

# Anti-Bullying Policy



## POLICY OBJECTIVES

To prevent bullying through the creation of a safe learning environment where all are encouraged to reach their emotional, spiritual and intellectual potential through classroom activities and beyond.

To provide guidelines to OLMC community members for dealing with bullying should it occur in order to minimise harm and prevent recurrence.

## POLICY STATEMENT

OLMC is committed to providing a safe, caring and supportive school culture that promotes positive relationships and reflects Gospel teachings. All staff, students and parents/ carers contribute to the prevention of bullying by modelling and promoting appropriate behaviour and respectful relationships.

There are expectations on each person to seek to maintain positive relationships with one another and to resolve conflict in a respectful and dignified manner.

Bullying and cyberbullying disregard core values of the Catholic faith including dignity, respect, justice, equity, compassion, trust and courage. Bullying, including cyberbullying, can adversely affect the wellbeing of students and is therefore unacceptable and requires a steadfast 'No Tolerance'.

All members of the OLMC community share a joint responsibility to identify and address bullying behaviour.

At OLMC we embrace a whole school collaborative approach as we believe that an anti-bullying policy is everyone's responsibility. Students, parents/carers, school staff and other community members have a shared responsibility to create a safe, caring and supportive environment where bullying has no place.

Complaints concerning bullying will be responded to and investigated in a timely manner that respects the dignity and the privacy of those involved, whilst observing due process and procedural fairness. The College will inform students and their families of the allegations against the student, giving them the right to be heard and ensure that the decision making process is fair and reasonable, based on relevant evidence.

### Definitions

Bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social, psychological or cyberbullying behaviour that is harmful, and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons. It can involve humiliation, domination, intimidation, victimisation and all forms of harassment including that based on sex, race, disability, sexual orientation or practice of religion.

In any bullying incident there are likely to be three parties involved: the bully, the person being bullied, and bystanders.

Bullying can be but is not limited to:

- **Verbal** e.g. name calling, teasing, making racist remarks and jokes, abuse, putdowns, sarcasm, insults, and threats

- **Physical** e.g. hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, obstructing, spitting
- **Social** e.g. ignoring, excluding, ostracizing, alienating, making inappropriate gestures, stealing friends, gossiping, criticizing
- **Psychological** e.g. spreading rumours, whispering, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions, malicious SMS and email messages, inappropriate use of computer or phone camera or videos
- **Cyberbullying**

**Cyberbullying** involves the use of any information communication technology by an individual or group to carry out deliberate, isolated or repeatedly hostile behaviour that is intended to harm others, or is undertaken recklessly without concern for its impact on others. In certain circumstances cyberbullying can be a single event.

For the purpose of this policy cyberbullying can include but is not limited to:

- Sending harassing, threatening or menacing messages to targets either directly or anonymously
- Using another person's address or alias via email
- Harassing and heated arguments via Instant Messaging
- Anonymously writing anything (true or untrue), creating and adding cruel entries in a worldwide form via Chat Rooms
- Mocking, teasing and harassing and posting visuals that can be altered via websites/social sites
- Masquerading as another by using their mobile phone or computer to send harassing or threatening messages via SMS
- Acts of cyberbullying are prohibited during and after school hours against:
  - the students at this College or other schools
  - the staff at this College or other schools
  - the College itself

N.B. Many acts of cyberbullying are Criminal Offences and carry fines and punishment and will be reported to Police.

Students' responsibilities are outlined in the Acceptable Use of Technology Policy, which can be accessed in the Student College Diary. Parents/carers are advised to visit the eSafety Commission at [www.esafety.gov.au](http://www.esafety.gov.au) for additional information on cyberbullying and tips for keeping their daughter safe online.

**Bullying is not conflicts** or fights between equals and single incidents are not defined as bullying. Bullying behaviour is not:

- Students not getting along well
- A situation of mutual conflict
- Single episodes of nastiness or random acts of aggression or intimidation (including single incidents of loss of temper, shouting or swearing do not normally constitute bullying).

