St Lawrence Primary School

DEALING WITH BULLYING AND HARASSMENT (Students)

RATIONALE

St Lawrence Primary School has 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.

St Lawrence School Vision
The vision of St Lawrence Catholic Primary School, Balcatta is to share the message of God's love and friendship in a community of learners, developing the full potential of each child.

At St Lawrence Primary EVERYBODY has the RIGHT to:

Be safe
Be respected
Be valued

Bullying undermines these values and affects everyone within our community.

Bullying in any form is not acceptable at St Lawrence. It is everyone's responsibility to prevent it occurring.

AIM

The Bullying Policy aims to ensure that all community members are able to grow and develop within a safe caring environment, where each person is valued.

Principles:

The Bullying Policy is designed to complement our school's "Friendly Schools Plus" program along with the "Making Jesus Real" philosophy. This is an outline of the whole school process involved in dealing with bullying and allows teachers, parents and students to understand the steps involved in implementing this policy.
The Bullying Policy is guided by the strategies outlined in the National Safe Schools Framework (NSSF) and is consistent with the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia's Pastoral Care Framework.
The National Safe Schools Framework is underpinned by a set of guiding principles and related key elements/approaches that schools can put in place to effectively provide a safe and supportive learning environment.

1. The six key elements that schools need to have in place to implement the NSSF are described in the Framework as:
    - school values, ethos, culture, structures and student welfare
    - establishment of agreed policies, programs and procedures
    - provision of education and training to school staff, students and parents
    - managing incidents of abuse and victimisation
    - providing support for students
    - working closely with parents

2. Catholic schools owe a duty of care to their students.

3.   Catholic schools provide supportive environments which:
-       Encourage socially appropriate behaviour using positive behaviour management
-       Promote respect for self and others
-       Develop physical/emotional well-being and resiliency; and
-       Develop interpersonal skills and positive mental health.

4.   Dealing with bullying, harassment and violence requires quality leadership and role modeling to facilitate strategy implementation and sustained change, together with a whole-school community approach that is consistent with the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia's Pastoral Care Framework, the school's Pastoral Care practices and the school's Evangelisation Plan.

5.   Bullying, harassment and violence shall be dealt with. When bullying, harassment and violence are ignored or overlooked, it serves to condone or reinforce the behavior. Bystanders (whose who observe bullying) can encourage or assist those who bully simply by doing nothing.

6.   While the aim is to promote and encourage positive behavior, school policy and procedure shall contain clear statements regarding the range of appropriate consequences that may be applicable for unacceptable behavior. In looking at consequences relating to specific issues, considerations should be given to other circumstances which may have bearing such as family or Mental Health matters.

7.   All parties to incidents of Bullying, Harassment and /violence are entitled to appropriate support.

Definition:

Bullying is a repeated behaviour that may be physical, verbal, written and/or psychological; where there is intent to cause fear, distress or harm to another; that is conducted by a more powerful individual or group; against a less powerful individual or group of individuals who is /are unable to stop this from happening.

Types and examples of Bullying:

Physical Bullying – repeatedly and deliberately:
•   bumping, pulling or shoving someone
•   hitting, punching or slapping, pinching, biting or scratching someone
•   touching someone who doesn't want to be touched

Verbal Bullying – repeatedly and deliberately:
•   calling people names or offensive nicknames
•   teasing someone or being sarcastic in a way that is hurtful and upsetting
•   comments about the way someone may look or behave that are hurtful

Threatening – repeatedly and deliberately:
•   making someone feel afraid that they are going to be hurt
•   pressuring someone to do things they don't want to do
•   aggressive gestures or looks that make someone afraid

Property Abuse – repeatedly and deliberately:

- damaging someone's belongings
- taking things away from someone
- taking or hiding someone's belongings

Emotional Bullying – repeatedly and deliberately:
- ignoring someone or keeping them out of group conversations (known as exclusion)
- leaving someone out by encouraging others to not have anything to do with them
- spreading lies or stories about someone to try and get others to dislike them

Cyberbullying – repeatedly and deliberately:
- ignoring someone or sending nasty messages through social media
- sending harassing, abusive or offensive messages online e.g. through social media or phone
- spreading rumours online e.g. through social media or phone

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.

