



POLICY ON BULLYING IN SCHOOL

PREAMBLE

At Our Lady of the Cape Catholic Primary School we believe that all students have the right to an education in an environment where they feel safe and happy. We also believe that parents have the right to know that their child is going to be able to learn and enjoy their school life without the threat of bullying. This policy is a proactive initiative to make our school free from any form of bullying.

OLC Bullying Definition

Bullying is a conscious, wilful, deliberate activity intended to harm where a child/ren get pleasure from the targeted child's pain/and or misery. It can be verbal, physical, and/or relational; have as it's overlay race, ethnicity, religion, gender, physical, or mental ability; includes all forms of cyberbullying.

It is when an individual or a group of people with more power, repeatedly and intentionally cause hurt or harm to another person or group of people who feel helpless to respond. Bullying can continue over time, is often hidden from adults, and will probably continue if no action is taken.

An Imbalance of Power: Kids who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people. Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumours, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

Repetition: Bullying behaviours happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once.

What bullying is not:

- single episodes of social rejection or dislike
- single episode acts of nastiness or spite
- random acts of aggression or intimidation
- mutual arguments, disagreements or fights.

These actions can cause great distress. However, they do not fit the definition of bullying, and they're not examples of bullying unless someone is deliberately and repeatedly doing them.





1. Clarity on the definitions for; Teasing, Taunting and Bullying:

Teasing allows the teaser and the person teased to swap roles, isn't intended to hurt other people, maintains dignity and is light-hearted and fun. Teasing stops when the person teased objects to the teasing.

Taunting is based on an imbalance of power, only one person thinks it's funny, the other doesn't, is intended to harm and demean and can be a prelude to physical bullying. The bully taunts and the bullied is taunted.

Bullying is often repeated taunting when the person knows they are upsetting and harming another and because of this, continues to target them. This person does this without empathy, compassion or shame. They feel a sense of entitlement to upset another person, are intolerant towards differences and feel a liberty to exclude another person who they see as not worthy of respect.
(*Barbara Coloroso -2015*)

<https://www.stopbullying.gov/what-is-bullying/definition/>

<https://www.ncab.org.au/bullying-advice/bullying-for-parents/definition-of-bullying/>

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Principles

1. OLC is built on gospel values which promote respect for self and others, physical and emotional well-being and positive mental health. We owe a duty of care to all students including those who engage in bullying behaviours.
2. If a complaint is made by a student regarding being bullied, the student is believed. No judgement can be made that it is anything but the truth. All complaints are then investigated through the set procedures. The student being bullied is not to feel they have not been believed by any adult taking the report.
3. When bullying and harassment are ignored, overlooked or not actively uncovered, it serves to condone and reinforce the behaviour.
4. Bullying is a demonstrated behaviour not a character trait. Therefore, this school shall always refer to 'children who bully or demonstrate bullying behaviour' rather than to children as 'bullies'.





5. Far from being an inevitable and trivial part of school life, bullying has significant adverse effects on educational, physical and mental health outcomes of victims and those who engage in bullying behaviours.
6. Open and honest communication, that has due respect for the confidentiality of those involved in any specific incident, assists with dealing with bullying.
7. Conscientiously and vigorously implementing an anti-bullying policy can achieve a significant reduction in bullying behaviours by building a school ethos. Strategies for prevention minimise the incidents requiring an intervention response.
8. Bullying is a social phenomenon and its solution requires collective responsibility. This requires the adoption of a whole-school approach to bullying and harassment that is consistent with pastoral care and evangelisation.

The Principal and Assistant Principal shall be responsible for:

- Implementing this policy within the school.
- Being aware of legislative requirements relating to bullying and harassment (refer CECWA policy "Harassment in Schools").
- Ensuring that the school-based policy clearly demonstrates the school's approach to bullying and harassment.
- Ensuring that students, staff and school community members 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 expectations of teachers and staff.
- Ensuring that the school's plans to counter bullying and harassment are monitored including documenting reported instances, interventions and follow-up and initiating reviews of the approaches at regular intervals.
- Ensuring sensitivity, confidentiality and the protection of the rights of all individuals.

The Teachers shall be 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 bullying and harassment (refer CEOWA policy "Harassment in Schools").
- Ensuring that claims of bullying and harassment speedily and constructively addressed according to school-based strategies.
- Recording details of incidents and meetings related to issues of bullying using internal





pastoral care records.

