



Loreto Normanhurst

POLICY AND GUIDELINES: STUDENT ANTI-BULLYING

RATIONALE

Our Catholic, and specifically Loreto, ethos requires that all students, their families and employees within the Loreto Normanhurst 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 create a culture of caring which endeavours to prevent bullying. Flowing from the vision of Mary Ward and expressed in the school's Pastoral Care Policy, Loreto Normanhurst is called to establish relationships which are grounded in love, compassion, reconciliation and justice. In witnessing Christian values we reject ideas, beliefs and behaviours which marginalise or victimise people.

DEFINITIONS

Bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons. It can have long-term effects on those involved.

Bullying can happen:

- face-to-face (e.g. pushing, tripping, name-calling)
- at a distance (e.g. spreading rumours, excluding someone)
- through information and communications technologies (e.g. use of SMS, email, chat rooms).

Some conflicts between children and young people are a normal part of growing up and are to be expected. These conflicts or fights between equals and single incidents are not considered bullying, even though they may be upsetting and need to be resolved. Behaviours that do not constitute bullying include:

- mutual arguments and disagreements (where there is no power imbalance)
- not liking someone or a single act of social rejection
- one-off acts of meanness or spite
- isolated incidents of aggression, intimidation or violence.

Identifying bullying can sometimes be difficult. Bullying is often conducted out of sight of teachers and children may be reluctant to report bullying.

Cyberbullying is a term used to describe bullying that is carried out through internet or mobile device technologies. Children who are cyberbullied are also likely to be bullied face-to-face.

Examples of cyberbullying can include:

- repeated hang up calls
- sending insulting or threatening text messages
- publishing someone's personal or embarrassing information online
- creating hate sites or starting social exclusion campaigns on social networking sites.

(Bullying No Way and the National Safe Schools Framework 2013)

ANTI-BULLYING STRATEGIES

Ultimately, strategies to prevent bullying will only be effective when placed within the context of a culture in which respect for others is consistently taught and demonstrated across all facets of school life. The Christian values, which represent the antithesis of bullying, must be continually affirmed in words and actions.

Strategies to prevent bullying will fall within the following broad categories:

- 'moral education' in the context of religious education, liturgies and assemblies where the value of the individual is affirmed and the importance of qualities such as compassion, kindness, reconciliation, tolerance, respect and justice are encouraged;
- 'across the curriculum' values teaching (e.g. looking at the problem of prejudice within the context of a novel or a History lesson)
- recognition that bullying is a concern for all sectors of the school community;
- education of students, staff and parents regarding all forms of bullying and in implementing the school's Anti-Bullying Policy;
- monitoring of student online activity through the school's network, on the external web, email and school portal;
- awareness raising of the importance of punctuality to class, active supervision and the need to challenge unacceptable behaviour;
- clear statements from staff about the nature and unacceptability of bullying;
- teaching specifically related to bullying in the PDHPE curriculum;
- teaching more positive ways of resolving conflict, such as working cooperatively within the classroom and playground;
- staff and students as role models, particularly those in leadership roles such as School Captains, House Captains, Boarder Captains, Extra-curricular Captains and SRC Reps;
- provision of activities which develop a culture of caring for one another and acknowledge the worth and contribution of others and which help to develop compassion and empathy;
- appropriate provision of counselling or other support services;
- provision of support for parent/guardians through the school's pastoral care structure, information seminars and support networks.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS

If their daughter is alleged to have been bullied or to have bullied another student:

- Parents/guardians should reassure their daughter and encourage her to speak with a trusted member of staff;
- Parents/guardians should discuss the school's Anti-bullying Policy with their daughter;
- Parents/guardians should contact the classroom teacher (Primary School), Head of House, Boarding Co-ordinator or School Counsellor as early as possible;
- It is often counter-productive for parents/guardians to contact parents/guardians of the other student/students involved;
- Parents/guardians should understand that the resolution of the situation may take time;
- Parents/guardians should monitor their daughter's progress;
- Parents/guardians should encourage their daughter to speak openly with them and to look at positive strategies to deal with her feelings;
- Parents should closely monitor all methods of electronic communication and be aware of the Loreto Normanhurst Cybersafety Statement and possible consequences of all forms of bullying.

WHO SHOULD STUDENTS SPEAK TO WHEN CONCERNED ABOUT BULLYING?

- Parents, older sibling, grandparent or trusted friend
- Classroom teacher (Primary School), Tutor, Advisor, Head of House or trusted member of day or boarding staff or a School Counsellor
- Phone the Kids Help Line - 1800551800; www.reachout.org.au; www.kidshelp.com.au/teens
- Phone your local Police Youth Liaison Officer and School Liaison Officer. Contact details for Hornsby Police is 02 94769799; Eastwood - 02 9858 9299; Castle Hill - 02 9680 5399.

