



Clarence Valley
ANGLICAN SCHOOL

Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy

Clarence Valley Anglican School is committed to providing a safe learning environment for all members of its community. All members of staff have the responsibility to report conduct that may be unlawful and/or bullying and harassment.

Rationale

The School has the responsibility to foster the physical, emotional, moral and educational health of students and staff within its care. The School does not tolerate bullying and harassment behaviours of any kind.

At Clarence Valley Anglican School all students and staff should:

- Be treated fairly and with respect
- Be able to be themselves
- Feel safe and feel heard
- Feel able to learn
- Have fun and enjoy school
- Be proud of being part of the School community

At Clarence Valley Anglican School all students and staff should:

- Be respectful and considerate to each other
- Accept and respect individual differences
- Act responsibly, sensibly and respect the opinions of others
- Contribute positively to the learning environment
- Always try their best in work and leisure
- Respect the environment and values of the School

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is the “repeated oppression, psychological or physical, of a less powerful person by a more powerful person or group of persons.” (Rigby, 1966)

There are three critical points in this definition:

Power: People who bully may acquire power through various means: physical size and strength; status within a peer group and recruitment within the peer group so as to exclude others.

Frequency: Bullying is not a random act; it is characterised by its repetitive nature. Because it is repetitive, the persons who are bullied not only have to survive the humiliation of the attack itself but live in constant fear of its reoccurrence.

Intent to harm: Bullies usually deny any intent to harm others and may not be fully conscious of the harm they cause. However, causing physical or emotional harm is usually a deliberate act. It puts the person being bullied into a position of being dominated by the person who bullies.

In many cases of bullying there are elements of harassment and discrimination on the grounds of ‘difference’. The intention of the bully is irrelevant, the important factor is the harm done to the other person. “It was only a joke” or “he doesn’t mind” are unacceptable excuses.

There are many different ways that someone can be bullied:

Physical: Intimidation; invasion of space/privacy; fighting; any unwanted physical attention or touch; gesturing that may include body language/facial expressions; going through other people's bags; hiding property; damaging personal items and threatening behaviour.

Verbal: Rumours; threatening as an individual or a group; intimidation; name calling; putting people down; offensive language; singling people out because of their appearance; threatening phone calls; sledges or payouts.

Sexual: Offensive jokes; using rude names or commenting about someone's morals; unwanted invitations of a sexual nature; asking questions about someone's private life or making others do so; touching or brushing against someone in a sexual manner; all in either physical; written or verbal forms or obscene gestures.

Discriminatory: Excluding someone because of their race; gender; disability or physical appearance; or their relationships and friendships with others.

Visual: Offensive notes; drawings; inappropriate use of photos; graffiti or offensive gestures.

Cyber: Using the Internet; interactive and digital technologies or mobile phones (eg offensive emails and MSN messaging, or text messages) and other electronic means already known or to be developed in the future.

Emotional: Victimisation; instilling fear; leaving people out on purpose and/or ignoring someone's presence and not letting them join in a group; forcing others to hand over food, money or other possessions; forcing other students to do their work.

WHAT IS HARRASSMENT?

Harassment is a form of bullying which is the act of systematic and/or continued unwanted and annoying actions of one party or a group, including threats and demands.

How does it feel to be bullied and/or harassed?

Powerless, angry, intimidated, depressed, alone, scared, humiliated, unwanted, aggressive, revengeful, worthless, neglected, embarrassed, blame themselves, low self-esteem, can become a bully themselves; in extreme cases may lead to suicide or lifelong trauma.

What happens when someone is being bullied and/or harassed?

They may want to avoid social contact with others. They may have a loss of self-esteem and confidence. They may have difficulty in expressing emotions. Their schoolwork may be affected. Their home life may be disrupted.

What are we doing at Clarence Valley Anglican School to prevent bullying and/or harassment?

All students and staff of the School are educated about the anti-bullying and harassment policy in the following ways:

- Involve students, staff and parents in the development of policy and strategies to prevent and respond to all forms of bullying
- Explanation of the ratified policy during class time, tutor group and assemblies, and publications to parents including on the School website
- Inclusion of sessions promoting positive peer interactions in the School's pastoral programs
- Use of the curriculum to examine aspects of bullying
- Ensuring the message 'It's OK to report bullying' is promoted
- Visual advertising around the School
- Teacher observation of students in and out of class
- Ongoing professional development of staff
- Counselling of anyone affected by bullying or engaged in bullying

ADVICE FOR STUDENTS

What should students or others do who have been bullied or have observed bullying?

Bullying will continue if those responsible think they can escape detection and avoid consequences.

Approach your teacher, Head of Junior School, Head of Senior School, the School Chaplain, tutor, parents, support staff, counsellor or another adult with whom you feel comfortable.

ADVICE FOR PARENTS

Watch for signs that your child may be bullied. Some of the following might indicate bullying: wanting to miss or change school; a pattern of headaches or stomach aches; tension or unhappiness; becoming withdrawn; bruising; disappearance of property and damaged clothing.

Some signs of cyber bullying are: reluctance to use the computer or electronic device; avoiding discussion about what they are doing on the computer or other electronic device; looking or appearing nervous, anxious or jumpy when receiving an email, IM or text message; exiting or clicking out of whatever they are doing if a person walks by; unexpectedly quitting using a computer or electronic device.

If you think your child is being bullied, inform the class teacher, tutor, the School Chaplain, or School Counsellor.

Do NOT encourage your child to retaliate either physically or verbally.

Support your child in developing his/her talents and participating in sports and other activities that will build confidence and friendships.

PROCEDURES FOLLOWING REPORTING OF BULLYING OR HARRASSING BEHAVIOUR

Management of reports

Clarence Valley Anglican School considers bullying a serious matter. The School may consider the following when dealing with a report of bullying and harassment:

- Conducting an investigation
- Appropriate consequences for the person who is found to be engaged in bullying
- Teaching strategies to combat bullying
- Counselling for some or all involved
- Conflict resolution strategies, including meetings
- Possible suspension or expulsion in serious cases
- Possible referral to the Department of Community Services if warranted

School response to bullying

Bullying goes against the values of Clarence Valley Anglican School and the things that make our School special – a friendly, family environment and a place of opportunity. Intimidation, violence, bullying or harassment are completely unacceptable in all circumstances.

Our School community has established processes to help us deal with unacceptable behaviour should it occur.

Policy Link: **Behaviour Support Policy**

Policy Link: **Procedural Fairness Policy**