



# Good Shepherd Catholic School

— Lockridge —

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## **Bullying and Harassment Policy**

### **Rationale**

The community of Good Shepherd Catholic School, Lockridge is endeavouring to live out the school's vision statement and the shared value of each person as an image and likeness of Jesus Christ.

**As a developing, loving community the members of Good Shepherd Catholic School find all forms of bullying, as exemplified by victimization, acts of violence, aggression, unkind words, teasing etc, unacceptable.**

The key stakeholders – target, perpetrators, witnesses and authority figures – need to be educated in the appropriate role, responses, behaviours and processes for dealing with and complaining about incidents of bullying.

Exists and functions within the Good Shepherd Catholic School Pastoral Care Umbrella.

Acts of violence or aggression, either physical or verbal, which are random or spontaneous, will be addressed through the Good Shepherd Catholic School Managing Student Behaviour Policy, which is also located under the Pastoral Care Umbrella.

### **Definitions**

#### **Bullying & Harassment**

Is a pattern of wilful, conscious behaviour intended to hurt, injure, upset, threaten or embarrass an individual or group. Its nature can be verbal (eg name-calling, putdowns or threats), physical (eg hitting, tripping, punching, kicking, throwing objects) or social (eg ignoring, hiding, ostracising, sending nasty notes/messages).

#### **Violence and random acts of Aggression**

"Unlike bullying and harassment, violence is not necessarily associated Aggression with an imbalance of power. It can occur between people of equal power.... it implies forcefulness, usually (but not always) of a physical kind" (Dr King Rigby) and is dealt with within the Managing Student Behaviour Policy.

#### **Target**

A community member who experiences bullying

#### **Bully**

A community member who is bullying another

#### **Witness**

A community member who witnesses bullying

### **Principles**

The Bully and Harassment Policy aims to ensure that each child is able to develop his/her education within a safe, caring environment free from harassment and bullying.

## **Procedures**

- 1 The Bullying and Harassment Policy relates to the children of Good Shepherd Catholic School.
- 2 All teachers will reinforce the school's ethos and expectations in regards to the principles of this policy by:
  - a. Maintaining a proactive philosophy and anti-bullying awareness within the educational processes and relationships
  - b. Have explicit Safe School (The Australian Government Resource Pack is a valuable resource) units of work within the education program. The units may be developed in consultation with the school Social Worker or Psychologist.
  - c. Educating community members to:
    - i. differentiate between "dobbing" and reporting
    - ii. asking for help and acting responsibly
    - iii. Empathize with the feelings of those targeted for bullying or harassment.
  - d. Encouraged to recognize the Christ-image in their peers and to take responsibility for the more vulnerable members of the community
- 3 All incidents of suspected or reported bullying:
  - a. Will be fully investigated by the teacher first identifying the incident or to whom the disclosure is initially made
  - b. Unless agreement is achieved with another teacher or member of the Administration Team
  - c. Will be documented and a copy emailed to The Principal.
- 4 The investigation process will:
  - a. Honour the principles of:
    - i. Natural justice
    - ii. Confidentiality
  - b. Ensure that all parties and witnesses are interviewed independently and in an appropriate manner using a shared concern or "no Blame approach"
  - c. Recorded and emailed to the Principal.
- 5 Reporting Process:
  - a. All incidents of bullying should be reported immediately to:
    - i. The class or duty teacher or
    - ii. The parent who should then report the incident to the class teacher or The Principal or
    - iii. The Principal by the child or parent

***Each child has the right to report incidents to The Principal in the yard or through the School Secretary who will facilitate immediate access to The Principal or his delegate.***

- 6 Where Bullying or Harassment is found to have occurred the process will aim to:
  - a. Establish the reason for the bullying
  - b. Heal the relationship between the parties
  - c. Reinforce the relevant school rules and policies by providing consequences consistent with the Managing Student Behaviour Policy.
- 7 The written notification to the bully's and target's parents will contain:
  - a. details of:
    - i. The incident
    - ii. The consequences or sanctions imposed (Bully's only)
  - b. The option for the parent to discuss the incident with the author of the notification
  - c. An appendix, which the parent is required to sign acknowledging receipt of the notification
- 8 To support those who are bullies in changing their behaviours community members will:

- a. Be encouraged to influence bullies positively and to model appropriate behaviour for the bully
  - b. Develop a no tolerance approach to bullying behaviour.
- 9 The reconciliation process will aim to change the attitude and behaviour of bully by:
- i. Supporting the bully to take responsibility for his/her behaviour
  - ii. Developing his/her ability to make more appropriate choices
  - iii. Assist bullies to develop appropriate non-violent ways to meet their needs
  - iv. Reason with the bully and help him/her to empathize with the feelings of the target
  - v. Assist the bully to understand the consequences of his/her actions on others
  - vi. Healing the relationship between the bully and the target
  - vii. Provide the target with the strategies and empowerment to deal with future such incidents should they occur.
- 10 The targets will be:
- a. Supported throughout the process
  - b. Educated in reporting procedures
  - c. Encouraged to use appropriate assertive and help seeking strategies to avert future incidents.
  - d. Access to support agencies e.g. School Social Worker, Psychologist or teacher where a relationship exists.