## Strategies to Prevent Bullying

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

- Promote the development of positive relationships across the College: Vertical House System, Pastoral Care lessons, camps, Retreats, co-curricular activities
- Involve and inform the whole school community of the policy and procedure: whole school assemblies, Pastoral Care lessons, and House meetings and class where necessary
- Education, training and professional development of staff in bullying prevention and response strategies
- A structured Pastoral Care Program that provides age appropriate information and skills relating to bullying (including cyberbullying) and bullying prevention, to students over the course of the academic year
- Promote responsible bystander behaviour amongst students, staff and parents/carers
- Provide counselling and support for parties involved in bullying
- Provide the school with a set of guidelines, which are readily accessible to all when action is necessary: College Diary, Staff portal, College website
- 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
- Anti-bullying posters are displayed strategically within the College and in every classroom
- Reporting of incidents of alleged bullying by students, bystanders, parents/carers and staff is encouraged, and made easy through the establishment of reporting channels (as specified below)
- Regular provision of information to parents/carers, to raise awareness of bullying as a College community issue to equip them to recognise signs of bullying, as well as to provide them with clear paths for raising any concerns they may have relating to bullying directly with the College
- Promote student awareness and a 'no bullying' environment by participating in events such as the National Day of Action Against Bullying and Violence

OLMC recognises that the implementation of whole College prevention strategies is the most effective way of eliminating, or at least minimising, incidents of bullying within our community.

### Possible Consequences for Bullying Behaviour

**OLMC regards all forms of bullying as unacceptable behaviours.**

**Possible consequences for bullying behaviour include:**

- Warnings
- Student interview with House Leader
- Parent/carer contacted
- After school detention
- Parent/carer interviewed at school
- Internal suspension
- Student Care Plan
- Mandatory counselling
- External Suspension
- Expulsion

## SUPPORTING PROCEDURES

### Reporting an Incident

- Each allegation of bullying will be fully investigated and documented
- Students must report immediately all incidents of bullying, including cyberbullying, to a responsible adult or teacher they trust
- If parents/carers become aware of any school-related bullying carried out against their daughter, or another student, they should notify the House Leader immediately

### Processing an Incident

- Once identified, the bully, victim and witnesses will write an incident report and be interviewed
- Parents/Carers will be notified by phone and, depending on the nature of the bullying, may need to attend an interview at the College with the House Leader and/or Director of Pastoral Care with their daughter
- Students may be immediately sent home until the matter is resolved (serious incidents of bullying)
- The consequences implemented will be consistent with the OLMC Student Management Policy, (see College website and those outlined in this policy)
- Bullies and victims will be required to undertake counselling and support with either the College Counsellor or an outside agency
- In some matters, advice may be sought from the NSW Police School Liaison Officer by the Director of Pastoral Care or Leader of Pastoral Care Programs
- At all times, actions taken by staff relating to allegations of bullying will place the dignity and integrity of the persons involved at the forefront

### Complaints

All complaints will be dealt with as per the OLMC Resolution of Complaints Policy.

### Tracking

House Leaders will monitor documented instances of bullying to identify any emerging patterns of behaviour.

## RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

**Students have the right to:**

- Feel safe and secure at school
- Seek assistance from a trusted adult without delay if they become aware of, or are involved in, a bullying or cyberbullying incident to maximise the effectiveness of the intervention
- Know their concerns will be dealt with as a matter of priority
- Know that they will be given appropriate support
- Appeal to the Director of Pastoral Care, then the Deputy Principal and finally the Principal if they feel the response is inadequate for any course of action taken to stop an incident of bullying

**Students have the responsibility to:**

- Behave appropriately and respect individual's differences and diversity
- Follow the College Expectations of Students; see College Diary
- Behave as responsible digital citizens, adhering to the Acceptable Use of Technology Policy; see College Diary

