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# Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedures

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## **Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedures**

The Lakes College does not tolerate bullying of any kind. Every person has the right to be treated with dignity and respect and to enjoy positive relationships with all members of the College community.

All students of the College have the right to be safe and to learn and all teachers have the right to teach in a safe environment that promotes self-worth and personal growth. It is the responsibility of all members of the College community to play an active part in ensuring that everyone is treated with respect and that any bullying is managed effectively.

### **The key aims of this policy are:**

- To provide a safe, secure and supportive environment for all members of the College community by actively promoting positive relations;
- To provide support for victims of bullying;
- To ensure that the perpetrators of bullying behaviour understand and accept responsibility for their behaviour, be able to offer reparation and receive appropriate consequences;
- To educate students of all ages about appropriate ways to treat others and
- To produce students who are responsible and caring citizens in the community.

### **Definition**

Bullying is a subset of aggression and is the intent to hurt, it is repetitive, has a power imbalance and the victim is unable to defend themselves. The hurt may be physical, emotional or psychological and can include comments, gestures, extortion and exclusion.

In essence, bullying involves individuals or groups exerting power over another person or group with the intent to hurt.

### **Examples of bullying behaviour:**

- Any form of physical violence (hitting, punching, pinching, biting, pushing, spitting) on others;
- Invasion of another's personal space with the intent to intimidate;
- Using offensive names, teasing or spreading rumours about others or their families or friends;
- Using put downs such as negative nicknames or belittling others' abilities, achievements or efforts;
- Ridiculing others because of their race, gender, religion or social grouping;
- Ridiculing another's physical appearance or dress
- Writing offensive notes, emails or graffiti about others;
- Using a third person or group to exert harm against someone;
- Hurtfully excluding others from a group, conversation or event;
- Using stand over tactics or threats to intimidate others
- Interfering with another's property by stealing, hiding, damaging or destroying it.
- Making sexually suggestive comments or gestures or telling sexually orientated jokes that cause discomfort

- Use of social media and/or technology (emails, websites, mobile phones) to inflict hurt on others.

The effects of bullying:

- May lead to a loss of self-esteem, confidence and self-worth;
- May feel frightened, embarrassed, angry depressed or unsafe;
- May be unable to sleep, experience, nightmares, loss of appetite or declining concentration on school work;
- May become more reserved and avoid participation in extra curricular activities or social events;
- May feel confused, alone and helpless to do anything about the problems;
- May experience a deterioration in other relationships;
- May begin to display bullying behaviour themselves.

### **Strategies to Prevent Bullying**

At The Lakes College, staff will:

- Increase the awareness of students about the appropriate ways to treat others;
- Actively display non-bullying behaviour in their treatment of both students and other staff;
- Listen to students and be sympathetic to reports of bullying behaviour even if they have retaliated under provocation;
- Be alert to the possible indicators prevalent in victims of bullying;
- Report possible concerns regarding treatment of individuals or actual incidents of bullying to the student's class teacher;
- Investigate parent concerns that have been raised with them;
- Promote an atmosphere in class and extra-curricular activities which allow for the full involvement of students without fear of ridicule;
- Be mindful of how students are allocated in group work activities or the way that teams are selected on sporting occasions;
- Be vigilant on playground duty and in class change over times;
- Assist students to develop positive strategies to deal with bullying and to build self-esteem and resilience;
- Encourage students to talk about and report concerns regarding bullying – to encourage a 'telling environment' as against the 'dobber' mentality;
- Explain the key terms 'bullying', 'harassment' and 'teasing' at appropriate opportunities in class;
- Be actively and enthusiastically involved in supporting and implementing the College's bullying and behaviour management policies;
- Be involved through interdisciplinary curriculum initiatives and pastoral care groups in education about bullying.

At The Lakes College, the victims of bullying behaviour will be urged to consider using the following strategies:

- Confront the offending student and make it clear that such behaviour is unacceptable;
- Speak with the relevant teacher or parent/guardian to work out strategies for dealing with the problem and follow the appropriate guidelines for the management of bullying.

At The Lakes College we acknowledge the role that bystanders play in bullying behaviour and actively encourage other students to:

- Inform an appropriate member of staff or responsible senior student immediately;
- Make it clear to others in the peer group that such behaviour is wrong;
- Understand that observing such behaviour without action can be seen as supporting the offending student.

At The Lakes College, we encourage parents to:

- Be supportive of the College's efforts to deal with incidents of bullying and be willing to attend interviews or conferencing if required;
- Be aware of signs of distress or changed behaviour that may indicate their child is a victim of bullying, for example, reluctant to attend College, a pattern of headaches or stomach pains, frequently missing equipment that is out of character, requests for extra money, damaged clothing or bruising;
- Take an active interest in their child's social life and friendship groups;
- Communicate openly and regularly with their child so the child is more inclined to tell them of problems before they become major problems;
- Encourage their child to report the problem to a trusted teacher or do so themselves if the child is unable to do so;
- Refrain from encouraging the child to retaliate or involving themselves directly with the child or their parents;
- Trust the College's established procedures and desire to reach the best outcome for all parties concerned rather than seek retribution themselves.

### **Management of a Bullying Incident**

All reports of bullying are to be investigated by relevant staff members in consultation with the Principal to determine the nature and extent of bullying.

#### **Level 1**

If the bullying is a less severe offence, the staff member will follow up as appropriate. This should involve speaking with the offender and victim, then bringing them together for a Restorative Chat (see Appendix A). This will allow both parties to talk through the situation and for the offender to apologise and modify their behaviour. It is important that we are trying to improve social behaviour rather than apportion blame, so punitive measures are not necessarily appropriate. However, the offender needs to understand that their behaviour is wrong and must not recur. The staff member will inform parents and keep a record of the incident. A copy of this is to be kept on the students' file (offending student and victim).

