

Bullying Intervention & Prevention Policy

Adopted by Redeemer Lutheran School 2022



Redeemer
Lutheran
School

Grow up to Christ



Guiding Principles

At Redeemer we believe and acknowledge that:

- Each member of the school community is a unique and worthy individual created and loved by God.
- God calls us to love and respect one another.
- Each member of the school community has the right to feel safe whilst at school.
- Being safe and supported at school is essential for student wellbeing and effective learning.
- The responsibility rests with each member of the school community not to take part in bullying.
- It is also the responsibility of each member of the school community, including parents, to inform the school/classroom teachers of any bullying / harassing situations of which they are aware.
- Developing a safe school community requires a whole school approach.
- It is important to actively support young people to develop skills needed to build meaningful and reciprocal relationships and to solve problems peacefully.
- We have a responsibility to develop and sustain a safe and supportive environment that fulfils our child protection responsibilities.

These principles help to guide the effective implementation of the School's Bullying and Harassment Policy and related practices as outlined below.

Aim of this Policy

The aim of Redeemer's Anti-Bullying & Harassment Policy is to:

- Reinforce within the school community that no form of bullying and harassment is acceptable.
- Provide a safe, secure learning environment for all.
- Raise awareness of the issues involved in bullying and harassment and provide information to students, staff and parents.
- Ensure that all reported incidents of bullying and harassment are followed up and that support is given to both the recipient and those displaying bullying behaviour.
- Identify what the school will do to discourage bullying and harassment.
- Impart information, skills and strategies to students, staff and parents.

Relevant Legislation, Standards and Frameworks

Education and Early Childhood Services (Registration and Standards) Act 2011
<http://www.legislation.sa.gov.au>

Children's Protection Act 1993
<http://www.legislation.sa.gov.au>

DECD Protective Practices for Staff in their Interactions with Children
<http://www.decs.sa.gov.au/docs/documents>

National Safe Schools Framework, Safe Schools (Australian Government) website
<http://www.deewr.gov.au/Schooling/NationalSafeSchools/Pages/overview.aspx>

What is bullying?

Bullying is the repeated and intentional behaviour of causing fear, distress or harm towards another person that involves an imbalance of power. It can involve humiliation, domination, intimidation, victimisation and harassment. In any bullying incident there are likely to be three parties involved: the bully, the person being bullied, and bystanders.

Bullying can take many forms including:

- **Physical bullying** which involves physical actions such as hitting, pushing, obstructing or being used to hurt or intimidate someone. Damaging, stealing or hiding personal belongings is also a form of physical bullying.
- **Psychological bullying** which is when words or actions are used to cause psychological harm. Examples of psychological bullying include name calling, teasing or making fun of someone because of their actions, appearance, physical characteristics or cultural background.
- **Indirect bullying** which is when deliberate acts of exclusion or spreading of untrue stories are used to hurt or intimidate someone.
- **Cyber bullying** which is the ongoing abuse of power to threaten or harm another person using technology. Cyber bullying can occur in chat rooms, on social networking sites, through emails or on mobile phones.

What isn't bullying?

There are many negative situations which, whilst being potentially distressing for students, are not bullying. These include:

- **Mutual Conflict Situations** which arise where there is disagreement between students but not an imbalance of power. Mutual conflict situations need to be closely monitored as they may evolve into a bullying situation
- **One-Off Acts** (of aggression or meanness) including single incidents of loss of temper, shouting or swearing do not normally constitute bullying.

Appropriate terminology:

The terms or labels "bully / bullies" and "victims" are not recommended as appropriate terminology to use when identifying, reporting, recording and responding to bullying. More appropriate terms to use may include:

- 'The Recipient' or 'Student who is bullied'
- 'Student who bullies' or 'Student who demonstrates bullying behaviours'
- 'Bystander(s)' - those who witnessed, or supported the bullying behaviour, but did not actively contribute to the bullying / harassment
- Bullying and harassment are considered synonymous terms

Signs of bullying

Children affected by bullying may not talk about it. They may be afraid that it will only make things worse, or that it is wrong to tell tales or 'dob in' other students.

When people are bullied they may feel angry, embarrassed, frightened, humiliated, scared or unsafe.

Some signs a child or young person is being bullied or harassed may be:

- crying at night and having nightmares
- refusing to talk when asked "What's wrong?"
- having unexplained bruises, cuts or scratches
- an unwillingness or refusal to go to school
- feeling ill in the mornings and not wanting to go to school
- a decline in quality of school work
- becoming withdrawn and lacking confidence
- beginning to bully siblings
- acting unreasonably.