- Follow the College's Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedures
- Behave as responsible bystanders. No one can remain blameless if they have allowed a situation to occur unreported
- Accept responsibility for their words and actions
- Report incidents of bullying to a responsible adult or teacher they trust
- Create a positive, inclusive school environment by being involved in initiatives and co-curricular activities

**Parents/Carers have the right to:**

- Know their daughter will feel safe and secure at school
- Know their concerns regarding bullying will be dealt with as a matter of priority and investigated in a timely manner that respects the dignity and the privacy of those involved, whilst observing due process and procedural fairness
- Know that their daughter will be given appropriate support
- Know of any allegations against their daughter, giving them the right to be heard and ensure that the decision making process is fair and reasonable, based on relevant evidence
- Know that they can appeal to the Director of Pastoral Care, then the Deputy Principal and finally the Principal if they feel the response is inadequate for any course of action taken to stop an incident of bullying

**Parents/Carers have the responsibility to:**

- Be aware of the College's Anti-bullying Policy and Procedures and assist their daughter to understand bullying behaviour
- Support their daughter to become a responsible citizen and to develop responsible on-line behaviour
- Support their daughter in developing positive responses to incidents of bullying consistent with the College Anti-bullying Policy and Procedures
- Advise their daughter to speak with a member of staff if she is being bullied
- Report incidents of school-related bullying behaviour to the school and speak with staff at the College if they suspect their daughter is being bullied
- Work collaboratively with the College to resolve incidents of bullying when they occur
- Be aware of behaviours that may indicate their daughter is being bullied (see signs of bullying)
- Be aware of the College's Expectations of Students; see College Diary and the Student Management Policy; see College website
- Be aware of the Acceptable Use of Technology Policy; see College Diary
- Encourage their daughter to be involved in co-curricular activities to build confidence, social skills and feel a sense of belonging

N.B. Parents should never approach or contact students of the College or their parents or carers regarding any incident, as this could potentially breach child protection.

**Teachers have the right to:**

- Know that they can work in a healthy and safe environment conducive to teaching and learning
- Know that they will be supported by Middle Leaders and the College Leadership Team in responding to reported incidents of student bullying
- Access resources and professional learning which enhance their ability to identify and deal with student bullying and digital citizenship in caring for students
- Access counselling services to receive appropriate support if they experience bullying

**Teachers have the responsibility to:**

- Model and promote appropriate behaviour at all times
- Respect and support students
- Ensure students are always well supervised
- Create a positive classroom environment in which 'put down' statements are not tolerated and be aware of any continual verbal or non-verbal harassment of particular students in class
- Provide curriculum and pedagogy that supports students to develop an understanding of bullying and its impact on individuals and the broader community
- Watch for early signs of distress and suspected incidents of bullying
- Have knowledge of College policies relating to bullying behaviour
- Undertake formal and informal training regarding identifying and dealing with bullying and digital citizenship at induction meetings, professional learning meetings, Staff development days, Staff briefings and via the Staff portal
- Treat complaints seriously
- Respond in an appropriate and timely manner to incidents of bullying according to the College's Anti-bullying Policy and Procedures i.e. report suspected incidents of bullying to the relevant House Leader
- Ensure any investigation preserves the dignity, privacy and respect of all involved whilst following due process and procedures
- Allow students to deal with conflicts openly, peacefully and respectfully
- Encourage students to be involved in co-curricular activities to build confidence, social skills and feel a sense of belonging

**Signs of Bullying**

Major behaviour changes in your daughter may be indicative of bullying. Such behavioural changes may include:

- Crying at night and having nightmares
- Refusing to talk when asked "What's wrong?"
- An unwillingness or refusal to go to school
- Feeling ill in the mornings
- A decline in quality of school work
- Becoming withdrawn and lacking confidence
- Beginning to bully siblings; and acting unreasonably