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 involved in dealing with an allegation of bullying and these steps follow our Procedural Fairness Statement (Attachment B).

Notification and Information Gathering

- School is notified by a student; parent/guardian; teacher; friends.
- The alleged victim meets with the Classroom Teacher (Primary School); Head of House/Tutor/school counsellor/Boarding Co-ordinator. The anti-bullying policy is discussed with the student and reassurance 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.
- It is made clear that any suggestion of retaliation by any party will be treated as harassment.
- Parent/guardian contact at this stage is discretionary.

Consultation and Investigation

- The alleged victim meets with the Classroom Teacher (Primary School); Head of House / School Counsellor/ Tutor /Boarding Co-ordinator 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 alleged bully/bullies are interviewed by the Classroom Teacher (Primary School); Head of House/Boarding Co-ordinators and parent/guardians from both sides are contacted. If the incident occurred in the Day School but involves a boarder, then the Director of Boarding is also notified. When boarders and day girls are involved with each other in an incident or allegation of bullying, the staff of both the day and boarding schools will take joint responsibility and work closely together to resolve the situation.
- The allegation and school's anti-bullying policy are discussed. Student/s are given the chance to respond to the allegation. Possible suggestions to deal with the situation are generated. Follow up appointments are made to see all parties involved and it is made clear that any suggestion of retaliation by any parties will be treated as harassment.
- Records of the meetings are documented and kept with the School Counsellor.

Review

- Within a reasonable timeframe, 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 the matter is referred to the Director of Pastoral Care or Director of Boarding, and the School Counsellor is made aware of the situation. Students are required to meet with the Director of Pastoral Care or Director of Boarding.
- Parents/guardians are kept informed.
- Records of the meetings are documented and kept with the School Counsellor.

Further/Additional Review

- Students are interviewed as planned by either the Director of Pastoral Care or Director of Boarding.
- 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/guardians of students are asked to come to the school for an interview with the Director of Pastoral Care and the School Counsellor or the Director of Boarding and the School Counsellor.
- Separate or collective interviews can be decided on an individual basis.
- Sanctions may be implemented depending on the severity of each situation.
- Strategies to be put in place to ease the situation for the alleged victim and an agreement reached about how the parties will interact with each other.
- Review of the situation to be conducted within a reasonable timeframe.
- Records of the meetings are documented and kept with the School Counsellor.

Final Resolution

- Students interviewed by either the Director of Pastoral Care or Director of Boarding and the School Counsellor.
- If the situation has settled or been resolved then all participants are affirmed.

- If the situation has not settled or has worsened, the Principal is informed as well as the parent/guardians of the students and appropriate action is then discussed.
- Records of the meetings are documented and kept with the School Counsellor.
- Parents have the right to contact their local Police Station and speak with the Youth Liaison Officer or the School Liaison Officer.

Sanctions

Where the balance of evidence suggests that an incident of bullying has occurred any of the following sanctions may apply, depending upon the circumstances. If an incident is witnessed by a member of boarding or day staff, and there is no issue of doubt, the relevant staff member may, in consultation with a Head of House or Boarding Co-ordinator, apply sanctions immediately. All sanctions may vary depending upon the severity of each individual incident.

Day School Sanctions

Any student found to have engaged in bullying behaviour is expected to take action to make reparation and an apology. Parents are expected to co-operate fully and support the school's efforts to achieve a just outcome.

Playground duty

At the discretion of the Classroom Teacher (Primary School) or Head of House:

- Cleaning up certain areas of the playground during lunch/and recess under supervision.
- Undertaking various tasks for staff during lunch/and or recess.

Access to digital technology

At the discretion of the Classroom Teacher (Primary School); Directors of Pastoral Care and Boarding, and with the knowledge of the Principal, access to the school's external web may be limited, email usage or use of mobile phones may be limited and/or monitored.

Detention

At the discretion of the Head of House or in consultation with the Director of Pastoral Care (Primary School):

- Thursday afternoon for one hour during which time the student undertakes a task which allows for reflection on their behaviour.
- The student will not be allowed to undertake their own work as this would not be seen as a sanction.

Holiday Detention

At the discretion of the Director of Pastoral Care or Deputy Principal:

- Assisting with tasks as directed by the appropriate staff member.

Suspension

At the discretion of the Principal a student may be suspended from this school.

