

# **TENISON WOODS CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

## **Countering Bullying Policy**

Date ratified: July 2017

Review Date: July 2020



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## Countering Bullying Policy

### VISION STATEMENT

Tenison Woods Catholic School is a faith filled community with a commitment to:

**INSPIRE, INNOVATE and EXCEL**

### RATIONALE

At Tension Woods Catholic School we have a clear commitment to building a community in which everyone feels safe based on the beliefs that:

- **We are all created in the image of God.**
- **We all have the right to feel safe.**
- **We all have the right to feel supported.**
- **We all have the right to feel respected.**
- **We all have the right to learn and work in a safe environment.**
- **We all have the responsibility to keep ourselves and others safe.**
- **We all have the responsibility to respect ourselves, others and the property of others.**

All members of the school community have the right to attend the school and for the environment to be safe, supportive and free from any form of harassment. Harassment can be in the form of:

- Emotional
- Physical
- Verbal
- Sexual
- Digital

**At Tenison Woods Catholic School we are committed to:**

- providing a safe, secure and supportive learning environment where we prepare students to be pro-active regarding their own safety
- providing a community where all are treated with equity and dignity
- taking every report/incident seriously

**Achieved through:**

- Child Protection and Well Being programs
- integrate *Choice Theory, Positive Ed* and *Restorative Practices* within classroom teaching
- have intervention and procedures to manage bullying and harassment incidents
- train and inform all staff members of the intervention and procedures to manage incidents in line with WHS procedures

- train and inform students of the procedures to implement if confronted with an issue of undesirable behaviour. Strategies include
  1. Choice Theory Strategies
  2. General Bullying & Harassment strategies e.g. informing a person that you don't like the behaviour being directed towards you. This can sound like: *'Stop it I don't like it when....'*

## PURPOSE

- to define and identify what bullying is
- to identify bullying behaviours and to provide support to address these behaviours
- to equip students with a range of strategies to 'counter bullying' behaviours
- to ensure that 'known' perpetrators understand the impact of their choices and actions
- to provide support to both targeted and perpetrators (note: this may result in referral to external resources)

## DEFINITION

The act of bullying is a violation of a person's right. The national definition of bullying for Australian school says:

Bullying is an ongoing misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that causes physical and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power over one or more persons. Bullying can happen in person or online, and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert).

Source: [www.bullyingnoway.gov.au](http://www.bullyingnoway.gov.au)

Bullying has three main features:

- it involves a misuse of power in a relationship
- it is ongoing and repeated; and
- it involves behaviours that can cause harm



The roles within bullying are:

- the person being bullied
- the person bullying someone else
- the person who witnesses bullying happen or knows about someone being bullied

Using the terms 'bully' and 'victim' to label students is not recommended. Instead, clearly identifying and labelling the inappropriate behaviour is more constructive, achieving positive and lasting solutions for everyone involved.

The following guidelines will be used with all members of the community and will be made accessible to all staff, families and students.

## WHAT IS BULLYING

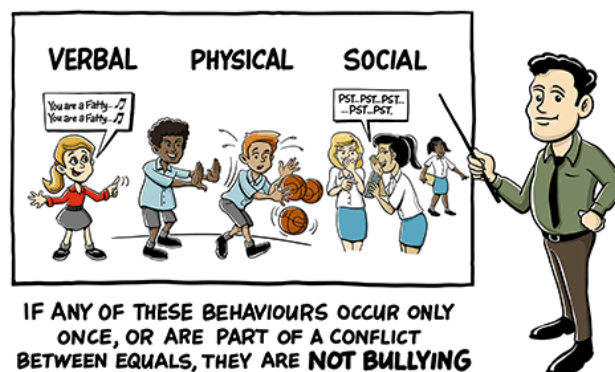
**Bullying** involves:

- deliberate and repetitive acts which cause distress for the targeted person, not only at the time but from fear of future incidents
- acts that can be physical, verbal or visual (electronic or text, psychological, gesture, exclusion) and can involve victimisation of a sexual, social, economic, religious or racial nature
- the inappropriate use of power by one or more people over another person or group
- the violation of an individual's right to feel safe and happy
- ensure the wellbeing and ongoing support of the students and parents involved is both firm and just

## BULLYING IS NOT

Many distressing behaviours are not examples of bullying, even though they are unpleasant and often require teacher intervention and management. There are three socially unpleasant situations that are often confused with bullying

- **Mutual Conflict**- In mutual conflict situations, there is an argument or disagreement between students but not an imbalance of power. Both parties are upset and want a resolution to the problem
- **Social Rejection or Dislike**- unless the social ejection is directed towards someone specific and involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others, it is not bullying.
- **Single Episode Acts**- single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. If a student is verbally abused or pushed on one occasion they are not being bullied. Nastiness or physical aggression that is directed towards many different students is not the same as bullying



