

Frederick Irwin Anglican School

A School of the Anglican Schools Commission (Inc)



BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY

Section:	4. Level of Care	Date Created:	November 2012
Sub-Section:	4.1	Approved by School Council:	March 2018
Version:	February 2018	Review:	July 2021
Pages:	Six (6)		

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Frederick Irwin Anglican School is committed to making the School a place where students can learn and staff can perform their roles free from harassment, bullying or violence. Our aim is to establish a community in which everyone is able to feel safe and valued and where individual differences are appreciated.

- Our School does not tolerate bullying or harassment.
- Respect for others is expected.
- Students are educated through Christian Education programmes, in assemblies, services, Secondary House Groups/Year Groups and Primary classes about what constitutes harassment and bullying. *Opportunities are also taken to raise awareness as situations present themselves.*
- Strategies and behaviours for positive social interaction are taught.
- Resilience and positive self-esteem are encouraged.
- Students are encouraged to report incidents of bullying – it is their right and responsibility to do so, whether it happens to them or to someone else. They are taught that this is not “dobbing”.
- Reports of bullying are always dealt with as quickly as possible. Each case is dealt with individually according to the specifics of the situation.
- Support and guidance is offered to all students – both those who are bullied and those who are bullying - through our Pastoral Care System.
- The School will also work with parents to support victims and to try to modify the behaviour of offenders.

INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS AND PARENTS

What is Bullying?

Most definitions agree:

- it is a pattern of wilful behaviour intended to hurt, injure, threaten or frighten, embarrass, upset and/or cause discomfort to another person;
- it is repeated or ongoing over a period of time;
- the person being bullied feels he/she can do nothing about it;
- there is an imbalance or misuse of strength or power (either physically or psychologically) in which one person is victimised by another or others.

Bullying comes in many forms. These are some examples:

- **Physical**
 - pushing, punching, hitting, bumping, kicking, pinching, tripping, spitting, scratching, hair-pulling, obstructing, throwing objects, locking someone in or out, inappropriate touching, stealing.
- **Verbal**
 - threats of violence, name-calling, teasing, mocking, belittling, insulting, taunting, using put-downs, shouting at, making racist or sexually harassing comments, threatening, text messages and telephone calls.
- **Written**
 - unpleasant, threatening or abusive notes, emails, text messages, cyber messages etc.
- **Social/psychological**
 - episodes of excluding, ostracising or ignoring, spreading rumours, gossiping, threatening looks or gestures, threatening and aggressive staring, stalking, damaging or interfering with personal property.

Response of Student Being Bullied

- Tell the bully to stop. Be very clear that you do not like what they are doing and/or saying.
- Tell someone. It is always a good thing to “talk it out” with someone you trust.
- Report it to a staff member.
- Tell a parent or guardian.

Response of Bystanders

- Care enough to act.
- If you feel able, tell the bully to stop.
- Report it to a staff member.
- Don’t be a bystander who does nothing – this exacerbates the problem.
- Provide support to the person being bullied and encourage them to seek help.

Response of Parents

(Adapted from *Bullying: Information for Parents* – a pamphlet from the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs.)

When a situation has occurred:

- calmly encourage your child to talk through it so you can get the facts straight;
- keep an open mind, remembering you are hearing only one side of the story;
- help your child to reflect on what he/she has done so far and to work out what might be done;
- contact the School – the best first port of call may be your child’s Head of House, the Deputy Principal – Secondary, the Head of Primary (Halls Head) or the Deputy Head of Primary (Meadow Springs);
- present the information you have as calmly as possible;
- reassure your child that the bullying is not his/her fault;
- talk to your child about positive ways of dealing with bullying such as:
 - pretending not to hear hurtful comments;
 - using silent self-talk e.g. “That’s their problem, not mine.” to develop confidence;
 - developing greater self-assertiveness;
 - believing it is important to tell someone when bullying happens or reoccurs.

It does not help to:

- get angry or upset;
- feel guilty or ashamed;
- make the child feel it is not important;
- blame the child;
- blame the other child/children involved;
- blame the School;
- accuse people without knowing all the facts;
- demand to know all the facts at once;
- look for easy solutions;
- try to sort the bullies out yourself.

PROCEDURES

Education of Students and Parents:

- Programs to address bullying and harassment, and building resilience in students, are in place across the School; for example:
 - *PATHS* (Early Learning)
 - *Virtues Programme* (Primary);
 - *Cyber Detectives* (Primary)
 - Cyber Bullying Committee (Secondary)
 - Other intervention and educational programmes where suitable and available; for example: Class Act’s *BullyBusters 2* presentation, Constable Care etc.

- Parents are to be kept informed about the School's policy and advice is given on what to do if bullying occurs through flyers, seminars, parent information sessions, school diaries and newsletters.