The Loreto Normanhurst community needs to be aware that, when necessary, the police may be involved in any case of severe bullying.

End Strategies

Depending upon the circumstances, and at the discretion of the Principal, a student might be asked to leave this school. This action would be in accordance with the *Loreto Schools' Policy on Suspension and Exclusion* (accessible from the Loreto Normanhurst web site).

Corporal Punishment

The school prohibits the use of corporal punishment in disciplining students attending the school. The school does not explicitly or implicitly sanction the administering of corporal punishment by non-school persons, including parents, to enforce discipline at the school.

Boarding School Sanctions

It is an expectation that a boarder involved in an incident of bullying would, in the first place, apologise for the behaviour and make every effort to repair the relationship.

At the discretion of the Director of Boarding any/all of the following may apply:

- Parents/guardians may be contacted;
- Detention or Community Service within the boarding school;
- Behaviour Modification programme;
- Loss of privileges;
- Referral for counselling or other form of support;
- Confiscation of mobile phone;
- Access to computers may be suspended or limited. Alternatively, access may be allowed under supervision.

If bullying behaviours persist, or recur, an interview with the Principal, Director of Boarding and parent/guardians will be held.

End Strategies

Depending upon the circumstances, and at the discretion of the Principal, a student might be suspended or asked to leave this school. This action would be in accordance with the Loreto Normanhurst Statement on Procedural Fairness and the *Loreto Schools' Policy on Suspension and Exclusion* (copy accessible from the Loreto Normanhurst web site).

November 2007
Revised March 2009
Revised June 2009
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Statement on Cyber Bullying

Code of conduct for Loreto Normanhurst students

Students at Loreto Normanhurst are expected to understand and live out our values as a Loreto school and strive to demonstrate qualities such as compassion, kindness, reconciliation, tolerance, respect and justice. Students have the right to:

- be treated with respect and dignity and the responsibility to treat others with respect and dignity;
- live within the school community free of hurtful behaviours, verbal, physical and emotional hurt;
- work in a positive learning environment.

Students develop a culture of caring for one another and acknowledge the worth and contribution of others and which help to develop empathy.

Students at enrolled at Loreto Normanhurst will observe the Anti-Bullying Policy at all times of their enrolment. Students who are found to have used digital technologies to bully or harass another student at any time, including the holidays, weekends and after school, may face any or all of the consequences outlined in this statement, at the discretion of the Principal. It is an expectation of the school that parents will support the school in such situations.

Definition

Cyberbullying is the use of technology to bully a person or group. Bullying is repeated behaviour by an individual or group with the intent to harm another person or group. Cyberbullying can be conducted in many ways, using different media including:

- the sending of abusive texts or emails
- taking and sharing unflattering or private images,
- posting unkind messages or inappropriate images on social networking sites
- excluding individuals from online chats or other communication
- assuming the identity of the victim online and representing them in a negative manner or manner that may damage their relationship with others
- repeatedly, and for no strategic reason, attacking players in online gaming.

While Cyberbullying is similar to real life bullying it also differs in the following ways:

- it can be difficult to escape and invasive—it can occur 24/7 and a person can be targeted while at home
- it can involve harmful material being widely and rapidly disseminated to a large audience, for example, rumours and images can be posted on public forums or sent to many people at once
- it can provide the bully with a sense of relative anonymity and distance from the victim, so there is a lack of immediate feedback or consequences

Being bullied can lower self-esteem and a student may feel alone, sad, angry and scared. It may also result in public humiliation given the scope of social networking sites, acceptance of the lack of privacy and the ease with which information can be forwarded.

If you are being bullied it is not your fault and there is nothing wrong with you. Don't be afraid to let someone know that you are being bullied; they may be able to help you.

Who to speak to when concerned about cyber bullying

- Parents, older sibling, grandparent or trusted friend
- Classroom Teacher (Primary School); Tutor, Advisor, Head of House, trusted member of day or boarding staff or the School Counsellors
- Ring Kids Help Line on 1800 55 1800; www.reachout.org.au; www.kidshelp.com.au/teens/
- Ring the Youth Liaison Office or the School Liaison Officer at your local Police Station

Reporting cyber bullying

The school's response to incidents of bullying is overseen by the Director of Pastoral Care. You or your parents may wish to contact her directly, or

- speak to your Classroom Teacher (Primary School); a trusted member of staff or family;
- email your Head of House or speak to the school counsellor

Procedures for dealing with an incident of cyber bullying will be as stated in Anti-Bullying policy

Prevention – what you can do to remain safe

Cyber bullying is everyone's business and can be experienced by people of all ages. The best response is a proactive or preventative one.

