



Learning Today, Leading Tomorrow

Student Bullying Policy

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Purpose:	The purpose of this policy is to protect students from bullying and to respond appropriately when bullying does occur	
Scope:	Students, parents and employees, including full-time, part-time, permanent, fixed-term and casual employees, as well as contractors, volunteers and people undertaking work experience or vocational placements	
Status:	Approved	Supersedes: Anti-Bullying Policy 2017
Authorised by:	School Governing Body	Date of Authorisation: April 2020
References:	<p>Wisdom College Privacy Policy</p> <p>Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulations 2017 (Qld)</p> <p>Australian Education Act 2013 (Cth)</p> <p>Australian Education Regulations 2013 (Cth)</p> <p>Wisdom College Student Bullying Reporting and Response Procedures</p> <p>Wisdom College Positive Behaviour Management Policy</p> <p>Wisdom College Child Protection Policy</p> <p>Wisdom College Disability Discrimination Policy</p> <p>Wisdom College Student Handbook</p> <p>Wisdom College Dispute Resolution Policy</p>	
Review Date:	Biennial	Next Review Date: February 2024
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Policy Statement

Wisdom College has a zero tolerance approach to bullying.

Wisdom College is committed to taking action to protect students from bullying and to respond appropriately when bullying does occur.

In order to prevent bullying from occurring, Wisdom College will implement the following actions:

- Raise awareness of the school community's shared understanding of what bullying is, how it impacts on people and how bullying is responded to at the school;
- Develop and promote effective social skills and positive relationships amongst students;
- In order to respond appropriately to any incidences of bullying, Wisdom College will:
 - Develop an appropriate mechanism for students and parents to report bullying;
 - Educate students and parents on how to respond, in the first instance, to incidences of bullying, and how to then report all incidences of bullying;
 - Educate employees on how to appropriately respond to reports of bullying;
 - Investigate and act upon all reports of bullying;
 - Take appropriate action, which might include support for targets of bullying; and
 - Deal with perpetrators and/or enforce disciplinary measures.

Wisdom College Student Bullying Reporting and Response Procedures explain the bullying reporting mechanism for students and parents, and details how employees will respond to reports. The Procedures also state that all reports will be investigated and acted upon, with appropriate support and consequences implemented.

Definitions

Bullying: is a systematic and repeated abuse of power. In general bullying may be defined as:

- dominating or hurting someone;
- unfair action by the perpetrator(s) and an imbalance of power; and
- a lack of adequate defence by the target and feelings of oppression and humiliation.

It can occur at any age, across cultures, genders and socioeconomic groups. It can happen in the playground, toilet areas, to and from school or in the classroom.

Physical bullying: this is when a person (or group of people) uses physical actions to bully, such as hitting, poking, tripping or pushing. Repeatedly and intentionally damaging someone's belongings is also physical bullying.

Verbal bullying: repeated or systematic name calling, insults, homophobic or racist remarks and verbal abuse.

Covert bullying: such as lying about someone, spreading rumours, playing a nasty joke that makes the person feel humiliated or powerless, mimicking or deliberately excluding someone.

Psychological bullying: for example, threatening, manipulating or stalking someone.

Cyber bullying: using technology, such as email, mobile phones, chat rooms, social networking sites to bully verbally, socially or psychologically.

What is NOT Bullying?

There are also some behaviours, which, although they might be unpleasant or distressing, are not bullying:

- Mutual conflict - which involves a disagreement, but not an imbalance of power. Unresolved mutual conflict can develop into bullying if one of the parties targets the other repeatedly in retaliation;
- Single-episode acts of nastiness or physical aggression, or aggression directed towards many different people, is not bullying unless it becomes a pattern of behaviours' and
- Social rejection or dislike is not bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.

Conflict: Conflict is a mutual disagreement, argument or dispute between people where no one has a significant power advantage and both feel equally aggrieved.

- Conflict is different to bullying because there is always an imbalance of power in bullying. However, poorly resolved conflict situations, especially those involving friendship break-ups or romantic break-ups sometimes lead to either aggression or bullying; and
- Conflict can be a precursor to bullying where there are instances of repeated conflict and where the balance of power changes.