Response of Staff Members:

- A teacher who observes bullying or harassment must intervene unless the safety of the teacher or bystanders is put at risk by such action.
- When bullying or harassment is reported to a teacher he/she must inform relevant staff members: the Classroom Teacher, the House Group Teacher and/or the Head of House of the students involved; if the matter is serious or ongoing he/she must inform the Deputy Head of Primary, the Head of Primary or the Deputy Principal – Secondary.
- Reports of bullying and harassment are followed up as promptly as possible and dealt with initially by the Classroom Teachers, the House Group Teacher and/or the Head of House; or, in serious or ongoing instances, by the Deputy Head of Primary or the Head of Primary or the Deputy Principal – Secondary, who will follow-up and inform the Principal.
- Interviews must be fully documented. (In some instances victims may find it easier to fill out a Bullying Incident Report form before the interview – this is optional.)
- Students involved in bullying incidents are given counselling. This may be done informally through the staff member who has dealt with the incident or the student(s) may be offered counselling with a member of staff responsible for his/her pastoral care or the School Chaplain, or in severe cases, through the Non-Government Schools' Psychology Service.

Resolutions to Bullying:

- Bullying incidents can vary in their form and severity. At times those who bully or harass are also in need of help. Therefore, if an incident of bullying is reported, the response may include any or all of the following:
 - Advise and confer with the Class Teacher, House Group Teacher, Head of House, Deputy Principal, Head of Primary, Deputy Head of Primary or the Chaplain.
 - Provide support and counselling to the student being bullied.
 - Provide support and counselling to the student(s) carrying out the behaviour together with clarification of further consequences/sanctions.
 - Inform Parents - Parents are informed about incidents of bullying in one or more of the following methods. Once again this will depend on the situation.
 - Note in the diary;
 - Telephone call;
 - Interview;
 - Sometimes, particularly with older students, the students are first given the responsibility of telling their parents what has occurred before a member of staff contacts them.
 - Intervention using *Restorative Justice*, or the *Method of Shared Concern*.
 - Invite parents to meetings at the School to discuss approach/provide support.
 - Follow-up meetings with all parties to monitor progress.
- Recurrent or severe incidents will be dealt with by the Deputy Head of Primary or the Deputy Principal – Secondary.
- Further consequences/disciplinary action may occur in consultation with the Principal.

CYBER BULLYING

- At Frederick Irwin, students are unable to access email, MSN, Facebook, My Space and similar social networking websites so that cyber bullying through these sites should not be able to occur during school hours. (See ICT Policy)
- Similarly, the School's Mobile Phone Policy is structured to prevent or minimise cyber bullying taking place during school hours through this medium. (See Mobile Phone Policy)
- While cyber bullying is thus mostly limited to out-of-school hours and home-to-home computer contact, the School acknowledges that cyber bullying which takes place in this context may have an impact on student relationships and behaviour during school hours. The School manages such cyber bullying in the following manner:

- In the first instance, parents are encouraged to be involved and to take responsibility for their children's behaviour in a home and or out-of-school setting. (Advice is given on best practice.);
- When it is necessary for the School to become involved, the same procedures that are employed for **bullying** are used for **cyber bullying**, as it is generally agreed that this is merely another form of the traditional problem. (Bullying is still bullying no matter what form it takes.)

WORKPLACE BULLYING

Bullying can be an issue between adults in the workplace too. Bullying in the workplace may be deemed to have occurred when an employee is harmed, intimidated, victimised, threatened, undermined, humiliated or degraded by another employee.

- Staff members who believe they have been bullied in the workplace should refer the matter to:
 - the EO Contact Officer;
 - their line manager;
 - a member of the Executive Staff; and/or
 - directly to the Principal.
- Should it be the Principal who is deemed to be the perpetrator of the bullying, the staff member should refer the matter to:
 - the EO Contact Officer; or
 - directly to the Chair of Council.
- The options in the above two dot points are meant to give staff members some choice, so that they are able to approach a person with whom they feel comfortable and believe will assist them to deal effectively with the issue. However, it is necessary that, unless the perpetrator is the Principal, he/she is informed of the situation, either by the staff member or his/her initial point of contact, so that the issue can be dealt with properly.
- All issues will be investigated and handled fairly and equitably, making every effort to ensure privacy and that the matter is resolved as quickly as possible.
- The Dispute and Complaint Resolution Policy of the Anglican Schools Commission will be utilised.
- Both the staff member who believes he/she has been bullied and the offender(s) will be offered counselling through *the Employee Assistance Program (Anglicare WA)*.
- If necessary, the offender(s) will be disciplined.

The School also recognises that there may be instances in which a staff member believes that he/she is being bullied by a student or a parent.