## Developing a Culture to Prevent Bullying

Prevention strategies assist students to become resilient. Staff at Tension Woods Catholic School will explicitly teach a range of strategies for students to apply when confronted with conflict situations from Reception to Year 6/7.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

### **Requires staff to:**

- adopt positive classroom management strategies and incorporate anti-bullying messages in the curriculum
- raise awareness of bullying issues through school activities
- regularly revisit and reinforce the school/class rules, values and clarify the school's policy on bullying
- Respond appropriately (according to school procedures) to any reported incidents of bullying
- actively supervise during yard duty to help reduce opportunities for bullying
- assessing risks and identifying needs
- providing school based strategies and support
- developing and implementing community and staff programs to improve skills
- promote a working partnership between the school and the home in dealing with all instances of bullying
- contact parents/carers to advise that additional counselling and support is recommended

### **Requires students to:**






- demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers and staff to ensure that everyone feels safe, respected and valued
- refrain from perpetrating acts of bullying and harassment
- be specific and ask the perpetrator to stop the behaviour that they are repeatedly doing that is demonstrating disrespect and causing distress
- ask a friend or teacher to support them when they ask the perpetrator to cease their behaviour
- if a student observes a bullying incident (bystander), where appropriate, inform the perpetrator that his/her repeated behaviour is unacceptable
- report incidents to yard duty teacher when alleged incidents occur during play-time; or report to the class teacher for other instances





### **Requires parents to:**

- ask your child not to retaliate to alleged incidents of bullying or harassment
- encourage your child to adhere to the schools '*Countering Bullying*' and *XYZ Policies*
- assist your child to discuss any incidents of alleged bullying or harassment with a teacher. If possible, allow you child to report and deal with the situation.
- be willing to attend discussions/interviews if your child is involved in an incident of bullying, and work cooperatively with the school
- not deal directly with the other children or their parents but work through and with the school
- discuss the school's expectations about behaviour and how best to deal with bullying
- firstly, talk to your child's teacher about methods and strategies to help you manage your concern(s) then the leadership team if required
- be prepared to discuss incidents with the school and co-operate with the school to solve the problem.

## Procedure for teachers dealing with bullying and harassment

### FLOW CHART FOR RESPONDING TO BULLYING

<p><b>1. Listen carefully and calmly and document what the student tells you</b></p> 	<p>Ensure a private place to talk. Do not dismiss their concerns or make them feel they are at fault. Listen to their account fully first and then ask them (and maybe others) questions to get more detail. Avoid the terms 'bully' or 'victim' and instead talk about the behaviour of everyone involved, including bystanders. Clarify if there are immediate safety risks and let the student know how you will address these. Write a record of the conversation.</p>
<p><b>2. Collect additional information</b></p> 	<p>Ask for any evidence from the student. Speak with all students involved, including bystanders. Be alert to your legal responsibilities regarding evidence if the incident may constitute a crime. Keep records. Ensure you have information that answers who, what, where, when, how, why. Students views on why bullying is happening can suggest ways the school can respond.</p>
<p><b>3. Discuss a plan of action with the students</b></p> 	<p>Once you are confident you have a comprehensive picture of the situation, discuss a plan of action with the student/s. Refer to your school's policy in terms of expectations and implications. Invite suggestions from students as appropriate. Inform all students involved of your intention to inform their parents/guardians. Involve the parents and other caregivers in developing the plan of action if appropriate.</p>
<p><b>4. Inform the students what you intend to do</b></p> 	<p>Provide as much information as you can without violating the privacy of other students or parents. Also inform them about when you are planning to follow up with them after implementing the plan. Explain that you will look at immediate and short term responses as well as other long term preventative measures or efforts to promote a positive school climate.</p>
<p><b>5. Provide suggestions about what to do if the bullying occurs again</b></p> 	<p>Have information on hand to share with students or set up a meeting for them to talk about strategies with an appropriate staff member. If this is not viable (due to the nature of disclosure), refer to the appropriate guidelines and processes.</p>
<p><b>6. Set a date for follow up review/s</b></p>	<p>Bullying can require a sustained effort to prevent, particularly if situations are long standing. Reviews are critical to check in with students, and to ensure the school's efforts</p>

	have not caused other problems or merely created a problem elsewhere. These reviews can last for months in some cases, to ensure the well-being of the students involved is satisfactory.
<b>7. Record the incident in the school's incident data management system</b> 	Refer to information gathered during discussions with relevant student/s. Staff and then student to fill in ' <i>Bullying &amp; Harassment Incident Report</i> ' form.
<b>8. Notify appropriate personnel</b> 	Refer the matter to the Leadership Team
<b>9. Contact the parent/guardian about the incident and the plan of action</b> 	If parents/guardians have not yet been involved in the process of planning the course of action (Step 3), advise them of the incident and the resulting course of action, including referring to the school's policy and guidelines. Refer parents to the Leadership Team for further consultation if required.
<b>10. Follow up with students over the next several weeks and</b>	It is essential to be alert to ongoing bullying, particularly the possibility that the bullying can 'reappear' in another form some time later.