## APPENDIX A

### **SUPPORTING ROLES**

#### Teachers will:

1. Act as role models, demonstrating caring and tolerant behaviour
2. Listen to reports of bullying as well as the student's other concerns.
3. Protect victims from further harm.
4. Try to stop the bullying from recurring.
5. Enforce disciplinary consequences if necessary.
6. Enlist the assistance of the school social worker for counselling if appropriate.

#### Targets will:

1. Be encouraged to speak up.
2. Be encouraged to try to stand up for themselves.
3. Report incidents to a teacher or the Office staff.

#### Students who witness bullying will:

1. Not encourage the bullying behaviour.
2. Intervene if they are able.
3. Seek teacher assistance if they cannot intervene.

### **How parents can help**

Whether their child is a target of bullying or involved in bullying someone else the following steps may help:

1. Be alert to the signs of possible bullying (eg unexplained bruises/scratches, unwillingness to attend school, loss of confidence, declining academic performance.)
2. Listen to their child sympathetically and sensitively
3. Being aware that each child involved will have his/her own views of what happened.
4. Report the incident to the child's teacher in the first instance, then the Principal if necessary.
5. **Refrain** from talking directly with other children, who may have been involved or witnesses, or their parents.
6. Refrain from encouraging the child to hit back or return verbal abuse.
7. Set a good example when resolving your own conflicts.
8. Teach your child to respect differences and to be tolerant.

### **Strategies that Good Shepherd Catholic School**

Will use to deter bullying include:

1. Being alert to the signs of bullying
2. Investigating incidents of bullying
3. Empowering targets of bullying
4. Ensuring the physical safe of the students
5. Giving bullies the opportunity to explore and address their unacceptable behaviour.
6. Providing supervision
7. Providing awareness-raising exercises in the curriculum about the impact of bullying and about conflict resolution
8. Make counselling by staff available to both victims and bullies
9. The implementation of the Managing Student Behaviour Policy and the imposing of sanctions.

### **Children can deal with bullying situations by:**

1. Calmly walk away
2. Avoiding children who bully
3. Not fighting or teasing
4. Ignore teasing and mean words
5. Find someone else to play with.
6. Tell themselves they are not the mean words being said about them

7. Practice a quick verbal retort that sounds confident.

If these strategies do not work, the child should tell a caring adult eg:

1. Their parent/guardian,
2. Their class teacher
3. The duty teacher
4. Miss Amy Chinotto in the office
5. The Social Worker
6. The Principal.

# Appendix B: Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia Policy

## DEALING WITH BULLYING AND HARASSMENT (STUDENTS)

Originally released: 2003  
Due for Review: 2007

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**RATIONALE** Catholic schools have a responsibility to provide an educational environment that promotes the dignity and respect of the person and, therefore, aims to eliminate bullying and harassment in all forms.

Learning outcomes, physical health, emotional, psychological and spiritual well being can be adversely affected by bullying and harassment.

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**DEFINITIONS** Bullying involves:

- a desire to hurt
- hurtful behaviour (physical, verbal or relational)
- an imbalance of power
- an unjust use of power
- typically repetition
- is experienced by the target of the aggression as oppressive, and by the perpetrator as enjoyable. (Adapted from Rigby 2001) <sup>1</sup>

Harassment is any unwanted, unwelcome or uninvited behaviour which makes a person feel humiliated, intimidated or offended. (Adapted from CEO Policy, Harassment in School, 1998). Harassment can be seen as one form of bullying. The terms are often used interchangeably.

***Bullying can be characterized as:***

- ***Repetitive, causing distress, not only at the time of the attack but also by the threat of future attacks***
- ***An imbalance of power (that is inappropriate and where there is an intention to hurt)***

***Its nature may be:***

- ***Verbal - name-calling, put-downs, threats (spoken, written or electronic)***
- ***Physical - hitting, tripping, punching, throwing objects, stealing***
- ***Social – ignoring, hiding, ostracizing***
- ***Psychological – stalking, threatening looks, spreading rumours, damaging possessions (MindMatters 2000).*** <sup>2</sup>

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**PRINCIPLES**

1. Catholic schools owe a duty of care to their students.
2. Catholic schools provide supportive environments, which promote respect for self and others, physical/emotional well being and positive mental health.
3. Dealing with bullying and harassment requires a whole school approach within the school's Pastoral Care Framework.
4. When bullying and harassment are ignored or overlooked, it serves to condone and reinforce the behaviour.

