



Policy No. 7

STUDENT BULLYING POLICY

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|--|-------------|--|--|--|--|
| Policy adopted from Nambour Christian College 2011 | | | | | |
| Board Approved | August 2011 | | | | |
| REVISED: | | | | | |

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | | |
|-----|---|----|
| 1. | Introduction..... | 5 |
| 1) | Purpose..... | 5 |
| 2) | Principles | 5 |
| 3) | The Law | 6 |
| 4) | Definitions..... | 6 |
| 5) | Scope | 7 |
| 6) | Policy Statement..... | 7 |
| 7) | Procedures | 7 |
| 8) | Responsibilities..... | 8 |
| 9) | Formal Complaints Policy | 9 |
| 10) | Records..... | 9 |
| 11) | Review..... | 9 |
| | Examples of Bullying | 10 |
| | Observed Behaviours That May Indicate Occurrence Of Bullying..... | 11 |
| | Anti-Bullying Strategies | 12 |
| | Bullying Complaints Form | 13 |

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1. INTRODUCTION

An important facet of the Mission of Gulf Christian College, herein referred to as the College, is to provide a secure and supportive learning environment based on Christian values of respect and care. In such an environment students will feel secure and be encouraged to reach their full potential and mature into effective members of society. The Bullying Policy is one of a number of policies formulated to protect students and staff thus providing a foundation whereby the Mission is translated into reality.

Other relevant College policies which deal with student issues include Suspension & Exclusion Policy, Student Behaviour Policy, Acceptable Use Policy and Child Protection Policy and in any inconsistencies, the Child Protection Policy, must be activated.

1) PURPOSE

This policy seeks to build an environment conducive to safety through pro-active management of all forms of bullying that may occur within the College.

2) PRINCIPLES

a) It is expected that students will uphold Christian values and comply with the law, to:

- value the dignity and respect of the individual;
- promote the principle of Equal Opportunity;
- refrain from any behaviours that impinge negatively upon a person's dignity and rights, morale and work effectiveness.
- contribute to quality of life through respect and tolerance;
- protect cultural and social diversity; and
- engender fairness and respect in relationships.

b) Natural Justice

The principles of natural justice will apply to decisions made under this policy. The two fundamental principles of natural justice are:

- those making a decision are not biased; and

- any person who has a complaint against them must be given a fair opportunity to be heard in response to the specifics of the complaint and to put their side of the matter.

c) Privacy

Privacy legislation applies to all records generated under this policy.

d) Timely Action

Matters need to be addressed with reasonable promptness.

e) Confidentiality

A complaint must be treated with the utmost confidentiality. This does not affect the complainant's right to seek external assistance at any time.

It is important when handling a complaint that confidentiality of all parties concerned is respected. Information will be shared only on a 'need to know basis' and as necessary to comply with the requirements of this policy or as required by law.

3) THE LAW

The College has a Christian duty and a common law duty of care to provide and promote a safe environment for students. Legislative obligations also arise under

- Child Protection 1989 and Amendments etc.
- Education (Accreditation for Non-State Schools) Act 2001
- Anti-Discrimination Act (Qld) 1991
- Education (General Provision) Act 2006

4) DEFINITIONS

- ***Bullying***

For the purposes of this policy the definition of Bullying is adopted from the Workplace Health and Safety regulation 2004.

"A person is subject to workplace harassment [bullying] if the person is subjected to repeated behaviour by a person that

- a) is unwelcome and unsolicited;*
- b) is often offensive, intimidating, humiliating or threatening; and*
- c) a reasonable person would consider the behaviour to be offensive, humiliating, intimidating or threatening ...*

- ***Discrimination***, deliberate exclusion, sexual harassment and vilification are all types of bullying.
- **Cyber Bullying** – the term cyber bullying is used to denote misuse of technology to bully others. This can include identification by image. The definition of Bullying can be adopted for cyber bullying. However cyber bullying often gives rise to offences that are against criminal law e.g.

- Threats
- Assault by words
- Stalking
- Sexual texting, images

Cyber bullying can also lead to breaches of privacy and defamation laws.

Cyber bullying that occurs beyond the school day is a matter for parents (and the police). The School will assist pastorally students who are the victims of bullying whether at school or out of school.