## CONTACT INFORMATION

House/Title	Name	Email	Telephone
McAuley	Laura Bell	Laura.Bell@olmc.nsw.edu.au	9683 3300
Doyle	Catherine McNulty	Catherine.Mcnulty@olmc.nsw.edu.au	9683 3300
Clare	Ann-Marie Herd	Annmarie.Herd@olmc.nsw.edu.au	9683 3300
Callan	Danielle McManus	Danielle.McManus@olmc.nsw.edu.au	9683 3300
Stanley	Rebecca Webb	Rebecca.Webb@olmc.nsw.edu.au	9683 3300
Kavanagh	Sharlyn Teo	Sharlyn.Teo@olmc.nsw.edu.au	9683 3300
Mercedes	Christine Roumanus	Christine.Roumanus@olmc.nsw.edu.au	9683 3300
Callaghan	Antonija Mustac	Antonija.Mustac@olmc.nsw.edu.au	9683 3300
Leader of Pastoral Care Programs	Kristen Sunner	Kristen.Sunner@olmc.nsw.edu.au	9683 3300
Director of Pastoral Care	Anne-Maree Donnelly	Anne-Maree.Donnelly@olmc.nsw.edu.au	9683 3300
Deputy Principal	Marie Wood	Marie.Wood@olmc.nsw.edu.au	9683 3300
Principal	Stephen Walsh	Stephen.Walsh@olmc.nsw.edu.au	9683 3300

## SUPPORT SERVICES

Title	Name	Email	Telephone
Senior College Counsellor	Sandra Portela	Sandra.Portela@olmc.nsw.edu.au	9683 3300
College Counsellor	Emily Montuori	Emily.Montuori@olmc.nsw.edu.au	9683 3300
College Counsellor	Alia Palethorpe	Alia.Palethorpe@olmc.nsw.edu.au	9683 3300
NSW Police School Liaison Officer	Senior Constable Dusan Dakic – Parramatta Police Station School Liaison Police are NSW Police officers who work with schools to reduce crime, violence and anti-social behaviour. School Liaison Police are a point of contact for the school community and the NSW Police Force.		9633 0799
NSW Youth Liaison Officer	Senior Constable Kellie Redwood – Parramatta Police Station Youth Liaison Officers are NSW Police Force members who are responsible for administering the Young Offenders Act 1997 (NSW). They are responsible for delivering cautions, referring children to youth justice conferences, and implementing strategies to reduce crime by juveniles in the community.		9633 0756

## COMMUNITY SERVICE/SUPPORT GROUPS

Service	Website	Telephone
Children's Hospital Westmead	<a href="http://www.schn.health.nsw.gov.au/hospitals/chw">www.schn.health.nsw.gov.au/hospitals/chw</a>	9845 0000
Westmead Hospital	<a href="http://www.wslhd.health.nsw.gov.au/Westmead-Hospital">www.wslhd.health.nsw.gov.au/Westmead-Hospital</a>	9845 5555
Child Protection Helpline		132 111 General public helpline (24 hours/7 days)
Kid's Helpline	<a href="http://www.kidshelpline.com.au">www.kidshelpline.com.au</a>	1800 55 1800
Headspace	<a href="http://www.headspace.org.au">www.headspace.org.au</a>	1300 737 616
Office of the Children's eSafety Commissioner	<a href="http://www.esafety.gov.au/complaints-and-reporting">www.esafety.gov.au/complaints-and-reporting</a>	1800 880 176
Australian Reach Out	<a href="http://www.reachout.com.au">www.reachout.com.au</a>	
Beyondblue	<a href="http://www.beyondblue.org.au">www.beyondblue.org.au</a>	1300 22 4636
Bullying No Way	<a href="http://www.bullyingnoway.com.au">www.bullyingnoway.com.au</a>	
NSW Department of Education Anti-Bullying Resources	<a href="http://www.antibullying.nsw.gov.au">www.antibullying.nsw.gov.au</a>	