Reporting Bullying

Students and their parents/guardians are sometimes reluctant to pursue bullying incidents, for fear that it will only make matters worse.

A key part of Redeemer's bullying prevention and intervention strategy is to encourage reporting of bullying incidents as well as providing assurance to students who experience bullying (and parents/guardians) that:

- bullying is not tolerated at Redeemer
- their concerns will be taken seriously
- Redeemer has a clear strategy for dealing with bullying issues.

Students are welcome to share bullying incidents with any trusted staff member. Parents can also raise concern. If it is in relation to their child, parents in the first instance need to make contact with their child's classroom teacher. If it is in relation to staff, other community members or children in other classes, it should be raised with the Principal or his/her delegate.

It is important for parents to note that matters of bullying are to be reported to the school and are not to contact the student displaying bullying behaviours or their family.

Responding to Bullying

Bullying behaviours vary enormously in their extent and intent and, as a consequence, each incident needs to be dealt with on its facts.

In all circumstances the Learning Community:

- takes bullying incidents seriously
- provides assurance to the recipient that they are not at fault and their confidentiality will be respected
- takes time to properly investigate the facts including discussing the incident with the recipient, the student displaying bullying behaviours and any bystanders
- takes time to understand any concerns of individuals involved
- maintains records of reported bullying incidents
- will escalate its response when dealing with persistent bullies and/or severe incidents.

Ways the School will Deal with Bullying

There are various methods to deal with bullying. Different responses are appropriate for different situations depending on the severity, frequency, and age of the students involved. Actions that may be taken when responding to bullying include:

Level 1: Early stages / Low Impact	Level 2: Ongoing / Increasing Impact	Level 3: Severe / Significant Impact
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What the bullying may look like

<p>Bullying at this level may involve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Periodic name calling - Teasing - Occasional exclusion - Other behaviours that may be perceived by the recipient as annoying and hurtful 	<p>Bullying at this level may be more systematic and malicious over time. It may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cruel teasing - Continual exclusion - Encouraging other students to bully - Threats - Minor physicality such as pushing, tripping - Theft of property. 	<p>Bullying at this level is considered to be cruel, malicious and intense.</p> <p>It may occur over an extended period of time and is distressing to the person receiving it.</p> <p>It may include</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Physical assault - Child protection issues - Sexualised behaviour - Concerning threats - Continuation of bullying behaviours not resolved from earlier intervention
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Who may be responsible

<p>Teaching staff (in particular the class teacher) would be responsible for dealing with bullying and harassment at this level.</p>	<p>Teaching staff would contact Student Wellbeing Teacher / Deputy to determine who would be responsible. All parties to be kept informed.</p>	<p>Either the Principal or his/her delegate would be responsible for this action, in consultation with all other staff involved.</p>
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Types of action taken that could be taken

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Check in with all involved individually. Listen carefully to all sides. Identify what the problem is and if bullying is taking place - If bullying is occurring, inform the student displaying bullying behaviours about the impact of their actions and that they need to stop. - Help the recipient of the bullying know what to do if it reoccurs in the future. - Meet with the student displaying bullying behaviours and recipient together if appropriate to have a restorative chat. - Consider if a consequence is required e.g. apology letter, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Check in with all involved individually. Listen carefully to all sides. Identify what the problem is and if bullying is taking place - Check in with other staff who may have managed the students involved previously - Formally document what has happened and what action will be taken. - Carry out a Restorative Conference if appropriate. - Contact parents/carers. Consider face-to-face meeting. - Implement counselling and mediation where required. - Provide opportunity for skills acquisition and support to modify behaviours. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Undertake a formal investigation and document the process and outcomes. - Meet with parents/carers of those involved. - Recommend required support for the students concerned (e.g. external counselling, referral to external behavioural consultants). - Carry out a Restorative Conference if appropriate. - If appropriate, initiate consequence including suspension or in-school withdrawal. - If required, Involve relevant agencies: e.g. police, e-Safety Commissioner, report to Child Abuse Report Line, LCA Sexual
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<p>act of kindness, missing out on play etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Monitor carefully and check in with students - Inform other staff e.g. specialists, other village teachers, wellbeing staff) - Communicate with parents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implement appropriate logical consequences (may include establishing a modified behaviour plan or an essential agreement, in-school withdrawal, missed play time, needing to work or play away from the recipient or in a place where they can be closely supervised). - Inform other staff e.g. specialists, other village teachers, wellbeing staff) - Implementation of follow up strategies, including checking in with key stakeholders, extra observations, setting up communication channels, positive reinforcement etc 	<p>Abuse Statement (Toll Free Number 1800 644 628).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inform other staff e.g. specialists, other village teachers, wellbeing staff) - Implementation of follow up strategies, including checking in with key stakeholders, extra observations, setting up communication channels, positive reinforcement etc
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Implementation of consequences: Where possible consequences will be logical to the behaviour being exhibited. For persistent and/or severe incidents of bullying, the Principal may opt to apply external suspension, in-school withdrawal or termination of enrolment.