Harm – significant detriment as defined in the Education (Accreditation for Non-State Schools) Act 2001

Inappropriate behaviour – that which is contrary to Christian values and which falls short of the definition of harm or bullying.

5) SCOPE

This policy and procedures apply to all bullying behaviours and all students attending the College, on campus and attending school activities.

6) POLICY STATEMENT

- Students are required to conduct themselves in a manner respectful of others at all times.
- Bullying in all its forms is unacceptable at the College and all reports will be investigated.
- Bullying in all its forms will result in appropriate College responses and consequences, additional to any penalties which may apply at Law.
- The issue of bullying will be proactively addressed within the curriculum and discussed in such forums as camps, year level assemblies and individual subject lessons. Additionally, students and parents will be informed through means such as handbooks and newsletters.

7) PROCEDURES

- The College aims to create an environment of understanding and cooperation in which the victim of bullying will feel empowered to seek help. (Refer to Appendix for a range of suggested strategies).
- In the event of suspected bullying (refer to definition) –
 - Any student experiencing bullying is encouraged to inform either his parents, teacher or another responsible adult
 - The recipient is urged to bring this information to the knowledge of the school by phone call and/or personal representation
 - This information will be forwarded to the appropriate Head of School or Coordinator.
 - The attached Form is available for recording of details.
- The parents will kept informed through all stages of the process. of any bullying incidents. This may include an outline of the proposed course the College will take in responding to this issue.

- (d) Once an issue of concern is reported the following course of action will usually be followed including the following:
- (i) Both the victim, suspected perpetrator and other people with relevant information will be interviewed by the Principal (or other delegated staff) specifically assigned to handle such cases.
 - (ii) Supportive pastoral care will be made available to the victim and the suspected perpetrator.
 - (iii) The situation will be monitored closely for a period of 4-6 weeks
 - (iv) The course of action will include consequences appropriate to the circumstances such as
 - apology
 - mediation
 - psychosocial assessment
 - counseling
 - restitution
 - probation
 - exclusion (in such an event, the Exclusion Policy will be enacted)
 - (v) Should a student be involved in perpetrating further incidents of bullying, the matter will be referred to the Principal for consideration of continued enrolment.
 - (vi) Bullying behaviours which amount to “harm” will result in activation of the Child Protection Policy and the matter being referred to state authorities.

8) RESPONSIBILITIES

(a) The Board

To discharge their duties in a manner which ensures that appropriate policies for effective management of the College are established and maintained. The Board may receive a report from the Principal.

(b) The CEO

will be available to consult/advise the Principal.

(c) Principal

Promote and in-service this policy with the school community.

(d) Staff

Are expected and required to implement this policy as part of active behaviour management.

(e) Students

All students are expected to contribute to the care and wellbeing of other students by complying with all school policies, rules and directions.

Students need to be familiar with examples of bullying and report incidents of suspected bullying.

(f) Parents are requested to:

Immediately report incidents of suspected bullying.

9) FORMAL COMPLAINTS POLICY

Should the outcomes of this policy be unsatisfactory to the parent concerned, that parent may choose to make a formal complaint to the Principal or to seek remedy at law. See the College Formal Complaint policy.

10) RECORDS

Records of bullying and outcomes will be kept securely.

11) REVIEW

This policy to be reviewed annually.

Examples of Bullying

There are a number of different forms of physical and psychological bullying.

These may involve acts of repeated - physical violence, verbal abuse, gesture, extortion and exclusion. Other examples of bullying include –

- Discrimination
- Sexual harassment
- Vilification (criticism / slander)
- Persistent name calling
- Persistent teasing
- Spreading malicious gossip
- Pushing or jostling
- Punching
- Intimidation / Extortion
- Coercing a person to do something that they do not wish to do
- Damaging or stealing an individual's property or work
- All forms of deliberate racism and sexism
- Deliberate isolation of an individual
- Misuse of school email
- Taking and distributing of unauthorised images/photos
- Posting on websites of unauthorised pictures or personal information pertaining to students and/or teachers
- Inciting behaviours in others to cause situations of bullying
- Exclusions
- Refer to sexuality or sexual name calling
- Ridicule of gifted and successful students
- Sexual texting / imaging / comments on mobile phones, facebook etc.
- Cyber bullying

Observed Behaviours That May Indicate Occurrence Of Bullying

Changes in behaviour that may be symptomatic of bullying include:

- lack of confidence
- withdrawal from school activities
- refusing to go to school
- temper flare ups
- demands for extra money
- loss of appetite
- sleeplessness
- wanting to change the route to school
- avoidance of specific lessons

If a student should exhibit such behaviours, the parent or student are encouraged to contact the College.