To be proactive you can:

- guard your username and password;
- be aware of the possible dangers of the indiscriminate use of webcam and other forms of digital photography;
- Guard your contact information; only give your mobile phone number, instant messaging name or e-mail address to trusted friends, and keep a note of who you've given it to. Consider using caller ID blocking to hide your phone number when making calls. Similarly, don't leave your name on your voicemail. Don't give your details to people you don't know – or don't want to know;
- Take a stand against cyber bullying; speak out whenever you see someone being mean to another person online.

Prevention – what the school will do

- Provide education programs for students, parents and staff;
- Filter for language, virus, malware, inappropriate content on websites; and
- Monitor student activity logs;
- Involve the police if necessary.

Action

If you are being cyber bullied it is possible that you're feeling powerless and isolated, take the following actions immediately:

- **Tell an adult you trust.** This can be a teacher, parent, older sibling or grandparent – someone who can help you to do something about it.
- **Stop the activity or leave the area.** People who bully get their kicks from knowing they've upset their target. Don't let them know they've upset you, and you've taken away half their "fun".
- **Block the sender's messages** if you are being bullied through e-mail or instant messaging.
- **Don't reply to bullying messages.** It will only get worse if you do. By replying the bully gets what he or she wants. Often if you don't reply the bully will leave you alone.
- **Keep a record.** Save any harassing messages, record the time and date, then tell someone you trust
- **Report to police.** If the bullying includes physical threats, tell the police. Some people think that they can get away with it because they believe it is anonymous. They are wrong. Most can be traced and it's a criminal offence to use a mobile phone or any form of communication to menace or harass or offend another person.
- **Advise your Service Provider.** Most service providers have appropriate-use policies that restrict users from harassing others.
- **Change your contact details.** Get a new user name for the Internet, a new e-mail account, a new mobile phone number and only give them out to your closest friends.
- **Keep your username and passwords secret.** Keep your personal information private so it doesn't fall into the hands of someone who will mis-use it.

Possible consequences for students imposed by Loreto Normanhurst

Many incidents of cyber bullying are initiated in the home, and therefore, contact with the parents of all the students involved is necessary. Any student found to have engaged in bullying behaviour while at school, or after school hours, will be expected to acknowledge her responsibility and take action to make reparation and an apology.

Where the balance of evidence suggests that an incident of cyber bullying has occurred, any of the following consequences may apply:

- Access to the external web at school may be limited or terminated
- Email usage and access to the web may be monitored
- Community service
- Counselling
- At the discretion of the Principal, a student may be asked to leave the school
- Detention
- Suspension
- The police may be involved and criminal charges may result

When accepting a place at Loreto Normanhurst parents are deemed to have accepted the School's values and expectations and are expected to continue to endorse and support them.

Statement on Procedural Fairness Loreto Normanhurst 2014

At Loreto Normanhurst the policies that relate to the discipline of students are the:

Student Anti Bullying Policy	Drugs and Alcohol Policy
Behaviour Management Policy	Code of Behaviour
The Cyber Bullying statement.	Uniform Code

The investigation process that leads to the imposition of serious consequences or penalties follows the principles of procedural fairness:

1. Students and their parents are fully informed of the allegation(s) against the student;
2. Students and their parents are informed of the likely consequences. These consequences may include:

Consequences

Support

In-school suspension

awareness program

Out of term detention

counselling

Suspension from school

behaviour monitoring contract

Expulsion

Boarding school sanctions

3. Students and their parents are given ample opportunity to provide an explanation and to respond to the allegation. The students always have the right of reply.
4. All parties are heard and relevant submissions considered, ensuring that a proper investigation of the allegation occurs.
5. The head of the investigation must act fairly and without bias.
6. The student at the centre of the allegation may have a support person, advocate or translator present.
7. The identity of witnesses may, at times, be withheld.
8. Students and their parents have the right to know how to seek a review of the decision and this is to be done through the Principal.

When a report of bullying or misconduct is made against a student, or group of students, the Director of Pastoral Care and/ or the Director of Boarding will meet to plan the investigation. The investigation will be conducted by student's Head of House or the Director of Pastoral Care. In case of a report of misconduct in the Boarding School, the investigation will be conducted by the Director of Boarding.

At the conclusion of the investigation, it is the Principal's responsibility to suspend or expel a student and this is done at the discretion of the Principal.

The Loreto Normanhurst Anti-bullying Policy states that "Loreto Normanhurst does not permit the corporal punishment of its students nor does the school condone the administering of corporal punishment by any student's parents."