



# Christies Beach High School

## Anti Bullying Policy

*Please note that this policy is 'a work in progress' and school community consultation and endorsement will occur in Term 2, 2012.*

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### **Introduction:**

This Policy is written with reference to the following DECD documents: DECD Guidelines in Child Protection, Safer DECD Schools, Bullying and Harassment Advice to Parents, The School Discipline Policy plus The Australian Government's National Safe School's Framework. Consult was also made with The Coalition to Decrease Bullying, Harassment and Violence in SA Schools.

### **Policy Statement:**

The aim of the anti bullying policy is to ensure that students have the best opportunity to learn in a supportive, caring and safe environment without fear of being bullied, harassed, victimised or intimidated. Only when issues of bullying are addressed will students be able to fully benefit from the opportunities offered at Christies Beach High School. It is the happy person who learns; the person with self respect who will reach his or her potential – bullying will obviously adversely affect this. Bullying is antisocial behaviour which affects everyone: it is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Teachers, students, parents, caregivers and members of the wider Christies Beach High School community have a responsibility to work together to address bullying effectively and to model and support the school values of Tolerance, Respect, Understanding and Excellence (TRUE).

### **Rationale:**

- To create a safe, inclusive environment conducive to learning and free from harassment and bullying.
- To have each member of the Christies Beach High School community collectively responsible to ensure every member feels safe, supported, and valued at all times. This is described here as Shared Concern.

- To explore and promote best practice approaches to reduce bullying and harassment through evidence based research and regular analysis of harassment and bullying-related data.
- To break the code of silence around bullying.

### **Definition:**

Bullying is intentional, repeated verbal, physical or social behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons. Bullying can involve humiliation, domination, intimidation, victimisation of others and includes all form of harassment (sex, age, race, disability, sexual orientation, beliefs).

Bullying may be:

- **Physical bullying:** being hit, tripped, kicked, pinched etc
- **Verbal bullying:** being called named, teased, put down etc
- **Psychological bullying:** being threatened, stalked, gestures etc
- **Social bullying:** being ignored, having rumours spread about you, excluding someone etc
- **Cyber bullying:** insulting someone in chat rooms, sending cruel or threatening emails/text messages; using the web, chat rooms or mobile phones to spread rumours or information about someone. (Appendix A)
- **Sexual bullying:** unwanted touching or brushing against someone, picking on someone because of their sexual orientation etc (Appendix B)

### **Violence:**

Violence is the intentional use of physical force or power threatened or actual against another person that results in psychological harm or injury.

### **Bullying Factors**

Bullying is often motivated by jealousy, fear, distrust, misunderstandings, or lack of knowledge.

Bullying is any form of behaviour that is not welcome and not asked for.

Bullying often occurs with the support of others including bystanders who do nothing.

Bullying is never good natured fun.

Bullying is never deserved.

Bullying is distressful and hurtful. It can lead to complete emotional breakdown.

Bullying is often justified as a legitimate action or as sanctioned revenge against a perceived personal slight. It is not acceptable.

Bullying generally continues if adult and peers take no action.

Bullying may be hidden from adults.

Bullying behaviour is reinforced where people watch but do nothing.

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long term effects on those involved including bystanders.

Research has shown that peers are more effective than anyone else in stopping bullying.

### **Strategies in Reporting Bullying:**

- Students reporting bullying will be taken seriously. It is important that power and self-esteem be restored to the student being bullied and that choices for intervention be presented to them before any action is taken.
- Incidents will be documented and if the student wishes to proceed with an active intervention, Learning and Well Being Team Leaders will investigate thoroughly. The victims and those accused of bullying will be interviewed separately and independent witness information will be obtained.
- If parents suspect their child is being bullied they should contact the Year Level leader who will liaise with the Counsellor and Mentor Group teacher to address concerns.
- We aim for a policy of openness but at times we receive information under promises of confidentiality. In this event the problem may need to be dealt with through the whole class in working to a solution. This aim is to encourage Shared Concern by all to rectify the issue.
- Where bullying incidents occur outside of normal school hours that are clearly related to our school community Christies Beach High School has a policy of 24/7. The essence of this policy is to support our students whose learning and well being are adversely affected. Parents are encouraged to refer incidents that require an immediate response and may not necessarily relate directly to student welfare at school to the police.
- Bullying involving violence will not be tolerated. Such incidents will be addressed through the School Discipline Policy.