**PROCEDURES**

1. All schools shall develop a school based policy on bullying and harassment which includes:
  - 1.1 an expanded definition statement which states that the school does not tolerate bullying and harassment
  - 1.2 examples of behaviours that are considered to be bullying and harassment

- 1.3 a statement defining and advising the responsibilities of each of the major parties to the policy: the Principal, staff, students and parents
- 1.4 strategies and responses to address:
- the development of supportive environments and relationships, the promotion of tolerance and the acceptance of difference
  - the resolution of bully/victim problems
  - the support and restoration to well-being of children who have been hurt by abusive behaviour by their peers
  - the amelioration of the behaviour and attitudes of students who bully
  - the pro-active engagement of bystanders to discourage bullying behaviour
  - the broader needs of the school community
  - the prevailing attitudes within the school including the 'culture' of the school.
- 1.5 school support systems that promote positive mental health
- 1.6 teaching and learning programs to support the strategies
- 1.7 reporting and recording procedures to be used when investigating incidents
- 1.8 a case management model to be used when bullying and harassment behaviours persist
- 1.9 a statement on appropriate confidentiality.
2. The school based policy shall be developed using a broad consultative process.
  3. Schools shall provide professional development to meet the needs of their staff in implementing the school policy.
  4. The policy developed by schools shall be monitored and have regular review.

## References

- 1 Rigby, K. (2001). *Stop the Bullying. A Handbook for Schools*. ACER, Australia
- 2 Curriculum Corporation (2000), *Mind Matters*, Commonwealth of Australia

## Appendix Supportive Material

### *Key points in any lesson plan when addressing anti bullying strategies.*

The plan should include the following headings. Please note that the wording and strategies included here:

1. are suggestions only and not exhaustive.
2. need to be tailored to the developmental needs of the children.

The bullying *behaviour* should be emphasised, instead of labelling children as “victims”, “targets” and “bullies”.

### **Definitions of Terms can be found in the Bullying and Harassment Policy**

It needs to be emphasised at all levels that bullying can be done by individuals, or groups.

### **The effects of bullying**

People who are bullied feel very hurt, upset or angry. The effects of bullying can last a long time.

### **Types of bullying behaviours, with examples:**

#### *Physical:*

Hitting, punching shoving, pinching, tripping, spitting, scratching, damaging, hiding or stealing belongings, throwing objects at someone, locking someone in or out.

#### *Verbal:*

Name-calling, making offensive remarks, taunting, teasing, put-downs.

#### *Social/emotional:*

Spreading rumours, gossiping about, or embarrassing someone, making fun of some one, using threatening looks or gestures, excluding or threatening to exclude from groups, ignoring, ostracising or alienating.

It needs to be emphasised that bullying is not limited to hurting someone physically.

### **How bystanders may encourage bullying:**

- Standing around looking on.
- Agreeing with mean comments.
- Not supporting someone who is bullied.
- Passing on mean\nasty notes\nmessages.
- Passing on rumours.
- Laughing at the bullying behaviour.
- Helping to hide the behaviour from adults.

### **Action students can take if they are bullied.**

These are not in any particular order; the extent to which children can try self-help strategies first, before asking an adult for support will vary according to the child’s age, developmental stage and the seriousness of the bullying behaviour. All students need to be made aware that in all cases of serious injury or upset they must go to a teacher straight away.

#### *Lower:*

- Tell the person who is bullying you that you don’t like it.
- Look strong and walk away.
- Don’t tease or hit back.
- Go to a safe place.
- Stay around other people.
- Go to a teacher and tell them what is happening; try and be as honest as you can.

### *Middle/Upper:*

- Pretend not to hear what is being said.
- Tell your self that you are not the nasty things that are said about you.
- Believe in yourself.
- Consider your own behaviour.
- Choose somewhere else to play, eat etc.
- Look strong and walk away.
- Control your anger.
- Be assertive.
- Explain how you feel.
- Don't be mean back.
- Ask your friends for ideas, but don't "badmouth ".
- Leave/avoid situations that could lead to bullying.
- Talk to a teacher (classroom or duty).
- Ask to see the social worker.
- Talk to your parents.