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Anti-Bullying Strategies

Nambour Christian College utilises a number of specific practices and procedures to address and minimise bullying activity within the school. These strategies are both implicit and explicit within the daily functions of teachers and administrators in their interaction with students.

Explicit Strategies

- NCC has utilised the “NO PUT DOWN ZONE” posters to promote a culture and environment of respectful behaviour.
- A number of anti-bullying posters have been placed on school notice boards. In 2011 these will also contain information regarding who to contact within the school when a bullying incident occurs.
- During senior and middle school Child Protection week (September) a strong anti-bullying message will be the key theme for one of the days of the week. Students will receive information about recognising bullying when they see or experience it personally, recommended responses to bullying behaviour and information about who to contact in the event of a bullying experience. This will event will be conducted every two years.
- The Senior School Development Counsellor has developed and implemented a “Dealing with Anger” program which can be utilised with suitable students who have instigated bullying of another student. This program has also been provided to the staff in RTC.

Implicit Strategies

- NCC upholds a clear zero tolerance policy to bullying and enforces this consistently in the manner in which bullying reports are dealt with. The school maintains an early-intervention approach to all bullying matters. All reports of bullying are dealt with immediately by an appropriate member of the senior administration.
- A comprehensive bullying complaints form is used to clearly report direct information about an incident. This ensures a clear and accurate transmission of facts and a reliable method of record keeping. This form is forwarded to the head of school.
- Parents are kept informed about any incidents, the schools response and the re-occurrence of any further incidents if they should occur. This enables the zero-tolerance to bullying policy being re-enforced in the home environment and engages the families in the resolution of the issue. Parents are also advised of their option to involve police where the matter becomes a criminal offence.
- The zero tolerance of bullying policy is re-enforced with the students through year level assemblies, where students are made aware of the any outcomes of public bullying occurrences and consequences to bullying are seen to be enforced.
- Subliminal anti-bullying messages are sent through weekly chapels and Christian Studies classes.

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Bullying Complaints Form

The purpose of this form is to detail occurrences of bullying so that this incident can be dealt with in line with the College Student Bullying Policy.

INCIDENT DETAILS – TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENT/STUDENT & GIVEN TO HEAD OF SCHOOL OR COORDINATOR

Name of person making complaint: _____

Name of student affected by the behaviour _____ Year Level ____
[this may also be the student making the complaint]

Date incident occurred _____ / _____ / _____ Time if known: _____
 Location of offence _____

Is this the first time this has happened? YES / NO

If no, please detail history -

Whom is this complaint against ? _____ Year Level ____

Please detail the offence, action or behaviour this complaint refers to -

Were there any witnesses to this event? YES / NO

Names _1. _____ Year Level _____
 _2. _____ Year Level _____
 _3. _____ Year Level _____

I maintain that the above is true and accurate to the best of my recollection -

 Name

Signature

Contact Phone Numbers

OFFICE USE ONLY

Name of person who received the complaint at the first instance: _____

Method by which complain was made known ☐ Parent completed form ☐ Student completed form

☐ Parent phoned office ☐ Other _____

The complaint was referred to: ☐ Heads of School ☐ Co-Ordinator

Matter: ☐ Concluded ☐ Continuing

| | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Date for next follow-up: | _____ | |
| Method of follow-up required: | _____ | |
| Issued followed up on: | _____ | |
| Outcomes: | _____ | |
| Matter: | <input type="checkbox"/> Concluded | <input type="checkbox"/> Continuing |
| Date for next follow-up: | _____ | |
| Method of follow-up required: | _____ | |
| Issued followed up on: | _____ | |
| Outcomes: | _____ | |
| Matter: | <input type="checkbox"/> Concluded | <input type="checkbox"/> Continuing |
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