



Bullying POLICY

RATIONALE:

1. Catholic schools have a responsibility to provide an educational environment that promotes the dignity and respect of the person and, therefore, aims to eliminate bullying, harassment and violence in all forms.
2. These forms of behaviour will not be tolerated at St Luke's College.
3. Learning outcomes, physical health, emotional, psychological and spiritual well-being can be adversely affected by bullying, harassment and violence.

DEFINITIONS:

Bullying involves:

- a desire to hurt
- hurtful behaviour (physical, verbal or relational)
- an imbalance of power
- an unjust use of power
- typically repetition
- is experienced by the target of the aggression as oppressive, and by the perpetrator as enjoyable. (Adapted from Rigby 2001)

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. The terms are often used interchangeably.

Bullying can be defined in the following ways:

- Repetitive, causing distress, not only at the time of the attack but also by the threat of future attacks
- An imbalance of power (that is inappropriate and where there is an intention to hurt)

Bullying takes many forms and can include:

- Verbal - name-calling, put-downs, threats (spoken, written or electronic)
- Physical - hitting, tripping, punching, throwing objects, stealing
- Social - ignoring, hiding, ostracizing, exclusion
- Psychological - stalking, threatening or demeaning looks, spreading rumours, damaging possessions (MindMatters 2000)

Violence can take the form of physical/sexual assault, restraining a person against their will, harming a person physically.

PRINCIPLES:

St Luke's College

- Recognises its duty of care for all students
- Endeavours to provide a supportive environment which promotes respect for self and others, physical/emotional well-being and positive mental health.
- Believes that dealing with bullying, harassment and violence requires a whole school approach within the school's Pastoral Care framework. All staff, students and the wider community play a significant key role in preventing such behaviours
- Respects the rights of all people, especially its students, to be free from all forms of anti-social behaviours.
- Educates students about issues related to bullying, harassment and violence across the curriculum
- Expects a high standard of behaviour at all times. Respect for each other, courtesy, kindness and co-operation are expected at St Luke's College from all staff, students and visitors to the college.

People can be involved in bullying, harassment or violence either as individuals, ringleaders or members of a group. When such behaviour is ignored or overlooked, it serves to condone and reinforce the behaviour. Bullying, harassment and violence are serious issues and will not be tolerated at St Luke's.

PROCEDURES:

Every student at St Luke's has the right and responsibility to report bullying to any member of staff, whether it happens to oneself or to someone else. Therefore -

All students should care enough to do something, such as:

- Take action as the bullying occurs by saying, "Leave him/her alone."
- Report the incident to a staff member as soon as possible. It is okay to ask for privacy and confidentiality or make an anonymous report.
- Offer support to the student being bullied. Encourage him/her to get help through an adult, a senior student or his/her family.

What can a student do if he/she is bullied?

There are many positive ways to deal with bullies. Remember there are many people who will help. There is a range of options:

- Be assertive. One has rights. State, "Leave me alone".
- Ignore it. Often bullies want a reaction.
- Laugh it off, use humour.
- Build your own protection by establishing a wide circle of friends.
- Talk about it with others - teachers, counsellor, family. One does not have to deal with this alone.
- Report bullying to a teacher especially when bullying continues after positive ways of dealing with it have not worked.

In a Catholic school, Pastoral Care is based upon the Christian belief in the fundamental dignity and worth of each person. It encompasses the total climate of care which reflects the broad Christian ethos of individuals caring for and respecting one another.

St Luke's College policies and procedures encompass the belief that students do and will make mistakes. We believe strongly that each individual has the ability to develop into strong Christian witnesses.

At St Luke's College, the Managing Student Behaviour Policy is modelled and operates out of the Gospel values of love, justice and reconciliation. This is incorporated within the school's motto of "Seek Truth and Justice".

- Serious forms of bullying, harassment and violence will be reported to parents at the earliest opportunity.
- A formal letter will be sent to parents of the child engaging in bullying behaviour.
- Each time an incident occurs, the school will document each case. The reason for this is to monitor to see if there is a continuing pattern occurring.

For any form of bullying, harassment or violence, depending on the severity of the incident, the following consequences may occur:

- Internal suspension
- External suspension
- Exclusion

St Luke's College believes in counselling all students involved in anti-social behaviour. This may involve staff, students, parents and members of the wider community.

During Pastoral Care periods, students will revisit this policy. This may involve inviting guest speakers to address each year level.

A shortened version of this policy will appear in the Student Diary each year.

All members of our school community – staff and students alike – have a right to be treated with respect and courtesy. It is our responsibility, along with parents and the school community, to help our students develop socially acceptable behaviour.