Post Violation / Restoring Wellbeing -**

Consequences for students will be individually based and may involve:

- Removal from classroom to the Principal/Deputy Principal/Student Wellbeing Leader
- Negotiated contracts
- Ongoing monitoring
- Time Away from class/yard
- Mediation sessions with the victim to reconcile differences
- Reinforcement of positive behaviours.
- Classroom Meetings/ Circle Time
- Support Structures such as Student Safety Plans
- Behaviour guidance programs (e.g. anger management, social skills)
- Ongoing monitoring of identified bullies.
- Ongoing communication with parents if required
- Referral to external agencies
- Class/group changes
- Exclusion from school.
- Negotiated Transfer

## **Appendix - Glossary of Terms**

### **Appendix 1 - Serious Incident – Definition**

1. The behaviour seriously undermines the ethos of Holy Trinity Primary School;
- or 2. The individual consistently and deliberately fails to comply with any lawful order of a principal or teacher;
- or 3. The individual is offensive or dangerous to the physical or emotional health of any staff member or any student;
- or 4. The individual consistently or deliberately interferes with the educational opportunities of other students.

### **Appendix 2 - The Key Elements of Bullying: An intention to be hurtful.**

1. This intention is carried out.
2. The behaviour harms the target.
3. The bully overwhelms the target with his or her power
4. There is no justification for the action
5. Action/behaviour is repeated.
6. Bully gets satisfaction/enjoyment from hurting the target.

### **Appendix 3 - Some Examples of Bullying Behaviour include:**

1. Hitting, pushing, kicking, spitting.
2. Teasing and using put-downs.
3. Using offensive names.
4. Making offensive comment about others or their families.
5. Gossip – spreading information (true or untrue).
6. Hurtful looks.
7. Rude gestures.
8. Leaving someone out of a group to be mean to them.
9. Messing up someone's game.
10. Hiding, damaging, stealing someone's belongings.
11. Making up rumours/stories about someone.
12. Using threats to stop people going to the toilet or to take their money, food, or other belongings.
13. Writing offensive notes to someone.
14. Sending offensive messages through e-mail, SMS or chat rooms.

### **Appendix 4 - What to do if you suspect your child is being bullied.**

- You are encouraged to contact your child's teacher and make an appointment to discuss your concerns
- Should the issue remain unresolved or the outcome is unsatisfactory you are invited to make an appointment at the school office to discuss the matter with the Principal/Deputy Principal/Student Wellbeing Leader.
- If the matter remains unresolved, you may make an appointment to speak with the Parish Priest, who is the employer of the school staff.

### **Appendix 5 - Emergency Support Plan**

When a serious incident occurs in the classroom or in the playground a student will deliver a red card to the office indicating that assistance is needed in the classroom or designated play area. The Principal, Deputy Principal or nominated staff member acts on Steps C & D of the Implementation stage of the policy. (Intervention/Post Violation and Restoring Wellbeing).

### **Appendix 6 - Consequences for Repeat Bullying Incidents**

1. Students involved are counselled using the 'affective questioning' model.
2. The following steps will then be followed:

**1<sup>st</sup> offence** - Documentation will be recorded on the Behaviour Reflection Sheet, which will be centrally archived by the Principal. Teachers are to ensure this document is an accurate account of the event. The teacher will contact the parent of both parties and inform them of the incident and outcome of the 'Affective Questioning' process.

**2<sup>nd</sup> offence** - Recess Time Away from the Playground – Up to 20 minutes of morning recess and lunchtime recess until the following is achieved;

- Parental contact is made, a negotiated contract is formalised including formal ongoing monitoring.

**3<sup>rd</sup> offence** - Exclusion from School–

In this time the parents will be required to:

- cooperate with the school in mediation sessions with the victim to reconcile differences.
- engage in a referral to external agencies that offer behaviour guidance programs (e.g. anger management, social skills programs).

### **Appendix 7 - Language of choice**

- Engages the young person with dignity
- De-escalates the behaviour
- Heightens the young person's responsibility



- Re-integrates the young person

Example; A child is not playing by the rules in a handball game. The other students are getting annoyed. Teacher: "Child's Name I can see your friends are starting to get frustrated, before you join back in the game with your friends you need to think about how you can play fairly and cooperate with the rules".

### **Appendix 8 - Affective Questioning**

- Focus on specific behaviours or incident without blaming.
- Use 'relational questions' to draw out who was affected and how they were affected.
- Direct questions toward problem solving what needs to 'make things right'?
- What happened?
- How did it happen?
- How did you act in this situation?
- What were you thinking at the time?
- What have you thought about since?
- Who do think was affected?
- How were they affected?
- How were you affected?
- What needs to happen to make things right?
- If the same thing happened again how could you behave differently?

### **Appendix 9 - Circle Time**

- Structured creative form of group work
- Safe, risk-taking, trusting, no-blaming environment to speak, listen, share thoughts, explore ideas and interact. • Way of supporting young people, raising confidence, building self-esteem.
- Time for students to feel valued and able to learn about themselves. What Happens? Everyone sits in a circle The three rules are stated: 1. Everyone has a turn to contribute 2. When it is someone's turn to talk everyone else listens. There are NO PUT DOWNS. 3. You may pass if you wish.

### **Appendix 10 Behaviour Reflection Sheet**