Responsibilities

School

Wisdom College acknowledges its responsibility to:

- Raise awareness of bullying and how the school will respond to it;
- Take action to help prevent bullying;
- Implement a reporting mechanism for students and parents;

- Educate students and parents on how to respond to bullying and how to report it;
- Educate employees on how to appropriately respond to bullying; and
- Investigate and act upon all reports of bullying, including providing appropriate support and consequences.

Staff

At Wisdom College employees have a responsibility to:

- Uphold and consistently apply this Policy; and
- Respond appropriately to reports of bullying, including by:
 - a) investigating and acting upon reports of bullying; and
 - b) by providing appropriate support and consequences in accordance with the Student Bullying Reporting and Response Procedures and Behaviour Management Policy

Parent

At Wisdom College, parents have a responsibility to:

- Encourage their child not to bully others;
- Encourage their child to report bullying inflicted on themselves or others; and
- Encourage their child to take steps to stop bullying as directed under these Policies, viz. Student Bullying Reporting and Response Procedures and Behaviour Policy Management.

Student

At Wisdom College, students have a responsibility to:

- Not engage in bullying behaviour towards others;
- Report bullying occurring to them or others; and
- Take steps to stop bullying as directed under these Policies, viz. Student Bullying Reporting and Response Procedures and Behaviour Policy Management.

Implementation

Every school will have approaches and processes to proactively support anti-bullying behaviours and respond to bullying and cyberbullying documented in the whole school Student Behaviour Support Plan.

The implementation section could include:

- Preventative approaches: education programs and strategies to promote positive behaviours including reporting of bullying and preventing bullying behaviours;
- Early intervention strategies when given notice of the enrolment of a student who has been identified as having been bullied or having engaged in bullying behaviour in a previous school; and

- A list of resources available in the school to support the process of restoring justice.

Reports of bullying will be investigated and acted upon. Responses to bullying might include support for targets of bullying and perpetrators and/or disciplinary measures.

The teacher will intervene to stop the bullying. The teacher may conduct and complete a mediation contract or refer the situation to a School Coordinator, or Principal if serious.

School Coordinators may employ one of the following intervention strategies:

- Traditional disciplinary approach;
- Strengthening the target ;
- Mediation;
- Restorative practice;
- Support group method;
- Method of shared concern;
- Conduct no-blame mediations and draw up contracts between the victim and the accused;
- Keep track of all bullying reports from all parts of the school;
- Give students feedback on what has happened with their report; and
- Offer student strategies to cope if the incident occurs again.

At Wisdom College we support targets and conduct reformatory programmes for perpetrators through:

- Counselling;
- Conducting bullying interviews;
- Increased supervision of risk areas;
- Social skills programs for targets and perpetrators;
- Teaching students how to cooperate and “get on” with others;
- Working out a behaviour plan or playground plan for some students, to keep everyone safe;
- Teaching students about conflict and bullying;
- Running programs that help students become more confident;
- Running anti-bullying workshops;
- Having special meetings to work things out with the involved students;
- Having students (as part of a school subject), to complete classroom tasks about bullying; and
- Give detentions, suspensions or exclusions to students who bully others.

At Wisdom College depending on the severity of the bullying or harassment any or all the following consequences might take place:

- No-blame discussion with the teacher or School Coordinators;
- Signing of a formal contract;
- Method of shared concern or restorative practices;
- Family meetings;
- Detentions;

- Community service (referred by Admin); and
- Suspension and recommendation for exclusion where bullying is so severe that no other form of consequence would be deemed adequate.

Serious and Repeated Incidents

Not all cases of bullying will be easy to deal with but these cases will be dealt with through providing support for victims and their families and consequences for bullies.

In serious cases, mediation between parties will be encouraged and the unacceptability of the deed (not doer) will be emphasized. The effect the deed has had on all parties involved will be explored. Our aim at this stage is to help the perpetrator see that a change in behaviour is required, that the victim feels supported and that the problem is solved with arrangements for restitution to be made.