### **Our aims in intervention are:**

- To prevent further incidents.
- To restore the well-being of the student being bullied through counselling and encouragement to be more assertive and socially skilled
- To educate the bully to change his or her behaviour
- Reinforce consistently through school practices a code of respectful relationships, tolerance of difference and understanding of the consequences of harm to others.

### **Sanctions:**

Sanctions will vary depending on the severity of the situation and the degree of intent.

- The bully will be counselled in the first instance to stop their behaviour. Parents will generally be notified at this stage.

- Where appropriate the bully may be removed from class and placed in the Flexible Learning Centre for a time or may be transferred permanently to another Mentor Group or class.
- If the bully does not appear to be able to modify his or her behaviour or to understand the seriousness of the situation they will be suspended. On re-entry from suspension goals in a Student Development Plan will be set to prevent further incidents.
- Bystanders or participants who actively assist in the bullying will be subject to the same sanctions.

### **Policy in Action:**

- The Diary is used as a pathway of raising awareness to the issues of bullying and harassment. There are 3 pages highlighting the concept of Bullying and Harassment, including Cyber Bullying as well as the outline of a grievance procedure. This information is repeated in the Staff Hand Book which is currently being reviewed to include more explicit guidelines for staff action.
- Professional performances highlighting bullying are often considered and funded by Christies Beach High School to promote anti bullying messages.
- Each year students are reminded about bullying in a week of raising awareness. Student leadership members lead and contribute to the discussion within the school and make recommendations for policy review and for improved understandings of the bullying issue.
- A student friendly pamphlet, produced by peers is available to students for quick reference on bullying with subheadings such as Taking Action, Values and What is Bullying?

### **Legal matters:**

- The South Australian Equal Opportunity Act 1984 makes it unlawful for a student over 16 years of age to sexually harass another student or staff member.
- Principals are required to contact SAPOL when there is a suspected e-crime.
- Parents and Carers may choose to report an offence to the Police and bring charges against the perpetrator.
- Parents who choose to report an offence to Police are requested to forward a copy of the police report number to the school.
- School personnel will not make comment on matters which are under investigation by the police. Such matters may be seen as hindering police in the execution of their duty.

## **Appendix A**

### **Cyber Bullying and e-Crime**

Cyber Bullying uses e-technology as a means of victimising others. It is the use of an internet service or mobile technologies - such as e-mail, chat room, discussion groups, instant messaging, web pages or SMS (text messaging) - with the intention of harming another person. Examples include communications that seek to intimidate, control, manipulate, put down or humiliate the recipient.

Cyber-bullying can occur from a single act when the message or picture is sent to more than one person. For example, a person may only press 'send' once, but the choice to send the message to multiple addresses, makes the action more than a single incident

The Department for Education and Child Development have released guidelines to help the school community to a shared concern in protecting children from electronic harassment. The following link will download a copy of a pamphlet that sets out:

- What is cyber bullying
- SAPOL examples
- What schools are doing to protect children
- How to monitor your child's use of screen culture
- Where you can get help
- Where you can express concerns and report offensive sites

## **Appendix B**

### **Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual conduct which makes a person (male or female of the same or opposite gender, same-sex attracted, bisexual or transgender) feel offended, humiliated and/or intimidated, where that reaction to the conduct is reasonable in the circumstances. Sexual harassment can be a single incident, repeated or continuous, direct or indirect and take various forms.

Sexual harassment is a legally recognised form of sex discrimination.

Behaviour of a sexual nature based on mutual attraction, friendship and respect, which is welcome or invited, consensual and reciprocal, does not constitute sexual harassment.

