	TOPIC	**DEALING WITH BULLYING, HARASSMENT, AGGRESSION & VIOLENCE (STUDENTS) POLICY**
	DOMAIN	**COMMUNITY**
	POLICY No.	**2-D6**
	ORIGINALLY RELEASED	**2014**
	DATE FOR REVIEW	**2017**

Our Vision

Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School seeks to offer excellence in education, enlivened by the Life and teaching of Jesus Christ in a school community where the dignity of each person is valued.

Our Mission

Our Lady of Lourdes School seeks to provide educational excellence through the integration of Faith, Life and Culture.

Our Values

BELIEF   HARMONY   RESPONSIBILITY

School Motto

'Honor Pretiosor Auro'

Honour is more precious than gold

Our motto reminds us to look to Jesus Christ, whose life and teaching inspire us to live life with honour, seeking justice for all.

1.0 RATIONALE

Our Lady of Lourdes School has a responsibility to provide an educational environment that promotes the dignity and respect of the person and, therefore, aims to encourage the development of positive relationships between students to reduce all forms of bullying, harassment, aggression and violence. The policies and practices that school employs should enhance the dignity of the human person and reflect the Principles of Pastoral Care as espoused in the Pastoral Care Framework (2007).

Learning outcomes, physical health, emotional, psychological and spiritual wellbeing can be adversely affected by bullying, harassment, aggression and violence. Students who are bullied, subject to aggression or harassed tend to have poorer health, lower self-esteem, more interpersonal difficulties, higher levels of loneliness, depression, suicidal ideation and increased anxiety. They are also more likely to have a dislike of and want to avoid school, higher absenteeism and lower academic competence. The effects of bullying can begin early in life and, for some, last a lifetime.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the Dealing With Bullying & Harassment (Students) Policy of the Catholic Education Commission of WA and The Australian

Government's National Safe Schools Framework. Likewise, it forms a part of the school's overall Vision Statement:

"Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Primary School seeks to offer an education enlivened by the life and teaching of Jesus Christ in a school community where the dignity of each person is valued, nurturing honour and respect for each other".

The Australian Government's National Safe Schools Framework (NSSF) adopts a whole school approach to safety and wellbeing. It provides a comprehensive range of evidence-informed practices to guide schools in preventing and responding to incidents of harassment, aggression, violence and bullying and to implement their responsibilities in relation to child protection issues. The National Safe Schools Framework is based on the following overarching vision:

All Australian schools are safe, supportive and respectful teaching and learning communities that promote student wellbeing.

In the NSSF, a safe and supportive school is described in the following way:

In a safe and supportive school, the risk from all types of harm is minimised, diversity is valued and all members of the school community feel respected and included and can be confident that they will receive support in the face of any threats to their safety or wellbeing.

The National Safe Schools Framework is underpinned by the following guiding principles that represent fundamental beliefs about safe, supportive and respectful school communities. These guiding principles emphasise the importance of student safety and wellbeing as a pre-requisite for effective learning in all school settings.

That Australian schools:
- affirm the rights of all members of the school community to feel safe and be safe at school
- acknowledge that being safe and supported at school is essential for student wellbeing and effective learning
- accept responsibility for developing and sustaining safe and supportive learning and teaching communities that also fulfil the school's child protection responsibilities
- encourage the active participation of all school community members in developing and maintaining a safe school community where diversity is valued
- actively support young people to develop understanding and skills to keep themselves and others safe
- commit to developing a safe school community through a whole-school and evidence-based approach

Our Lady of Lourdes' behaviour management and discipline procedures, together with its Social and Emotional health procedures and programmes should promote the resiliency and wellbeing of students and in so doing seek to minimise negative behaviours and attitudes.

2.0 DEFINITION

Bullying is when, over a period of time, an individual or a group intentionally harm a person, who finds it hard to stop this behaviour from continuing. Additionally, bullying can be characterised as: causing distress, not only at the time of the attack but also by the threat of future attacks; and, an imbalance of power (that is inappropriate and where there is an intention to hurt).

Its nature may be:

- **verbal** - name-calling, put-downs, threats (spoken, written, electronic or cyber which may also apply to the following points)

- **physical** - hitting, tripping, punching, throwing objects, stealing

- **social** – ignoring, hiding, ostracising

- **psychological** – stalking, threatening looks, spreading rumours, damaging possessions.

Harassment is any unwanted, unwelcome or uninvited behaviour which makes a person feel humiliated, intimidated or offended. (Adapted from Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia Policy, Harassment in School, 1998). Harassment can be seen as one form of bullying.