#### **Level 2**

If the behaviour recurs, or if it is a serious first offence the staff member will complete a Bullying Incident Report Form (Appendix B) and submit to the Head of Primary School, Head of Secondary School or Principal. The Head of Primary School, Head of Secondary School or Principal will investigate to find out the nature and extent of the bullying and hold restorative discussions with both the offender and victim and any bystanders if appropriate. The Head of Primary School, Head of Secondary School or Principal will ensure appropriate restoration is offered to the victims and the offender is supported in changing their behaviour. A written agreement will be drawn up (or equivalent in lower year levels) and signed by the offending student who agrees to refrain from such behaviour in the future. Parents will be interviewed at this level, with a phone call in the first instance and a follow up meeting if required. Follow up will occur to ensure the victim feels safe and the bullying behaviour ceases.

### **Level 3**

In the event of repeated bullying or bullying that has not been resolved through the mechanisms described above, the Principal will hold a restorative conference with the students and their parents. Consequences for ongoing bullying may include the following:

- playground suspension;
- College service;
- Professional assistance or counselling for conflict resolution, anger management;
- Other creative ideas as determined in the restorative conferencing process;
- A contract agreeing to refrain from such behaviour in the future will be signed by the offending student and parents;
- Suspension;
- If the bullying is repeated behaviour that does not cease despite all attempts at restorative conferencing and other consequences, it is considered a breach of the Enrolment Agreement and the Principal may implement expulsion procedures.

### **Records**

Each staff member will record first low level incidents. These reports are to be filed and discussed with the Principal, Head of Primary School or Head of Secondary School as required.

Bullying Incident Report Forms and written agreements are filed on student files for both the victim and the offending student.

### **Review**

It is important that staff follow up with victims and offenders of bullying in the days and weeks following the original incident to ensure the situation has been resolved.

**Evaluation**

The College undertakes to review this Bullying Policy annually in light of the fact that the College is ever changing in its growth.

The evaluation would also include an assessment of the extent to which the strategies used and educational opportunities undertaken have been effective. In light of such an evaluation, the Principal in consultation with other relevant staff will map out the approaches, activities and external support needed to ensure that all students are aware of the issues involved in bullying and all behave in socially appropriate ways.

**Conclusion**

While bullying exists at all levels of society it is important that we communicate our intolerance of this behaviour and take all action to restore relationships when bullying occurs. We understand the effects of bullying on learning, self-esteem and general adjustment in the school environment as well as long term psychological effects.

The implementation of this policy requires the whole College community to share in the responsibility of managing bullying wherever and whenever it occurs.

**POLICY RELEASE DETAILS**

**Date of Policy**

January 2008

January 2014

Updated January 2015

Reviewed January 2016

Reviewed January 2016

**Approved by**

The Lakes College Board

Chairman .....

Date .....

**Review Date:**

Annually, after initial review by Student Services Committee (Chaplain, Educational Consultant, Head of Learning Enhancement, Year 7 Coordinator, Careers and Guidance Counsellor) and in consultation with the Principal, Head of Primary and Head of Secondary.

**Related Policies and Documents:**

Unsatisfactory Performance Management Policy

Fair Culture Policy

Social Media Policy

Appendix A

**Short Restorative Conference Format**

Key Principles:

- o There must be a recognition of harm
  - o There is acceptance of the effect of that harm
  - o Reparation is offered
  - o An agreement is drawn up – can be recorded by teacher or a written agreement by older students.
1. Ask questions to the wrong doer (see restorative chat)
  2. Ask questions to the victim (see restorative chat)
  3. You have just heard how ..... has been affected by what you did and how what you did has caused harm. Is there anything you would like to say?
  4. Wrong Doer’s response.
  5. What can you do to put things right? *This may be difficult so allow time for the wrong doer to come up with something. If still struggling, then ask if they would like you to make some suggestions.*
  6. Ask victim how they feel about the offer?
  7. To wrong doer.... ‘On .....(day) you made the choice to (summarise incident) and today you have made another choice and have offered to (summarise reparation offered). Which choice do you feel better about?
  8. Both parties agree on reparation.
  9. To wrong doer “You have said you have taken responsibility for what you did and that you are going to put things right by (sum up agreement). How do you feel now? How will ... feel if you do not keep to the agreement? How will...feel if you do keep to the agreement? How will you feel if you keep to the agreement?

**The Restorative Chat**

reflect.... repair...reconnect

To the wrong doer	To the victim	When stuck
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What happened?</li> <li>• What were you thinking?</li> <li>• What did you feel? What are you feeling now?</li> <li>• Who do you think has been affected by what you did?</li> <li>• In what way?</li> <li>• What do you need to make things right?</li> <li>• How can we make sure things doesn’t happen again?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What happened?</li> <li>• What did you think when it happened?</li> <li>• What are you feeling?</li> <li>• What has been the hardest thing for you?</li> <li>• What is needed to make things right?</li> <li>• How can we make sure this doesn’t happen again?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Was it the right or wrong thing to do?</li> <li>• Was it fair or unfair?</li> <li>• What exactly are you sorry for?</li> </ul>

Appendix B

**Bullying Report Form**

Student Name:
Date of Incident/s:
Nature of Incident:
Description of incident and how Level 1 strategies have not worked (Please attach any supporting documentation)

**Action/Agreements for Reparation and Reconnection**

For victim:
For bully:
Date of feedback given to parents of students. _____
Signed by staff member compiling the report _____
Signed by the Principal/HOP/HOS _____
Date _____