### **Examples of Sexual Harassment**

- Unwelcome touching, hugging, kissing, brushing up against a person, staring or leering
- Suggestive comments or jokes; sexually explicit pictures, screen savers, posters, graffiti, letters, messages, magazines or any other visual or written medium
- Unwelcome invitations to go out on dates
- Requests for sex

- Inappropriate and intrusive personal questions about a person's private life or his/her body
- Insults, taunts, teasing or name calling of a sexual nature; or sexually explicit conversation
- Accessing sexually explicit internet sites
- Offensive telephone calls, letters, emails or mobile phone text messages
- Posting filmed or photographed images or comments on social networking sites
- Behaviour that may constitute a criminal offence, under criminal law and reportable to the police, such as physical or indecent assault, stalking, obscene communications and sexual assault.

## **Addressing Homophobia**

[Writing Themselves In 3](#) (LaTrobe 2010) found that homophobia has a profound impact on the psychological wellbeing of young same-sex attracted young people, resulting in increased rates of depression, self harm, and attempted suicide. This is a significant concern for schools. The findings also indicated that:

61% of young people reported verbal abuse because of homophobia

18% of young people reported physical abuse because of homophobia

80% of all the abuse happened at school

37% described their school as homophobic or very homophobic

2 times the number of young people who suffered verbal abuse had attempted suicide, compared to those who reported no abuse

4.5 times the number of young people who had been physically assaulted had attempted suicide, compared to those who reported no abuse

The data reported in *Writing Themselves In 3* provides “substantial evidence of the significant contribution to the mental health of same sex attracted young people made by schools which had policies against homophobic abuse, with students at these schools being generally less likely to self harm. More significant was the finding that young people, who reported their school as having a supportive environment, were less likely to harm themselves or attempt suicide demonstrating the importance of putting policy into practice”. (Flentje, 2011)

## **Appendix C**

### **Code of Conduct (Students) – a work in progress – consultation and endorsement to occur in Term 2, 2012**

Show Respect for yourself in your language and actions

Show Respect for your peers

Show Respect for members of staff

Show Respect for your community

Show Respect for your school environment

Model good behaviour and conduct to your peers

Be Polite

Be Caring

Do not say or do anything to hurt someone else

Be Considerate

Be Tolerant of difference

Have Empathy for everyone  
Be Punctual, Neat and Organized  
Seek Excellence in all your endeavours.

**Code of Conduct (Staff) – a work in progress – consultation and endorsement to occur in Term 2, 2012.**

Show respect for every student as an individual  
Be aware of vulnerable students  
Model power and authority appropriately  
Be a good role model  
Explicitly state that bullying is not acceptable at every opportunity  
Always be seen to be fair  
Comment on the behaviour and not the child  
Always have high expectations of the students

**Appendix D**

**Workplace Bullying**

For staff, a comprehensive series of Info sheets on Workplace Bullying are available from the DECD website. Topics include  
Workplace Bullying Definition and Behaviours.  
Strategies to Address Bullying Behaviour.  
Checklist for a Person Accused of Bullying.  
Checklist for a Person Complaining of Bullying.  
Responding to Workplace Bullying.

There are other references to SAfeWork SA and Stop Bullying in SA Website as well as a PowerPoint (388KB) presentation

**Need more information?**

DECD Parent Helpline: 1800 222 696  
Australian Communication and Media Authority's advice for parents [www.cybersmart.gov.au](http://www.cybersmart.gov.au)  
Bullying No Way: [www.bullyingnoway.com.au](http://www.bullyingnoway.com.au)  
Kids Helpline: 1800 551 800  
Youth beyondblue: [www.youthbeyondblue.com](http://www.youthbeyondblue.com)  
Reach Out <http://au.reachout.com/>  
Equal Opportunity Commission of South Australia: equal opportunity, human rights and laws, complaints: [www.eoc.sa.gov.au](http://www.eoc.sa.gov.au) Phone 82071977  
Equal Opportunity for schools <http://www.eo4schools.net.au/>  
Reducing homophobia <http://safeschoolscoalitionvictoria.org.au/resource/writing-themselves-3-research-report>  
It is recommended that students install the free phone application "Take a Stand" and the application from the Daniel Morecombe Foundation titled "Help Me" on i phones for 99c titles

**Review:**

This policy is dated 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2012  
Formal Review including school community consultation and endorsement is set for Term 2 2012