### **Actions students can take if they see bullying going on.**

- Refuse to watch bullying.
- Don't join in with the bullying.
- Tell the person bullying to stop.
- Ask the person being bullied to walk away with you.
- Allow the person being bullied to play with you and your friends.
- Tell a teacher what is going on.
- Don't take on the person bullying; it's not safe and could lead you into bullying behaviour too.

Student's need to be reminded that asking for help when someone is hurt or upset is not dobbing. Dobbing happens when a student tells an adult something about another student only to get someone else into trouble.

### **What students can do if they feel tempted to bully someone else.**

- Think about what is making you angry or upset.
- Think of some other ways to deal with someone who has annoyed/hurt you.
- Talk to someone about what is happening to you, how you are feeling.
- Think of doing something else instead of bullying eg play with other children, suggest a new game, go somewhere quiet to calm down.

### **What students can expect teachers to do.**

If teachers see or hear about someone being bullied they will try and help. They will also ask questions like:

- What happened?
- How do you feel?
- What did you do to try and solve the problem?
- What happened then?
- What can you do now?
- Do you need more help?

If teachers are told about or see someone bullying they will remind them of the school's rule against bullying. They will also ask questions about what happened, how the other person may have felt and what the person doing the bullying can do to make things better. The teacher may also use consequences from the school's discipline policy.

It needs to be emphasised that teachers will take all complaints seriously, will check up on how the children are coping and may contact the parents.

**How family members may be able to help.**

Parents will probably be interested in hearing about what happened and will support you and encourage you to try the ideas you have learned.

**Closing statement.**

At this school we try to make everyone feel safe, happy and valued. We can stop bullying if we all work together.

(Prepared by Christine Pittman School Social Worker April 2004)

## **Appendix**

### **Pro-Active Social Skills Program for Good Shepherd Catholic School.**

1. Meet with the Principal and APs.
2. Raise at a staff meeting.
3. Newsletter item to parents, to inform them of this new initiative.
4. Raise community awareness of the school's bullying response plan.
5. Assessments/surveys of each class's social interactions.
6. Christine to conduct, with teacher input, two half hour sessions for each class level over the year. Some presentations could be done with the year levels combined, depending on the teachers' programs.

### ***Proposed outline of a class-by-class program.***

These issues have been selected following research, plus discussions with various teachers. Compatibility with the curriculum and teacher programs would need to be confirmed and the relevant resources acquired. Input/comment from the NGSPS psychologist may be useful.

#### **Year One**

1. Introduction to identifying feelings and being friendly.
2. Story: eg "The lion and the mouse"
3. Activity: colouring in activity with a partner, heads and tails game.

#### **Year Two**

1. Joining in a group, including others.
2. Story: eg "Feeling left out"
3. Activity: "My secret Buddy" Friendly Cards game, works sheet: "Good ways to join in /include others in a game."

#### **Year Three**

1. Appreciating differences, Asking for help vs dobbling, being a good winner/loser.
2. Story: (TBA)
3. Activity: class survey: "How do you see your classmates?"
4. Video "Being friendly", worksheet "Being noticed", Strengths Card Game.

#### **Year Four**

1. Problem solving steps for dealing with teasing and feeling left out.
2. Video "Why is it always me?"
3. Activity: Role-plays and other activities to be selected from the "Friendly Schools Program", send an anonymous letter to a "Problem Box;" students are given a letter to answer and share.

#### **Year Five**

1. Handling conflict, managing angry feelings, enhancing self-esteem.
2. Video "Being me"
3. Activity: to be selected from the "Bounce Back "package

#### **Year Six**

1. Introduction to group cooperation and leadership skills.
2. Activities from the "Friendly Kids Friendly Classes" book and the "Young leaders" program

#### **Year Seven**

1. Transition to high school
2. Video "Hit the ground running"
3. Activity: presentation from CP and an intake high school counsellor



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Dear \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you for raising your concerns relating to \_\_\_\_\_

As I explained today where a child complains of being bullied or harassed then the school implements the Bullying Policy which details how each incident is dealt with. Should the matter continue or be an incident of inappropriate behaviour rather than bullying then the school's Behaviour Management Policy is enacted.

In case where the child is uncomfortable in reporting an incident then I meet with them and try to find out which staff member the child would be comfortable to report incidents to. It may be the class teacher or anyone else on staff. The child is also reminded that they can tell Miss Amy who will let me know.

?? has chosen ?? to be that person and she has indicated she is happy to fill that role and will keep me informed.

It is vital that ???? report the incident immediately to enable it to be investigated immediately and each party to be held accountable for their actions. This is frequently through the use of Think Sheets.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you wish to discuss this further.

Yours sincerely

.....  
Martin Barrett  
Principal

Date: \_\_\_\_\_