Bullying Prevention Strategies

Redeemer Lutheran School recognises that the implementation of whole-school prevention strategies is the most effective way of eliminating, or at least minimising incidents of bullying within our community.

The following initiatives form part of our overall bullying prevention strategy and our strategy to create a 'no-bullying' culture within the school:

- a structured curriculum, that provides age-appropriate information and skills relating to bullying (including cyber bullying) and bullying prevention, to students over the course of the academic year
- education, training and professional development of staff in bullying prevention and response strategies
- regular provision of information to parents/guardians, to raise awareness of bullying as a school issue to equip them to recognise signs of bullying, as well as to provide them with clear paths for raising any concerns they may relate to bullying directly with the school
- promotion of a supportive environment that encourages the development of positive relationships and communication between staff, students and parents/guardians
- promotion of responsible bystander behaviour amongst students, staff and parents/guardians
- reporting of incidents of alleged bullying by students, bystanders, parents/guardians and staff are encouraged, and made easy through the establishment of multiple reporting channels (as specified below)
- regular risk assessments of bullying within the school are undertaken by surveying students to identify bullying issues that may ordinarily go unnoticed by staff
- records of reported bullying incidents are maintained and analysed, in order to identify persistent bullies and/or victims and to implement targeted prevention strategies where appropriate
- statements supporting bullying prevention are included in students' Learning Community diaries
- education of staff, students and parents/guardians on health conditions to promote understanding and to reduce stigma and fear
- anti-bullying posters are displayed strategically within the Learning Community
- promotion of student awareness and a 'no-bullying' environment by participating in events such as the National Day of Action Against Bullying and Violence.

Responsibilities

Principal

The principal will ensure that the school implements a Bullying Prevention & Intervention Policy that includes strategies for:

- developing a shared understanding of bullying behaviour that captures all forms of bullying (including cyber bullying)
- developing and implementing programs for bullying prevention
- embedding anti-bullying messages into curriculum
- developing and implementing early intervention support for students who are identified by the school as being at risk of developing long-term difficulties with social relationships
- developing and implementing early intervention support for those students who are identified at or after enrolment as having previously experienced bullying or engaged in bullying behaviour
- empowering the whole school community to recognise and respond appropriately to bullying, harassment and victimisation and behave as responsible bystanders
- developing and publicising clear procedures for reporting incidents of bullying to the school
- ensure incidents of bullying that have been reported to the school are responded to quickly and effectively
- matching a planned combination of interventions to the particular incident of bullying
- providing support to any student who has been affected by, engaged in or witnessed bullying behaviour
- providing regular updates, within the boundaries of privacy legislation, to parents or caregivers about the management of incidents
- identifying patterns of bullying and responding to such patterns
- monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the school's Bullying Prevention & Intervention Policy.

School Staff

School staff have a responsibility to:

- model and promote appropriate behaviour
- deal with all reported and observed incidents of bullying in accordance with this policy in a timely manner
- have knowledge of school policies relating to bullying intervention and prevention
- be vigilant in monitoring students that have been identified as displaying or recipients of bullying behaviour
- maintaining a positive climate of respectful relationships where bullying and harassment are less likely to occur
- respond in a timely manner to incidents of bullying and harassment in accordance with the school's Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy.

In addition, teachers have a responsibility to provide curriculum and pedagogy that supports students to develop an understanding of bullying and its impact on individuals and the broader community.

Students

Students have a responsibility to:

- follow the Whole-School Student Essential Agreement
 - show care and respect
 - solve problems peacefully
 - be ready to learn
 - be safe and fair
- follow the Student's ICT User Agreement
- behave as responsible bystanders
- report incidents of bullying according to their school's Student Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy.

Parents and Caregives

Parents and caregivers have a responsibility to:

- support their children to become responsible citizens and to develop responsible on-line behaviour
- be aware of the school's Bullying Prevention & Intervention Policy and assist their children in understanding bullying behaviour
- support their children in developing positive responses to incidents of bullying and harassment consistent with the school's policy
- report incidents of school related bullying behaviour to the school
- work collaboratively with the school to resolve incidents of bullying when they occur.

Policy Review:

This policy will be reviewed again in 2025.