Continued behaviours will result in children being referred to the Principal and possible involvement of external agencies e.g. CEO, CAMS, SAPOL

### **Bullying and Harassment Process for Students**

1. Tell the perpetrator to **stop** what they are doing  
E.g. *"Stop it, I don't like it"* is appropriate for the Early Years students  
E.g. *"Stop it, I don't like it when you ....it makes me feel...."* is appropriate for the Yr. 2-7's
2. If a similar behaviour is repeated by the same perpetrator, repeat Step 1, but this time bring a witness as support. A witness may be a friend, your buddy or a teacher. The witness is an observer, he/she doesn't talk they are there to support only.

These steps allow for the perpetrator to be specifically told what behaviour or actions they are exhibiting towards another student and how they are making someone feel unsafe or disrespected. The process allows the perpetrator the time reflect upon their behaviour and choices and make the required and necessary adjustments to ensure everyone feels safe and respected in the school.

3. If a third incident is repeated by the same perpetrator, student to notify a teacher who will then investigate the matter and follow the '*Flow Chart for Responding to Bullying*'. Each time an investigation and discussion is conducted a '*Bullying & Harassment Incident Form*' (*Step 7 on flow chart*) [see Appendix] is completed and emailed home to parents/guardians. This form must be signed and returned to the issuing teacher the following day.

Further to this:

- if the student continues to bully others, they will be referred to the Leadership Team
- if the bullying continues parents/carers of the perpetrator will be requested to attend a meeting with the Principal
- where appropriate counselling may be suggested for the perpetrator or the bullied student
- police may be contacted if the nature of the bullying is so serious as to warrant their involvement

## **STRATEGIES:**

### **Methods to restore relationships:**

- restorative practices
- strengthening the 'target'
- mediation
- support group method

These methods focus on repairing harm and restoring relationships and can happen alongside broader proactive steps and strategies designed to prevent bullying from happening again



RESOURCES

BULLIES MAKE YOU FEEL.....



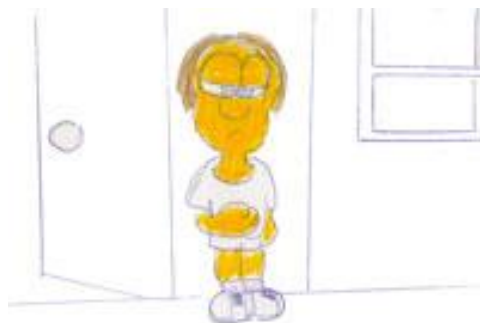
angry



scared



sad



sick

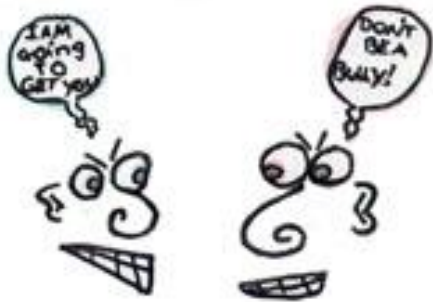


alone



unsafe

WHAT CAN YOU DO?



Tell the person you don't like it



Tell a friend what happened



Tell your teacher



Tell someone you trust

**BULLYING & HARASSMENT INCIDENT REPORT FORM**

<b>Student's Name:</b>	
<b>Class:</b>	
<b>Date:</b>	
<b>Investigating Teacher's Name:</b>	

Your child has been involved in an alleged incident of harassment and bullying at school today. The incident has been investigated with both the target and the perpetrator by a member of staff and mediation has been conducted. The following is a brief overview of the alleged incident.

<b>Incident</b>	<b>Type of Bullying / Harassment</b>	<b>Action Taken</b>

<b>Investigating Teacher's Signature:</b>	
<b>Student's Signature:</b>	
<b>Parent's Signature:</b>	
<b>Classroom Teacher's Signature:</b>	

We would greatly appreciate it if you could discuss this matter with your child. If you would like to discuss this matter further, please contact the Investigating teacher to schedule a mutually convenient appointment time.

### **Additional resources for children and parents**

1. Student well-being hub (general)

<https://studentwellbeinghub.edu.au/resources/detail?id=14c84822-d5c5-6d32-997d-ff0000a69c30#/>

2. Primary students: <https://studentwellbeinghub.edu.au/students/primary#/>
  - a. Foundation – year 1
  - b. Years 2-4
  - c. Years 5-7
3. Educators: <https://studentwellbeinghub.edu.au/educators#/>
  - a. National Schools Framework
  - b. Well being
  - c. Online safety
4. Bullying No Way: <https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/Resources>
5. Kids Helpline: <https://kidshelpline.com.au/>
6. Parenting SA Helpline: <http://www.parenting.sa.gov.au/helpline.htm>
7. Kids Helpline for parents: <https://kidshelpline.com.au/parents/parentline-services/>