Bullying and harassment are often thought of separately, however, both involve a more powerful person or group oppressing a less powerful person or group, often on the grounds of 'difference'. These differences can be related to culture, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, sexual orientation, ability or disability, religion, body size and physical appearance, personality, age, marital status, parenting status or economic status. (Bullying. No Way! website cited in the National Safe Schools Framework, 2003).

Unlike bullying and harassment, violence is not necessarily associated with an imbalance of power. It can occur between people of equal power. It implies extreme forcefulness, usually (but not always) of a physical kind. (Rigby, cited in the NSSF, 2003).

CYBER BULLYING

Bullying and harassment can involve the use of information and communication technologies. Cyber bullying involves destructive texts or images posted on the internet via personal websites or web logs (blogs), email messages, discussion groups, message boards, online personal polling sites, social media websites, chat services or instant messaging, or on mobile phones using SMS or MMS. Cyber bullying is often very serious, and young people who experience cyberbullying can experience severe suffering that interferes with their social and emotional development. (Australian Family Relationships Clearinghouse Briefing, Number 11 2008)

Cyber Bullying is ".. covert, psychological bullying behaviours.. through email, chat rooms, mobile phones, text messages, mobile phone cameras and websites" (Campbell 2005; Brown, Jackson & Cassidy 2006)

Our Lady of Lourdes School has developed an Acceptable Use of the Internet Policy to minimise the misuse of information and communications technology. It is important to note that where cyber bullying occurs outside of school, the matter becomes one for parents to follow up with police. School takes an active role where the cyber bullying occurs or is instigated during school time or severely disrupts student's functioning at school.

THE IMPORTANCE OF FAMILY

Support from within the family environment is a crucial factor in determining a young person's involvement in bully-bullied situations. The dynamics of families and their ability to resolve conflicts through appropriate modelling are also of great importance (Kostelnik, Whiren, Soderman, Gregory, & Stein, 2002).

Young people whose parents support their autonomy while providing clear boundaries as to what is acceptable behaviour are less likely to engage in bullying behaviour (Rican, Kicperova & Koucka, 1993).

3.0 SCOPE

This policy applies to all activities within the school.

4.0 PRINCIPLES

Our Lady of Lourdes' approach to dealing with bullying, harassment and student well-being form part of the scope and responsibilities of the National Safe Schools' Framework.

Our Lady of Lourdes School has zero-tolerance of bullying or harassment.

4.1   Our Lady of Lourdes School is a safe and supportive environment where the 6 guiding principles and 9 key elements of the National Safe Schools Framework are practiced.

4.2   Our Lady of Lourdes School owes a duty of care to its students.

4.3   Our Lady of Lourdes School provides a supportive environment which:
- acts to prevent instances of bullying, harassment, aggression and violence

- encourages socially appropriate behaviour using positive behaviour management and direct teaching of curriculum in areas such as interpersonal and self-management skills

- promotes respect for self and other

- develops physical/emotional well-being and resiliency

- develops interpersonal skills and positive mental health.

4.4   Responding to bullying, harassment, aggression and violence requires quality leadership and role modelling to facilitate strategy implementation and sustained change, together with a whole-school community approach that is consistent with the Catholic Education Office of Western Australia's Pastoral Care Framework, the

school's Pastoral Care practices and the school's Evangelisation Plan and which partners with parents and other agencies.

4.5   Bullying, harassment, aggression and violence may occur outside of the school. When these behaviours impact on a student's learning and behaviour in school, Our Lady of Lourdes School will take action to support the continued wellbeing of those involved.

4.6   All bullying, harassment, aggression and violence shall be responded to. When bullying, harassment, aggression and violence are ignored or overlooked, it serves to condone or reinforce the behaviour. Bystanders, (those who observe bullying) can encourage or assist those who bully simply by doing nothing.

4.7   While the aim is to promote and encourage positive behaviour, school policy and procedures shall contain clear statements regarding the range of appropriate consequences that may be applicable for unacceptable behaviour. In looking at consequences relating to specific issues, consideration should be given to other circumstances which may have bearing such as family or mental health matters.

4.8   All parties to incidents of bullying, harassment, aggression and violence are entitled to appropriate support.

Therefore, important assumptions on which this policy is based are:

- As the prevention of bullying lies mainly in the ethos and social climate of our school we will continue to nurture the ideal of "community. The aim is for each member to respect the uniqueness of others and to be responsible for his/her self and for the well-being of others.
- *Our Lady of Lourdes'* will be pro-active in developing an ethos that reflects a personal and democratic atmosphere in which children can attend school and learn without fear.
- A Clear and consistent approach to positive Behaviour Management will be implemented and disseminated to all within the school community.
- No child deserves to be bullied and because most children who experience bullying need adult help to stop the bullying, all teachers will be firmly committed to putting an end to such acts.
- The Staff and Principal will establish clearly that bullying will be dealt with firmly and justly and that it will not be tolerated within the school.
- Students who experience bullying will be supported and parents will be notified by the Principal/ Assistant Principal.
- Students who bully will also be helped through a behaviour management program that will teach them social skills. (Method of Shared Concern).
- Parents will be required to be involved at all levels;
  - Acceptance of the policy
  - Implementation and management of the program
  - Support of consequences for non-adherence to the policy as home conditions have a vital effect on bullying.
  - Invitation to participate in workshops addressing student well being.

