

Bullying Policy

Policy Statement

Caloundra Christian College does not tolerate bullying in any form. All members of the College community are committed to ensuring a safe and caring environment which promotes personal growth and positive self-esteem for all.

Rationale

This policy has been formulated to fulfil the our Mission Statement:

Providing Christ centred education, strong foundations for life and learning.

Jesus reminds us in Matthew 25:40 that inasmuch as you have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, you have done it unto me. Bullying or tolerance of situations involving bullying prevents the delivery of effective Christian education by our College.

What is bullying?

Bullying is an act of aggression causing embarrassment, pain or discomfort to another and:

- it can take a number of forms: physical, verbal, gesture, extortion and exclusion
- it is an abuse of power
- it can be planned and organised or it may be unintentional
- individuals or groups may be involved
- it undermines the principle set out in Matthew 25:40

We recognise that bullying distracts teachers and students from their goals and endangers their safety.

Some examples of bullying include:

- Any form of physical violence such as hitting, pushing or spitting on others
- Interfering with another's property by stealing, hiding, damaging or destroying it
- Using offensive names, teasing or spreading rumours about others or their families
- Using put-downs, belittling others' abilities and achievements
- Writing offensive notes or graffiti about others
- Making degrading comments about another's culture, religious or social background
- Hurtfully excluding others from a group
- Making suggestive comments or other forms of sexual abuse
- Ridiculing another's appearance
- Forcing others to act against their will

Our commitment is to ensure that staff and students possess skills to enable them to identify situations where bullying is occurring and refer the situation to the relevant role harassment officer as per this policy.

If bullying occurs:

- A person may feel frightened, unsafe, embarrassed, angry or unfairly treated

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Last Review: May 2014

Last Update: May 2013

Next Review: May 2015

- A person may feel confused and not know what to do about the problem
- Work, sleep and the ability to concentrate may suffer
- Relationships with family and friends may deteriorate

Guidelines for dealing with Bullying

As a College community we will not allow cases of bullying to go unreported, but will speak up, even at risk to ourselves.

(a) This requires staff to:

- be role models in word and action at all times
- be observant of signs of distress or suspected incidents of bullying
- make efforts to remove occasions for bullying by active patrolling during playground duty
- arrive at class on time and move promptly between lessons
- take steps to help victims and remove sources of distress without placing the victim at further risk
- report suspected incidents to the appropriate staff member such as Home group Teacher, Class Teacher, Deputy Principal, Chaplain or College Counsellor who will follow the designated procedures

(b) This requires students to refuse to be involved in any bullying situation. If a student is present when bullying occurs:

- if appropriate, take some form of preventative action
- report the incident or suspected incident and help break down the code of secrecy

If students who are being bullied have the courage to speak out, they may help to reduce pain for themselves and other potential victims.

(c) The College recommends that parents:

- watch for signs of distress in their child e.g. unwillingness to attend school, a pattern of headaches, missing equipment, requests for extra money, damaged clothes or bruising
- take an active interest in your child's social life and their acquaintances
- advise your child to tell a staff member about any incidents. If possible allow them to report and deal with the problem themselves. They gain much respect through taking the initiative and dealing with the problem without parental involvement.
- inform the College if bullying is suspected, even if your own child is not directly affected
- keep a written record (who, what, when, where, why, how)
- do not encourage your child to retaliate
- communicate to your child that parental involvement, if necessary, may be appropriate for the situation
- do not personally or directly approach students suspected of bullying or their family members, as this may lead to further dispute

When staff, students and parents work together we can help create a safe, Christian environment at Caloundra Christian College.

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Process for dealing with issues related to Bullying

What happens when a student has been bullied?

Unless incidents of bullying are reported to an appropriate person, very little can be done about bullying, either for the victim or the perpetrator.

At Caloundra Christian College we encourage everybody (teachers, students and parents) to report incidences of bullying so that help can be given where it is needed. Bullying reports can be made to any member of staff (including non-teaching staff) and students are encouraged to report instances of bullying that have been shared with them by their friends.

What happens when a report has been made?

The member of staff will take details and refer the incident to the College Counsellor. If this is a first time incident, then level 1 action will be taken by the appropriate staff as determined by the Deputy Principal, House Leader or Counsellor.

Level 1

- Victim counselled
- Key bully/ies identified and interviewed
- Bully writes a statement in response to victims allegations
- Peer mediation, if appropriate
- Bully is on first level of anti-bullying program
- College Counsellor informed
- Parent contact may occur at this stage

What happens if a second incident occurs?

- Bully will complete a bully busters program during lunchtimes
- Principal interviews bully as part of the program
- Parents contacted by College Counsellor and notified of consequences of next level
- Bully on second level of anti-bullying program

What happens if a third incident occurs?

- Students are recommended for an external suspension
- Parents are contacted and notified of the consequences of next level
- Meeting between parents, College Counsellor and Principal on return to school
- Bully on third level of anti-bullying program

What happens if a fourth offence occurs?

- Termination of enrolment

It is important to note that both victims and perpetrators are counselled with regard to employing strategies that may assist them in breaking out of the 'cycle'.

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