- If a staff member believes he/she is being bullied by a student he/she should refer the matter to:
 - a member of the Executive Staff; and/or
 - directly to the Principal.
- If a staff member believes he/she is being bullied by a parent he/she should refer the matter:
 - directly to the Principal.
- All issues will be investigated and handled fairly and equitably, making every effort to ensure privacy and that the matter is resolved as quickly as possible.
- The Dispute and Complaint Resolution Policy of the Anglican Schools Commission will be utilised.
- The staff member will be offered counselling through *The Employee Assistance Program (Anglicare WA)*.

Appendix

Frederick Irwin Anglican School Anti-Bullying Policy (pamphlet for parents)

Frederick Irwin Anglican School



Anti-Bullying Policy

Frederick Irwin Anglican School endeavours to provide a positive Christian community where all students are made to feel valued, safe and secure.

Respect for each other and kindness are clear expectations at our School. The uniqueness of each individual is valued and it is every person's right to be free of any bullying, harassment or intimidation.



What is Bullying?

Bullying is a pattern of behaviour, which is designed to hurt, injure, embarrass, upset or discomfort a person.

Examples of Bullying:

Verbal Name calling, teasing, abuse, putdowns, racist comments, sarcasm and threats.

Physical Hitting, punching, kicking, scratching and tripping.

Social Ignoring, excluding and making inappropriate gestures.

Emotional Spreading rumours, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions, sending hurtful notes, forms of "Cyber Bullying" such as malicious SMS, email messages, and inappropriate use of camera phones.



What can you do if you are bullied?

Don't be afraid to talk to your parents, teacher and friends about the situation.

If something is making you feel uncomfortable it is not "dobbing" if you tell someone.

Try to ignore the bullying. If you show that you are not concerned, the bully may stop.

Build your own protection by establishing friends you can trust.

Try not to retaliate by becoming a physical or verbal bully yourself.

Avoid the person who is bullying you.

Be assertive and tell the person to stop. If they choose to continue, you have the right to report the situation.

Talk to a Teacher, Head of House, Deputy Principal, Deputy Head of Primary or the Chaplain. They will be able to assist you to resolve the situation.

You have the right to feel happy and secure at School so don't accept the situation and seek help. The School takes bullying seriously and we are on your side.



What can bystanders do?

Don't allow the bully to continue the behaviour and care enough for the victim to assist.

Intervene and remind the bully that such behaviour is not acceptable. Don't be a bystander and do nothing.

Report the incident to a member of staff. You may need to establish you want privacy and confidentiality.

Provide support and friendship to the victim. Make suggestions about handling the situation and encourage the victim to seek help.

Show care and respect for others inside and outside the classroom. Make a special effort towards a student who may feel lonely or who is experiencing a difficult time.



What can parents do?

Be aware of your own responses and act in a calm, supportive and caring manner and suggest ways your child can obtain help at School.

Communicate to a staff member if you suspect your child is being bullied.

Keep in mind there may be other factors related to the situation. Remember there are two sides to every story and all facts need to be investigated.

Do not approach or speak to the children bullying or their parents. This may make the situation worse.

Support and trust the School in dealing with the issues, as a student's welfare is a Parent ~ School partnership.



Response of Teachers

Act on all observed or reported incidents of bullying.

Reinforce regularly the expectations the School has towards bullying.

Provide Pastoral Care to all students involved in bullying behaviours.

Support all victims of bullying.



Resolutions to Bullying

Bullying incidents can vary in their form and severity. At times those who bully or harass are also in need of help. Therefore, if an incident of bullying is reported the response may include any or all of the following:

- Advise and confer with a Class Teacher, House Group Teacher, Head of House, Deputy Principal, the Deputy Head of Primary or the Chaplain.
- Provide support and counselling to the student being bullied.
- Provide support and counselling to the student(s) carrying out the behaviour together with clarification of further consequences/ sanctions.
- Inform parents.
- Intervention using the Restorative Justice, or the Method of Shared Concern.
- Invite parents to meetings at School to discuss approach/provide support.
- Follow-up meetings with all parties to monitor progress.

Recurrent or severe incidents will be dealt with by the Head of Primary (Halls Head), Deputy Head of Primary (Meadow Springs) or Deputy Principal – Secondary. Further disciplinary action may occur in consultation with the Principal.



Advice to Parents

Show interest in what your child does at School and how they are feeling. Take time in each day to talk with your child.

Foster a positive home environment which models good listening skills and accepts and tolerates the differences in others.

Encourage your child's self-esteem by valuing who they are and reinforcing their positive qualities.

Openly discuss School issues with your child and the School's expectations about behaviour.

Be aware of and monitor your child's internet social network.

Watch for signs of bullying:

- Reluctance to attend School
- Complaints of headaches or stomach aches
- Mood swings
- Withdrawn from social activities with peers
- Refusing to say what is wrong
- Decrease in School performance
- Signs of distress

If your child reports being bullied, treat the concern seriously and assist them to seek help.

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