- We will attempt to provide activities and teach skills dealing with assertiveness and non-aggressive conflict resolution in a manner that emulates Gospel values.

- Counselling and/or other support for staff and students will be provided when recommended by the Principal in consultation with the leadership team.

- Our anti-bullying stand will be publicised by a variety of means including the parent information booklet, *Promoting Students' Ability to Deal With Difficult Situations* pamphlet, enrolment agreement, newsletters, assemblies, incursions, information talks, student discussions, pastoral care groups etc.

- Provision of the set of guidelines for recognising and dealing with bullying to be available to staff, parents and students and printed in our Parent Handbook and *Promoting Students' Ability to Deal With Difficult Situations* Pamphlet.

- Adoption of resources relating to personal, social and emotional development

- Provide training for school staff

- Provide parental workshops

- Students participate in curriculum based activities, including opportunities such as online bullying and cyber bullying resources.

5.0 PROCEDURES

The definitions for bullying behaviour (as listed at the beginning of this policy) assume that when such bullying behaviours occur, the school's normal processes of Behaviour Management will not necessarily be suffice. In this regard, when bullying behaviour occurs it will be appropriate that the more severe behaviour management steps will be taken e.g. use of a blue slip, direct contact with parents for a collaborative conference, possible suspension or exclusion (following appropriate liaison with the Catholic Education Office).

The Bully

Immediate Action:
1. Principal to be notified immediately.
2. Strict supervision and communication system set up regarding the bully (teacher/Principal/parent/student).
3. Staff and students are clear that the behaviour is unacceptable (the behaviour not the student is unacceptable).
4. Outline sanctions to be imposed and Principal contacts parents for major incidents.
5. An incident form is completed and lodged on SEQTA (or the student's file).

On-going Action:
1. Support the student doing the bullying in changing behaviour (Method of Shared Concern).
2. Whole staff support on the bullying viewpoint taken and the manner of handling issues.
3. Any damage caused by the bullying student must be addressed immediately by them.
4. The class needs to be made aware of the nature of bullying and the need to support the student being bullied as well as encouraging the student doing the bullying to modify his/her behaviour.

The PERSON BEING BULLIED

Immediate Action:
1. Investigate the situation.
2. Find out the information by observing, discussing with peers and parents.
3. Assure the student being bullied that there is a determined effort to stop the bullying – provide feedback.
4. Reassure the student being bullied that he/she is safe.

Ongoing Action:
Principal or delegate contacts parents. Action taken should be practical to restore self-esteem.
1. Link the student being bullied to a staff member with whom they can discuss personal matters comfortably.
2. Establish a network for the student being bullied with Pastoral Care, Buddies etc., to offer protection.

Whole School Action:
1. All teachers implement a curriculum that integrates personal, social and emotional wellbeing themes.
2. All classes conduct class/ age appropriate audits in Term 1 and Term 3.
3. Specific processes of actions are undertaken for Behaviour Management (refer to Behaviour Management Policy) and when addressing bullying incidents.
4. Regular training for staff in relation to pastoral care of students.
5. Offer information workshops for parents in area of student well-being.
6. Regular communication between the school and the school's psychologist is maintained.
7. Review of this policy every three years or sooner following any incident that raises issues in respect to policy and practice.

6.0 RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Catholic Education Commission of WA 2-C4 Harassment, Discrimination and Bullying Policy

- Catholic Education Commission of WA 2 D-3 Child Abuse Policy

- Catholic Education Commission of WA 2- D8 Management of Confidential Information in Schools Policy

- Catholic Education Commission of WA 2- D7 Exclusion of Students for Disciplinary Reasons Policy

- Catholic Education Commission of WA, Framework for the Development of Pastoral Care in Catholic Schools (2007)

- National Safe Schools Framework (2003, revised 2011) Education Services Australia (MCEECDYA)

- Our Lady of Lourdes School's Behaviour Management Policy

- Our Lady of Lourdes School's Acceptable Use of ICT (Students) Policy

- Our Lady of Lourdes School's Promoting Students' Ability to Deal With Difficult Situations Parent Leaflet