



Lobethal
LUTHERAN SCHOOL
Historically Grounded, Future Minded

Student Anti Bullying and Harassment Policy

Lobethal Lutheran School (LLS) upholds that students have the right to learn in a safe and positive environment. The values of care, respect, compassion, acceptance of diversity are encouraged to ensure the wellbeing of themselves and others. Bullying has no place at Lobethal Lutheran School. A students' behaviour must not negatively interfere with another person's comfort or safety.

This Anti Bullying and Harassment Policy outlines the school's commitment to proactively provide a safe learning environment by outlining procedures for staff and students to:

- Know how to promote positive student relationships
- Know how to recognise bullying behaviour
- Know what to do if experiencing bullying behaviour(s)
- Know what consequences will apply

The principles within this document are inclusive of the school's Mission and Values statements. When these values are lived and shared, the school firmly believes that bullying behaviours will not be able to establish themselves. The school is committed to:

- Recognising the worth of each person
- Acceptance and celebration of difference
- An ethic of care for our community
- Developing students who can achieve their potential
- Fostering innovation and creativity

This policy outlines the procedures and actions should bullying behaviours develop so as to quickly and effectively manage incidents in a manner respectful to all parties.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is an ongoing misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal/non verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that causes physical and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power over one or more persons. Bullying can happen in person or online, and it can be obvious or hidden.

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders.

Some conflicts between children are a normal part of growing up and are to be expected. Single incidents and conflicts or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not considered bullying, even though they may be upsetting and need to be resolved.

Bullying can happen:

- Face-to-face (e.g. pushing, tripping, name-calling)
- At a distance (e.g. spreading rumours, excluding someone)
- Through information and communications technologies (e.g. use of SMS, email, social media).

What is Harassment?

Harassment occurs when someone is overtly or covertly made to feel intimidated, insulted or humiliated of their:

- Identity, race, culture or ethnic origin
- Religion
- Physical characteristics
- Gender
- Sexual orientation
- Marital, parenting or economic status
- Age
- Ability or disability.

It can include behaviour such as:

- Telling insulting jokes about particular racial groups
- Sending explicit or sexually suggestive emails
- Displaying offensive posters or screen savers
- Making derogatory comments or taunts about someone's race, religion or sexuality.

It may be:

- An ongoing pattern of behaviour or a single act
- Directed randomly or towards the same person(s)
- Intentional or unintentional.

Discrimination occurs when people are treated less favourably than others because of these characteristics.

What is Cyber Bullying?

Cyberbullying is bullying that is conducted through the use of technology, for example, using the Internet, a mobile phone or camera to hurt or embarrass someone. It can be shared widely with a lot of people quickly, exacerbating the potential for dangerous and hurtful consequences.

Examples of Cyber Bullying include:

- Being sent mean or hurtful text messages from someone you know or even someone you don't know
- Receiving threatening or hurtful messages through social networking sites like Facebook and Twitter, or through sites where people can ask/answer questions like AskFM, KiK, Snapchat or internet forums
- People sending photos and videos of you to others to try and embarrass or hurt you
- People spreading rumours about you via emails or social networking sites or text messages
- People trying to stop you communicating with others
- People stealing your passwords or getting into your accounts and changing the information there
- People setting up fake profiles pretending to be you, or posting messages or status updates from your accounts.

What can I do if I feel harassed or bullied?

- Recognise that you can take positive action. Believe that it is not your fault. You have rights
- Ignoring it or laughing it off may not always work
- If you feel safe – tell the person bullying you that what is happening is not okay/unacceptable and that you wish it to stop
- Do not retaliate – physically or with verbal aggression
- Seek assistance ask for help, tell someone and be assured that staff are there to believe you and assist
- Inform – tell someone you feel comfortable with: parent(s), an adult you trust, Classroom teacher, a staff member, Chaplain, Principal, so that the school becomes aware of your problem
- All bullying reports are taken seriously and the school will work with you to deal with the issues in an appropriate way
- For cyber bullying, take screenshots of the material and/or keep the entire unedited document as evidence

What can you do if you are a witness or a bystander to bullying?

- You should care enough to want to do something. Doing nothing is the same as siding with the bully.
- Take action when the bullying occurs by saying something like “leave him/her alone”.

- Report the incident as soon as possible. You can make an anonymous report that will alert staff to a bullying incident, or ask for privacy and confidentiality.
- Offer support to the student being bullied. Tell them that what you saw or heard was not acceptable and provide support or advice on how to access further supports.

School Action

When a formal report is made it must be presented to the Principal within 24 hours. This person will investigate the incident fully to ascertain the details of the situation through interviewing all relevant parties starting with the recipient.

They will then take the following steps:

Restorative practices

In the first instance a meeting will be held with the alleged bully, where the bullying behaviours and the effects of these behaviours, will be specifically described. Questions will be directed to the student to ascertain how they feel about the impact of their actions. The student will then be asked to explain how things can move forward, what they can do to fix/improve the situation and what needs to be done to prevent it from happening again. The consequences of similar further behaviours will be clearly outlined.

The Principal or teacher will inform the parent/s about the incident and the meeting. This contact will take place within 24 hours of the meeting.

Parent meeting

If there is a second incident of bullying involving the same student/s there will be a meeting with the bully, the parents of that student, the Principal or teacher. The focus of this meeting will be:

- To clearly describe the bullying behaviour and its effects
- To explain what behaviour is required
- To identify strategies to support the student in changing behaviour

Depending on the severity of this second incident, the student may be internally suspended until the parent meeting can be arranged.

Principal meeting

If a third incident of bullying involving the same student/s occur, the Principal will arrange a meeting between the Principal, the student and the parents.

The purpose of this meeting will be for the Principal to explain clearly that for the student to remain a part of the Lobethal Lutheran community their behaviour needs to adhere to the school values and reference will be made to the Terms of Enrolment, notably section 14 of the Enrolment Agreement. The student will be required to make a specific undertaking to improve their behaviour and will be provided with clear expectations and outcomes. The student may be suspended externally for a defined period of time with access to school psychologists or outside agencies to provide strategies for the student to change their behaviour.

The parents will be informed by the Principal, about the time and place for this meeting so that they are able to attend. Depending on the severity of the bullying incident, the student may be sent home until the meeting can be arranged consistent with the Behaviour Management Policy.

Approved April 2018

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