



Nepean Christian School

In Christ We Grow

ANTI- BULLYING POLICIES & PROCEDURES

Version	Author	Change	Date
1.0	Geoff Wheaton	Creation	2006
2.0	Cameron Nunn	Revision	2015
2.1	Cameron Nunn	Addition of Police Youth Liaison details	3/5/2016
2.2	Chris Atwood	Revision	7/3/2021

Intended Use

This *Anti-bullying Policy* is issued to the school's staff at the commencement of their employment and is available to staff and students via the school's website. The *Anti-bullying Policy* forms directions to staff and student that sets out the school's position about bullying and the steps that the community takes to prevent bullying. It should be read in conjunction with the following policies and procedures:

- *Staff Code of Conduct*
- *Discrimination, Harrassment and Bullying Statement for Employees, Contractors and Volunteers*
- *Student Code of Conduct*
- *Discipline Policy*
- *Duty of Care Statement*
- *Safe and Supportive Environment Statement*

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This policy outlines responsibilities of

- The school
- The students
- The parents in preventing and responding to allegations of bullying

It also outlines the steps the school will take in response to allegations of bullying.

We believe:

1. God created each person in his own image and infinitely valuable in his sight. The cross is God's declaration of his love for all people.
2. Human beings, broke relationship with God and with each other when they turned their backs on God. Bullying is evidence of the brokenness and sin of humanity
3. In Christ, God reconciles all things to himself. The death and resurrection not only made a means by which people can be reconciled to God, but in Christ, people are reconciled to each other.
4. Bullying contradicts the message of scripture that we have a responsibility to look after the most vulnerable in our community (James 1:27)

Therefore we will:

1. Not tolerate bullying and harassment at N.C.S.
2. Provide a safe and secure learning environment for our students
3. Maintain the principles of the National Safe Schools Framework
4. Provide an environment where bullying is reported and with which it is appropriately dealt
5. Provide support, encouragement and justice for victims of bullying
6. Encourage repentance, restitution and reconciliation from the perpetrators of bullying
7. Train staff and students in recognising bullying and implementing strategies to prevent bullying.

PREAMBLE

School bullying has been recognised as a serious problem in schools in Australia. In addition, bullying is becoming an increasingly important public policy issue, following concern about the negative effects of bullying on pupils' academic attainment and emotional well-being. The duty of a school extends to reasonably protecting a student from the reasonably foreseeable conduct of other students or strangers and from the student's own conduct.

Schools have been held liable for injuries sustained to students as a result of bullying, where the school was aware of the bullying and failed to take reasonable or adequate steps to prevent or eliminate the bullying. As the problem of bullying is now well recognised, all schools are expected to:

- a) have policies and procedures in place to deal with bullying; and
- b) take all reasonable steps to ensure that these policies are put into practice

Furthermore, a school may be found to have breached its duty of care if these policies and practices are not implemented, understood and carried out by students and staff.

WHAT IS BULLYING

Bullying is repeated, unreasonable behaviour directed toward a staff member, student, or group that may cause harm, including risks to health and safety. Unreasonable behaviour means behaviour that a reasonable person having regard to all the circumstances would expect to humiliate, intimidate or threaten another person. Such behaviour can include an individual's or group's actions or practices which humiliate, intimidate or threaten another person. Bullying may also amount to unlawful discrimination or harassment.

WHAT ARE EXAMPLES OF BULLYING?

The following types of behaviour, particularly if directed towards an individual repeatedly, may amount to bullying:

- demeaning language;
- threats;
- verbal abuse;
- outbursts of aggression;
- physical or verbal intimidation;
- excluding, isolating and ganging up.

Normal school discipline or a representative of the school making reasonable behavioural demands for compliance, do not constitute bullying.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE SCHOOL

The school has a responsibility to prevent bullying and to appropriately respond to all allegations of bullying. Therefore we will:

- Actively affirm the right of all school community members to feel and be safe and supported at school
- Engage the whole school community in anti-bullying strategies that promote kindness, compassion, respect, generosity of spirit and cooperation
- Ensure that members of the community are aware of their roles and responsibilities as outlined in the *Safe and Supportive Environment Statement*
- Train staff in how to develop, promote and maintain a safe and supportive school environment
- Treat all allegations of bullying seriously and respond in accordance with this policy
- Act with both justice and compassion toward the victim
- Seek to bring about resolution for both the victim and the perpetrator
- Take whatever disciplinary action the school deems necessary to bring about resolution.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE STUDENTS

Students are expected to:

- Care for one another as befitting a Christian community.
- Report all incidents of bullying to the Head of School or Deputy Principal, even if they are not directly involved.

- Accept responsibility and consequences for their actions if they have been found to have engaged in bullying. Show true repentance and be prepared to engage in a process of restorative justice.
- Forgive others where they have been wronged.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS

Parents are encouraged to:

- Contact the school immediately if their child reports bullying or they have a reasonable suspicion that their child may be being bullied.
- Be Alert for warning signs of bullying. These may include
 - physical injuries, such as bruises
 - repeatedly 'losing possessions'
 - reluctance to go to school or talk about school
 - altered sleep patterns
 - mood swings
 - personality changes
 - few if any friends
 - lack of interest in life
 - health problems
- Instruct their children not to retaliate
- Support their children in raising concerns about themselves or others

SCHOOL PROCEDURES

Where bullying is reported, the school will initiate the following process:

- Reassure the victim and affirm their right to feel safe and supported at school
- Interview and take statements from all parties involved
- Follow fair process for both the alleged bully and the victim
- Where bullying has been of a significant or ongoing nature, parents of both the victim and the perpetrator will be contacted
- Punishments will be decided
- Where appropriate, restitution may be sought as part of the process of reconciliation
- Clear guidelines of future behaviour will be outlined and the process monitored
- Further support and/or counselling will be offered to the victim
- Where it is considered that a crime may have been committed, the school will contact the police.