Compliance and Monitoring

At Wisdom College reports of bullying are taken seriously. Students and parents/carers may report bullying in the following ways:

- Directly to a member of staff; and
- Via the annual /biannual bully service; and
- Using a Bullying Report Form.

Reports of bullying will be collated and monitored to inform the school community about the extent of bullying and to identify particular areas of concern for future action.

Resources

- Act Smart Be Safe: a gateway for parents/carers, students, teachers and the community to access information to help improve youth safety.
<http://education.qld.gov.au/actsmartbesafe/>
- Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA)
www.acma.gov.au/cybersafety
- Australian Federal Police: are involved in crime prevention and awareness raising activities, particularly in keeping young people safe online. The AFP coordinates ThinkUKnow. www.afp.gov.au
- Bullying. No way! Safe and Supportive Communities (SSSC) Project; Queensland Department of Education, Training and Development on behalf of the Australian Education Authorities (2013) www.bullyingnoway.com.au
- The Bullying No Way! website provides a wide range of information and resources for parents and school communities on managing bullying. For more information, visit: www.bullyingnoway.gov.au
- Cybersmart provides an outline of policies and procedures schools may follow to assist them in providing a holistic approach to cybersafety. www.cybersmart.gov.au
- Digital Citizenship information on the BCE Learning and Teaching site
- Friendly Schools and Families Program: provides a description of individual, group, family and school community level actions to address and prevent bullying in its social context. The program assists with the design, development, implementation, dissemination and evaluation of a social skill building and comprehensive anti-bullying program. Dr. Donna Cross and co-workers at Edith Cowan University developed the program. <http://www.friendlyschools.com.au/about.php>
- Guide for educators to bullying on the internet
www.education.unisa.edu.au/bullying/educators.html
- Ken Rigby www.kenrigby.net Professor Ken Rigby is a national consultant for Australian schools and a leading international authority in bullying and victimisation in schools with more than 100 peer refereed papers and other publications. In his site he has set out to present in brief what is most useful for schools and parents to know about bullying among children and how resources can be accessed to tackle this enduring and troubling problem.
- Kids' Helpline: is a free, private and confidential, 24-hour telephone and online counseling service for young people aged between 5-25 years 1800 551 800
www.kidshelp.com.au
- The National Centre Against Bullying (NCAB) is a peak body working to advise and inform the Australian community on the issue of childhood bullying and the creation of safe schools and communities, including the issue of cyber safety.
www.ncab.org.au
- Restorative Practices www.restorativepractices.org.au offers teachers, students and parents a way of seeing problems as an opportunity for learning.
- Reach Out: an online resource that assists young people by providing information to improve understanding of the issues that relate to mental health and wellbeing. Reach Out also has information on how young people can get the best help from

services, as well as opportunities to connect with other young people.

<http://au.reachout.com>

- Rock and Water Program: founded by the Dutch educationalist, Feerk Ykema, is designed to help young people interact and communicate more confidently with others. It makes use of physical exercises that are constantly linked to the acquisition of mental and physical skills. It claims to assist boys and girls to become aware of purpose and motivation in their lives.
<http://www.yapa.org.au/youthwork/stories/rockandwater.php>
- Safe Schools Hub: National Safe Schools Framework (2011) MCEECDYA, Department of Education, Employment and Workplace relations; Commonwealth of Australia (2013) www.safeschoolshub.edu.au
- Working Together Suite of Resources developed by QSAAV, can be accessed at:
<http://education.qld.gov.au/studentservices/behaviour/qsaaav/index.html>

It includes:

- o Queensland Schools Declaration Against Bullying and Violence
- o Working Together: A toolkit for parents to address bullying
- o Working Together: A starter kit for developing local community alliances against bullying and violence
- o Working Together: Good practice in Queensland schools – Case studies of effective school based action against bullying
- o Working Together: Understanding student violence in schools
- You Can Do It: a program delivered through a school curriculum to help students set achievable goals and enjoy life. It emphasises the need to have positive thoughts in order to change negative feelings and behaviours. The program covers eight areas: confidence, effort and persistence, happenings, self-acceptance, goal setting, time management and organisation, making friends and handling conflict.
www.youcandoit.com.au