The Parents shall be responsible for:

- Supporting the school's policy and procedures on Bullying and Harassment.
- Approaching the school, either classroom teacher or administration, if they think their child is being bullied or harassed.
- Participating in meetings with school staff to assist with resolution where there has been an incident involving their child.

DETECTION

Indications that a student is suffering silently from bullying or harassment have many similarities to other forms of abuse. Caution needs to be taken when analysing the source of these behaviours. Children who are victims usually display a number of the following symptoms.

Class/School attendance

- Truancy
- School refusal or reluctance to attend school
- School refusal on certain days or lessons
- Lateness for school
- Reluctance to leave school

Academic

- Significant decrease in work output and results
- Distractible in class
- Problems with retention and short term memory

Physical

- Tiredness
- Psychosomatic complaints; frequent headaches, stomach aches
- Bedwetting – usually younger children
- Loss of appetite
- Unexplained bruises and injury
- Torn clothing





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Emotional

- Personality changes from confident to loss of confidence, impulsive hitting out and swearing
- Sudden outbursts of temper
- Being particularly negative and difficult towards siblings at home.
- Lethargic
- Swings in mood
- Social
- Withdrawal from social activities with peers
- Withdrawal from extra curriculum activities

Other signs from home

- Requests to change transport arrangements to and from school
- Requests for extra money
- Taking and "losing" valuables from home
- Sudden reluctance to do things in the community eg. Go the shops, pinball machines, swimming pool etc..

If you think your child is bullied - Do's and Don'ts for Parents

Don't's

Don't minimise, rationalise or explain away the bully's behaviour
Don't rush in to solve the problem for your child. Listen to them carefully first.
Don't tell your child to fight back.
Don't confront the bully or the bully's parents.

Do's – what to say.

"I hear you, I am here for you, I believe you, you are not alone in this"

"It is not your fault"

"There are things you can do"

Report the bullying to the school classroom teacher and/or the School Leaders. Include relevant details that your child has shared with you.

(Coloroso 2015)





OLC procedure and management for dealing with reported or suspected taunting or bullying incidents.

When a bullying incident occurs it should be dealt with immediately and tailored to suit the severity of the incident.

Step One:

When a child is taunted the expectation is that they, or a bystander, ask the perpetrator to cease the behaviour. If the behaviour then stops, no further action is necessary.

Should the action not cease at this point the following process begins.

Step Two:

Ensure the immediate safety of the student who is bullied.

Investigate (Schools and/or the classroom teacher) the bullying claims, gathering evidence from all possible students connected to or who have witnessed the reported behaviour. School leaders form an understanding for what has been occurring and the behaviours displayed.

If necessary, check the validity and accuracy of the understanding that has been formed by re-interviewing students and consulting with the classroom teacher.

Provide immediate and individual mediation for the student who is bullied and the student who engaged in the bullying, by allowing both parties an opportunity to address the issue and explain their actions, feelings and possible options.

Both the student who is bullied and the student who engaged in the bullying, are spoken to by firstly the classroom teacher, then are referred to school leadership.

The parents of all students are informed and the information and evidence gathered is shared as required. Parents are informed:

1. If there has clearly been legitimate and on-going bullying occurring.
or
2. If there has been an isolated incident of taunting or unkind behavior (no in keeping to the OLC Values)
or
3. If the reports made have not been substantiated.

Details of the events are recorded using internal pastoral care records.





If there is defensible and clear evidence that on-going bullying has occurred;

- The student who engaged in the bullying is given an opportunity to apologise for the offence and give a guarantee that they will not repeat an act of bullying in the future.

The Assistant Principal or Principal emphasise:

- A. The impact the bullying behaviour has had on the other student/s
- B. The OLC values that were not adhered to.
- C. What the specific expectations and behavior are moving forward.

“Own it, Fix it, Learn from it” (Coloroso 2015)

- The student who engaged in the bullying receives an appropriate consequence based on the age of the student, their understanding of what has occurred and the severity of the incidents. The goals of the **consequence are to be related to the behaviour, allow the student to take responsibility for the behavior and ensure the bullying ceases.**
- Consequences may include using time during lunch times to formulate a letter of apology or research the impacts of bullying. This may also include exclusion from certain areas of the school for a period of time at lunch and recess.
- The parents of the student who engaged in the bullying will be notified of the consequences and future restorative steps that will be necessary.
- Action and resolution will be recorded in SEQTA.
- In the interim, a safe and supportive environment will be provided for the student who is bullied, which may result in both parties being isolated from playing with one another until all students feel and are safe.
- When appropriate, possibly at this stage, the parents of individual children identified as being involved in bullying (or those who were interviewed) will be contacted, and depending on the severity and repetition of the bullying may be asked to attend an interview with the Assistant Principal or Principal and the classroom teacher. (This will be the decision of the Principal).

