



# Our Lady of Hope School

## Greenwith

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# POLICY DOCUMENT

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## **ANTI BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY**

## **Rationale**

Our Lady of Hope School is a place of belonging, where each person has the right to feel safe, comfortable and where learning can take place at all times. It is every person's responsibility to make this happen. From this we then seek to live justly, respect individual dignity and build a community of compassion and reconciliation through the love and example of Jesus.

## **A definition of bullying and harassment**

**Bullying:** is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons. Cyber bullying refers to bullying through information and communications technology.

**Harassment:** There is much overlap between the definition of bullying and definition of harassment. Harassment is generally considered to be more overt than bullying and can be much easier to recognise as it involves obvious name calling, intimidation, comments about a person's physical appearance, race or sexuality.

A course of conduct which is considered to be harassment can consist of as little as one or two incidents and therefore can be behaviour instances which occur less frequently than bullying. Bullying is more frequent and ongoing and can also be more subtle than harassment. What starts off as acts of harassment, if continued over a period of time or increased in frequency can be re-defined as bullying.

Bullying and harassment can involve the same types of behaviours and can both include humiliation, domination, intimidation, victimisation and all forms of disrespectful comments and behaviour based on sex, race and disability. Bullying and harassment of any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved including bystanders.

Bullying can happen anywhere: at school, travelling to and from school, in sporting teams or online.

Conflict or fights between equals and single incidents are not defined as bullying. Bullying behaviour is not:

- Children not getting along well,
- A situation of mutual conflict,
- Single episodes of nastiness or random acts of aggression or intimidation.

An act of bullying or harassment can occur, for example:

- by a student to another student,
- by a student to a staff member,
- by a staff member to a student,
- by a staff member to another staff member,
- by a parent to a staff member,
- by a parent to a parent.

Bullying and harassment can take many forms. Some examples are:

- **Physical:** hitting, pushing, shoving, spitting, kicking, pinching, scratching etc,
- **Social:** Lying, stealing, hiding or damaging property, spreading rumours, exclusion, ridiculing success or failure,



- **Emotional & Verbal:** Name calling, offensive comments, teasing, putting people down, threatening to cause harm.
- **Cyber \ Online:** Using technology to send threatening or hurtful messages, spread rumours, sending offensive images,
- **Sexual:** Unwelcome staring, whistling, gesturing or making comments about a person's sexual appearance, making repeated unwanted sexual advances, inappropriate and unwanted touching.

Standing by and supporting people who are bullying or joining in with a perpetrator of bullying will also be viewed as a form of bullying.

### **School policy:**

Our Lady of Hope School promotes inclusivity, recognises the uniqueness and value of each individual and supports the Catholic Education Office's policy statement of 'ensuring the rights of teachers to teach and students to learn in a safe and caring Christian environment'.

Bullying and harassment will not be tolerated at our school. In employing a 'zero tolerance' policy, all reported instances of bullying and harassment will be investigated and monitored and when it is deemed that acts of bullying have occurred appropriate action will be taken.

### **IMPLEMENTATION OF BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY:**

In developing a school culture that is free from bullying and harassment, it is important that staff, students and parents are pro-active in both discussing and reporting issues of bullying and harassment. Being pro-active requires all members of the community to work together to create a culture that values the dignity of each person and which actively strives to eliminate bullying and harassment.

### **Staff are required to:**

- Be observant for signs of bullying and harassment,
- Teach an anti-bullying and harassment program as part of their classroom program,
- Act on and investigate any claims of bullying or harassment,
- Take steps to prevent further instances of bullying or harassment,
- Support children in developing their own skills to effectively deal with harassment and bullying situations,
- Report any confirmed bullying and harassment issues to the parents of the children who are involved.

### **Students are required to:**

- Understand the difference between bullying and mutual conflict,
- Report any instances of bullying and harassment that they witness,
- Not support or encourage people who are perpetrators of bullying or harassment,
- Seek support if they are a victim of bullying or harassment,
- Be proactive in telling a bully to stop,
- Treat people with the same respect that they would like to be treated with.

### Parents are required to:

- Report any signs of distress or significant changes in their child's behaviour, mental wellbeing which they believe may be caused by issues at school,
- Support their child to report any instances of bullying,
- Understand the difference between bullying and mutual conflict and not label every form of conflict as bullying,
- Support the school in applying consequences and resolving bullying issues that their child is involved in,
- Monitor their child's online behaviour and interactions with others,
- Be an advocate for their child or other children in the school by reporting any bullying that they are aware of to staff.

### Responses to Bullying and Harassment issues will include

- Counselling by school staff and referral to the leadership team for further action,
- Restorative Justice Practices implemented as appropriate,
- Parents contacted and involved in the process of remedying the situation,
- Where necessary children will be removed from the classroom or school yard for a period of time,
- Ongoing support for the victim of any bullying – including a clear process for reporting any further instances,
- Continued or serious acts of bullying or harassment could result in external suspension or expulsion from school,
- Children need to understand that if they support or encourage a person who is bullying, then they are a supporter of this bullying behaviour and will therefore receive consequences which are similar to those that the bully receives.

### Related Policies and Procedures:

- **Personal Responsibility and Behaviour Education Policy**
- **Behaviour Education: Classroom and yard processes**
- **Grievance Policy for Students**
- **Grievance Policy for Adults**
- **Pastoral Care Policy**
- **Social Media Policy**

### Attachments:

Appendix A OLOH Anti Bullying & Harassment Flowchart

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Chairperson)

30/6/21  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal)

30/6/21  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)





**OUR LADY OF HOPE SCHOOL, GREENWITH  
ANTI BULLYING AND HARASSMENT FLOWCHART**