Bullying and harassment are often thought of separately; however, both involve a more powerful person or group oppressing a less powerful person or group, often on the grounds of 'difference'. These differences can be related to culture, ethnicity, genre, sexuality, sexual orientation, ability or disability, religion, body size and physical appearance, personality, age, marital status, parenting status or economic status.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Principal is responsible for:

- Implementing this policy in the school.
- Being aware of all legislative requirements relating to violence, bullying and harassment.
- Ensuring that the preparation and review of the school-based policy and procedures involve consultation with all groups within the school community.
- Ensuring that the school-based policy clearly enunciates the school's approach to bullying and harassment.
- Ensuring that the students, staff and parents are familiar with the school's approach and understand their rights and responsibilities in relation to it.
- Promoting this policy within the school, with particular regard to the professional development needs of staff, and inclusion of this within the school's professional development plan.
- Ensuring the school's plans to counter bullying and harassment are monitored and reviewed at regular intervals.
- Ensuring reported incidents, intervention and follow-up are documented.
- Ensuring sensitivity, confidentiality and the protection of the rights of all individuals.

Staff (in particular teachers) are responsible for:

- Ensuring that curriculum content and teaching practices are congruent with and support this policy.
- Helping students to develop competencies to challenge bullying attitudes and behaviours in themselves and others.
- Being aware of the legislative requirements relating to violence, bullying and harassment (refer CECWA policy "Harassment in Schools")
- Ensuring that claims of violence, bullying and harassment are speedily and constructively addressed according to school-based strategies.

Students are responsible for:

- Understanding and practising their rights and respecting the rights of others to be free from bullying and harassment.
- Discouraging bullying bevaviour by taking on the role of pro-active bystander.
- Being aware of and using the appropriate procedures for responding to incidents of bullying or harassment.

Parents are responsible for:

- Supporting the school's policy and procedures on bullying and harassment
- Approaching the school if they think their child is being bullied or harassed.
- Participating in meetings with the school so as to assist the staff with resolving the incidence of bullying involving their child.

PROCEDURES

Currently at St Lawrence a number of measures have been established to promote a Christ centered environment. Making Jesus Real is at the forefront of our school's culture, where we ask ourselves, "What Would Jesus Do?" This in itself encourages students to understand the right path to follow.

However, should bullying occur the following actions will take place:

All incidents of suspected or reported bullying will be fully investigated and can be reported immediately to:

- The class or duty teacher.
- The parent who should then report the incident immediately to the class teacher.
- The Principal directly by the child or parent or staff member.

	Responding to a Bullying Incident
RESPECT	1. Disclosure of Bullying episode to teacher on duty and/or classroom teacher. 2. Teacher collects relevant information. 3. Assess if the situation is considered Bullying by referring to the policy definition and determine the level of seriousness.
RESPOND	4. If the situation has been determined as a Bullying issue then the teacher utilises the CoLATE Model and guided by the principles of Restorative Justice conducts separate meetings with bully, victim/s and bystander/s to gather information and determine the series of events. *Co-Late Model* *The Co-Late model is an interview technique that is helpful when speaking to students about bullying behaviour. The model is simple and is comprised of five steps.* *Confidentiality* *Listen* *Acknowledge concerns* *Talk about the options – What Would Jesus Do?* *End with encouragement* *Restorative Justice* *In schools restorative justice practices hold students responsible to the person they have harmed rather than to the 'authorities'. While students are held accountable for their behavior, the focus is on repairing the damage they caused to other members of the school community and on restoring relationships. Consideration of the effects of their actions on others is aligned with the "Making Jesus Real" philosophy.* 5. Formalised reporting is critical when addressing bullying incidences. Collect and record all information related to each event using the incident report form template. Copy of Incident Report Form to be forwarded to Principal for storage on file. 6. Verbally communicate incident and relevant information to the Assistant Principal/ Principal who will then offer support and guidance for the remainder of the process. 7. Assistant Principal/Principal to conduct incident interview and action plan devised using whole school template and implemented 8. Contact parents of relevant parties to disclose the situation. If meeting is required, Principal to attend.
RECONCILE	9. Check in with all parties involved in the incident at regular predetermined intervals as specified on the action plan. Offer additional support to those students who are experiencing difficulties adhering to the bounds of the agreed plan. 10. Monitor the effectiveness of your response technique after each incident. Ensure all monitoring is recorded and tracked as part of the school record management system. 11. Those students continuing to experience difficulties adhering to the bounds of the agreed plan following additional support may be excluded from school activities at the discretion of the Principal.

INCIDENT REPORT FORM

Date	
Reported by…	
Reported to….	
Who was involved? *All persons including bystanders.*	
Where did the incident/s occur?	
Further Action Required	
Series of events	

INCIDENT INTERVIEW & ACTION PLAN	
Interview date & people present	
What happened?	
How did it happen?	
How did you act in this situation?	
Who do you think was affected?	
What needs to happen to make things right?	

If the same situation happens again, how could you behave?	
Check in times/dates	
Monitoring	
Further Action	
Signed: Student Parent Principal	 ---------------------------------- ------------------------------ -- ------------------------------------