Follow Up and “Check-In” Times

School leaders and the classroom teacher design a plan for scheduling “check-in” times for both students. The frequency and longevity of these meetings is at the school leaders professional discretion and until there is certainty that the bullying has stopped and there is no potential for it to continue.

These are to ensure:

The student being bullied is no longer experiencing the negative behaviours toward them.

The student engaging in the bullying is demonstrating the previously outlined specific positive behaviour and has ceased the taunting and bullying behavior.

To ensure that the negative behavior has ceased, evidence that the behavior has changed or ceased may be validated by checking with previously interviewed students





Prevention and Proactive School Processes and Programs at OLC

Australian Curriculum

Bullying and social skills shall be addressed through the curriculum at every year level. Teachers shall act as role models for inter-personal skills and will implement inclusive teaching practices. **The focus must be on empowering bystanders to take action and developing greater resiliency in victims.** Perpetrators of bullying must be identified so that an intervention can be put into place to unearth the reason for the behaviour and to teach strategies for dealing with social interactions.

Religious Education

Through the Gospel values, students make links and understand examples that Jesus taught us in the way we treat others and behaviour around others. In particular the examples and concepts covered in the **Making Jesus Real program** will compliment the RE curriculum.

OLC School Values

The OLC Value are strongly embedded in the school culture through a deliberate whole school program to focus on the OLC values of Compassion, Appreciation, Respect and Excellence each term and year. These are explained and examples of them being adhered to are given at whole school assemblies, at a classroom level, through the school newsletter and at a community level. The aim of the OLC school goals is to educate students and teach them empathy, social skills, foster positive relationships, promote productive and positive behaviour and enhance student well being.

We Value:
Compassion

Our expectation:
We strive to be kind and show awareness for those people who need our help.

We show this by:

- Treating everyone just as we would like to be treated.
- Including others in our games and activities.
- Caring for each other through our words and actions.

We Value:
Appreciation

Our expectation:
We use manners, words and actions to show gratitude to others.

We show this by:

- Appreciating and respecting our environment by keeping it clean, organised, cared for and putting our rubbish in the bin.
- Saying please and thank you to everyone.
- Speaking to people by using their name and making eye contact.
- Responding clearly and with words when someone is speaking to us.

We Value:
Respect

Our expectation:
We display respect for ourselves, for others and for our environment.

We show this by:

- Never hurting others with our bodies or our words.
- Respecting ourselves by wearing our hats outside at all times.
- Respecting other people's learning by walking, without speaking, around the school during class times.
- Valuing everyone's safety by walking around the paved areas at all times.
- Appreciating and respecting our environment by keeping it clean, organised, cared for and putting our rubbish in the bin.

We Value:
Excellence

Our expectation:
We strive to be at our best in and out of the classroom.

We show this by:

- Having a positive attitude in and out of the classroom.
- Being at our best by using appropriate language.
- Wearing our uniform correctly as outlined on the school uniform policy.
- Representing our school at all times with pride through our words and actions.



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Programs that OLC has implemented to foster social emotional well being and resilience:

- **Kimochi Dolls Emotions Program – Kindy to Year 2**

Kimochi means “feeling” in Japanese. Sometimes kids (and adults) have strong feelings that can fuel challenging behaviours. Sometimes it’s hard to know how to communicate when you are in an emotional moment. Kimochis are a playful way to help children (and adults!) learn how to identify and express feelings. When kids can communicate their feelings effectively, they develop positive social skills that lead to lasting friendships and success in all aspects of life. Kimochis teach the fourth “R”—reading, writing, arithmetic, and RELATIONSHIPS. This “R” is the foundation for success in ALL areas of life.

<http://www.kimochis.com/about/what-are-kimochis/>

- **URStrong Friendship Programs and the Friendology 101 Curriculum Year 1- 6**

This curriculum teaches children a common language for confidently managing conflict and creating a culture rooted in respect and kindness. This program empowers boys and girls with the skills and self-confidence to develop healthier relationships. Students learn what’s normal in a friendship, the difference between healthy and unhealthy friendships, and how to stand up for themselves. URSTRONG lights up those character virtues you’re trying to teach your students, like resilience, empathy, growth-mindset, tolerance, and citizenship.

<https://urstrong.com/>

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