



# NHILL LUTHERAN SCHOOL

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Policy Document

## STUDENT ANTI-BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY

### RATIONALE:

Nhill Lutheran School has a Christian Ethos where Christ's teaching of love, respect, tolerance for each other and the forgiveness of sins are evident in the school environment. In Romans 15 verse 7 Paul tells us to "Accept one another, then, just as Christ has accepted you, in order to bring praise to God." We believe that God loves and cares for all people equally and that all individual differences are acknowledged and accepted.

Nhill Lutheran School believes that all school community members, visitors, volunteers or contractors have a right to be in an environment that is safe and free from harassment and bullying. We promote an environment where people:

- Respect each other's rights and property;
- Treat each other with kindness and courtesy;
- Support and encourage each other in their actions;
- Accept each other's differences;
- Show tolerance, forgiveness and understanding to each other.

In such an environment, people can develop positive relationships with each other, grow and learn in a healthy atmosphere and develop in self-esteem and confidence.

We recognise that our humanity means that we can hurt others physically, verbally or emotionally. At Nhill Lutheran School, we promote repentance, forgiveness and supporting changes in behaviour for all concerned.

### AIMS

- To create a gospel-centred culture within the Nhill Lutheran School Community which is the means to meet personal needs of worth, acceptance, value, dignity, adequacy, personal security and respect. This culture respects individual differences by modelling the unconditional love of Jesus for all people and does not support any form of bullying or harassment.
- Everyone within, or involved with the Nhill Lutheran School community is to be alert to signs and evidence of bullying and harassment and to have a responsibility to report it to staff whether as observer or victim.
- To ensure that all reported incidents of bullying and harassment are followed up and that support is given to both victim and perpetrator.
- To seek parental and peer-group support and cooperation at all times.

## DEFINITIONS:

### HARASSMENT:

Harassment can take many forms. At Nhill Lutheran School, we define harassment as ***behaviour that unduly embarrasses, hurts or upsets another person.***

It can be:

**Physical:** Striking, kicking, damaging or taking belongings.

**Verbal:** name calling, teasing, insulting, and racist remarks.

**Emotional/psychological:** spreading rumours, exclusion from social groups, persistent mockery, manipulation of friendship groups, extortion and threats.

**Racial:** Any repeated or deliberate comment, gesture or conduct, which hurts someone because of their nationality, ancestry, skin colour or beliefs.

**Sexual:** Behaviour that enforces gender stereotypes; behaviour which is seen by the victim as embarrassing, offensive, belittling or compromising and behaviour such as crude or suggestive talk, offensive gestures or jokes; unwelcome physical contact or a display of offensive photographic material.

### BULLYING:

At Nhill Lutheran School, we define bullying as ***repeated, unprovoked aggressive behaviour or harassment, deliberately inflicted by someone of greater power on someone of lesser power.***

It can be distinguished from common conflict and harassment as defined above or a transient outbreak of aggressive behaviour by these indicators.

- 1) It is **deliberate**.
- 2) It is **persistent or repeated**, taking place over a significant period of time.
- 3) Regardless of the form it takes, it involves a **power imbalance**. The bully sets out to exercise power over another person so as to intimidate them. The victim cannot use normal methods of protection because of the power imbalance.

In both harassment and bullying, students may be involved as either perpetrators or victims.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### STAFF

It is the responsibility of staff at Nhill Lutheran School as part of their Duty of Care to follow the school policy on any harassment and bullying incidents through to their conclusion.

Staff are to:

- Act as role models of caring and tolerant behaviour.
- Respond to reports of harassment and bullying using the procedures outlined in this policy to protect the victim from harm and stop the behaviour recurring.
- Ensure that information gathered follows guidelines outlined in the Privacy Policy.
- Keep the Principal informed.
- Keep parents informed of harassment and bullying incidents by consulting and collaborating with the parents in the behaviour management and change of student actions where the student is a perpetrator of bullying or displaying victim-like behaviours. (*See flow chart*)
- Keep parents generally informed regarding curriculum, conflict resolution techniques, peer mediation and buddy activities as specific to the individual class and in general the whole school.
- Teach an Anti-bullying component in the Curriculum for each year level across the school. This includes items that teach resilience and resistance to bullying.
- Be vigilant whilst on Yard Duty, ensuring that trouble spots for bullying incidents are patrolled regularly.

- Take any other actions that support the development of a culture that does not tolerate harassment and bullying behaviours.

## STUDENTS

Students need to develop an attitude that when they feel bullied or harassed or see someone being bullied, “it’s OK to tell”. Students need to have confidence in the adults they tell. The peer group culture will value tolerance and cooperation and reject aggressive and unacceptable behaviour.

It is the responsibility of each student to:

- Report to a staff member any bullying or harassment incident, whether self or others, as soon as it occurs.
- If safe to do so, support a victim of bullying or harassment in the manner taught by teachers.
- Be aware of what bullying / harassment are and how such behaviours can affect others. The class program outlines the anti-bullying and harassment policy in terms that students can understand.
- Accept the consequences of bullying and harassment behaviours.
- Use appropriate conflict resolution techniques.
- Students in the senior classes are to act as role models of caring and tolerant behaviour.

## PARENTS

Parents need to inform a Nhill Lutheran School staff member as soon as they become aware that their child or another person is being bullied or harassed or is bullying. In the list of people that students might tell, teachers may not be the first on the list. Staff, parents and older students need to work together and support each other with bullying and harassment issues. Parents need to have confidence that the process for dealing with these issues works.

It is the responsibility of parents to:

- Report any bullying or harassment incident to a staff member in a calm and civil manner, whether related to self or others, as soon as it occurs.
- Be aware of what bullying and harassment are and the differences to conflict.
- Be familiar with the process for dealing with harassment and bullying reports.
- Be familiar with the consequences outlined in the Student Behaviour Management policy for bullying and harassment.
- Support School actions to enforce these policies and consequences in regard to harassment and bullying behaviour.
- Support a School culture of tolerance and understanding by supporting anti-bullying programs as provided by the School from time to time.
- Consult and collaborate with the classroom teacher in the behaviour management and change of student actions where the student is a perpetrator of bullying or displaying victim-like behaviours.

## PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH BULLYING AND HARASSMENT INCIDENTS

Creating a school culture where the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the means of freedom and security for individuals to love and serve each other will be more effective than trying to inhibit bullying and harassment with consequences and punishments. Consequences and punishments may at times still be necessary, but Nhill Lutheran School will use these together with many approaches including:

- **Nurturing a Gospel-centred culture** in which the whole school community is involved in pastoral care, by modelling the unconditional love and forgiveness of Jesus to all people as the basis for personal security and worth with ourselves, others and God.
- **Anti-bullying Component in Curriculum**: Use of appropriate resources will enable students to practise good relationship behaviour and be able to recognise bullying behaviour and thus report it.

- **Vigilance**: All staff members consistently follow the chart for reports of bullying as follows. Classroom teachers are to keep records of each incident for follow-up and training as the need arises.
- **Gather information**: Teachers use methods such as surveys, journal writing, non-threatening questionnaires, social studies, to gather information on students who are undertaking bullying behaviour, places where bullying is more likely to occur and students who are not in a social group and are “at risk” of being victims.
- **Consequences**: Bullying and harassing behaviours will have consequences enforced as outlined in the Student Behaviour Management policies.
- **Collaborative Approach**: When a student has been involved in a bullying incident(s), parents may be informed by the classroom teacher, especially if the behaviour has been repeated, or is hurtful physically or emotionally. A collaborative approach will then be implemented in order to change the behaviours that led to the incident.

DATE: 22 April 2014

FOR REVIEW: April 2016

**FLOWCHART FOR DEALING WITH A REPORTED BULLYING/HARASSMENT INCIDENT:**

