



**Emmaus
Christian
School**

Anti-Bullying Policy

Student Welfare: SW Policy 1-7

Access Level - Public
August 2023

Growing together in faith, love and wisdom

Student Welfare: SW1-7 Anti-Bullying Policy

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1.2	Nov 2018	Put into new style template
1.3	Nov 2021	Update position descriptions, check content M Gillis, K Smith, added definition for Restorative Practices
1.4	August 2023	Executive Review

Relevant Legislation:

- Children and Young Persons (Care and Protection) Act 1998
- Work Health and Safety Act (ACT)
- Work Health and Safety Regulation (ACT)



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Vision/Purpose

Emmaus exists to partner with parents, in providing a Christ-centred, Biblically-grounded and academically-rigorous education, which enables students to grow in wisdom and character, to the glory of God.

Values

1. Caring for Others

At Emmaus, we value, care for and respect each other because we are all made in the image of God. We partner with parents to care for and develop the whole person- body, soul and spirit. We foster a sense of belonging, celebrate one another's achievements and choose to be grateful for our school and each other. We are a community that learns in a fun, creative, encouraging and generous environment.

2. Striving for Mastery

At Emmaus, we encourage students to strive for excellence in all aspects of life: in study, work, and in relationships with God and with people. We believe God equips every person with gifts and abilities. We seek to instil in our students a strong desire to apply their utmost to what they do, an attribute that will long outlive their school years. Students are encouraged to master and apply academic and life skills in order to make the most of their opportunities in later life. Our goal is to equip students with the necessary skills and understanding to make wise and Godly choices, and to live resilient, fulfilled, and productive lives.

3. Equipping for Service

At Emmaus, our motivation for service is the love that Christ has shown us: his life of servant leadership is the example we seek to follow. Staff at Emmaus model integrity, accountability and the value of excellence in our work. We strive to equip students with both the desire and the skills to make a difference in the lives of others. We aim to grow students who are rich in Godly wisdom and noble character, and find their security in the love of Christ.



1 INTRODUCTION

Schools exist in a society where incidents of bullying behaviour may occur. Preventing and responding to bullying behaviour in learning and working environments is a shared responsibility of all staff, students, parents, caregivers and members of the wider school community.

The school's Duty of Care provides for the school to take the necessary steps to protect students from physical, psychological or emotional damage arising from issues such as bullying, and to take the necessary steps to avoid foreseeable risks of such behaviour.

Cyber bullying may occur at or outside of the school. The school makes every effort to teach students to use the internet in a safe and responsible manner. Parents ensure their child's safe and responsible use of the internet and mobile devices outside of school.

Bullying is serious. It may be a criminal offence if there is physical violence or threats, made either in person or by digital technology.

2 CHRISTIAN RATIONALE

The occurrence of bullying behaviour relates to a breakdown in human relationships and the failure to love one another as Christ loves each person. God intends for us to live together in a community that acknowledges differences, and accepts others, because every person is made in His image. The Emmaus Christian School Canberra community represents the Body of Christ, where every person is valued and has a unique part to play, as (in Christ) the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work. (Ephesians 4:16)

The school seeks to build a supportive, caring community which aims to protect all people from behaviour by others which may cause distress of any kind; and to foster the restoration of relationships of mutual regard and honour.

This policy aims to facilitate processes that will deter and prevent bullying; support and strengthen the victim; and address the cause, and suitable restitution, with the offender. The careful resolution of each incident will be for the benefit of each person involved, as they grow in discipleship; and of the whole school, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. (Ephesians 4:12b-13)

3 PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

This policy applies in all cases of student bullying behaviour, including cyber bullying, that occurs in the school; and off school premises, and outside of school hours, where there is a clear and close relationship between the school and the conduct of the student.



4 WHO MUST COMPLY

Evidence of Compliance

Principal	
Implement the policy within the school	Executive & Calendar
Review the policy in collaboration with school community	Policy Review
Report to relevant authorities	Records of Investigations (Sharepoint)
Director Teaching and Learning	
Investigate reports and incidents of bullying	Records of Investigations (Sharepoint)
Oversee appropriate follow up after investigation	Records of Investigations (Sharepoint)
Heads of School	
Communicate anti-bullying policy and procedures to teachers in their section	Staff section meetings
Ensure anti-bullying curriculum in teaching programs	Staff Appraisals/ Teaching programs
Assist class teachers in maintaining anti-bullying behaviours in class	Staff section meetings
Teachers	
Include anti-bullying content in programs	Teaching Programs
Promote and enforce anti-bullying behaviour standards within the school	Student morning assemblies, teaching programs, student behaviour records (FACTS)
School Staff	
Respect and support students	Staff Code of Conduct
Model and promote appropriate behaviour	Staff Code of Conduct
Respond in a timely manner to incidents and reports of bullying	Incident Reports and Records of Investigations (FACTS/ Sharepoint)
Students	
Behave appropriately, respecting individual differences and diversity	Student Code of Conduct
Behave as responsible digital citizens	ICT Agreement
Behave as responsible bystanders	FACTS records
Report incidents of bullying	FACTS records
Parents and Carers	
Support their children to become responsible citizens and to develop responsible on-line behaviour	
Assist their children in understanding bullying behaviour	
Support their children in developing positive responses to incidents of bullying	
Report incidents of school related bullying behaviour to the school	
Work collaboratively with the school to resolve incidents of bullying when they occur.	Parent Teacher meetings/ Information nights
Model and promote positive relationships that respect and accept individual differences and diversity within the school community	Code of Conduct for Parents, Code of Conduct Visitors & Volunteers School communications Student/ Parent end of year surveys



5 DEFINITIONS

Brave Talk:

'Brave talk' is an approach to conflict resolution based on the principles of restorative practice, and one which has been foundational at Emmaus Christian School throughout its history. Restorative practice encourages children to take responsibility for their behaviour by thinking through the causes and consequences of their actions. It aims to shift away from a punitive approach to discipline, and is instead relational. Students are equipped to respond to conflict with supportive and respectful behaviour through explicit teaching of skills pertaining to empathy, repair and harm. The approach is grounded in the notion of Biblical relationships being core to how we live.

With Brave Talk we teach, model and have students practice affective statements and questions that explain or ask how others are impacted by the other party's behaviours. Body language, active listening and restating the other participant's concerns to check for understanding are amongst the micro-skills taught. Students are held responsible for their actions through implementation of a transparent and fair process. The ultimate goal is to resolve the conflict whilst preserving positive and respectful relationships.

The essence of Brave Talk is that I am brave enough to speak up about what you did and how I felt about it, and you are brave enough to hear me and respond as needed.

Bullying:

Bullying is an ongoing misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that causes physical and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power over one or more persons. Bullying can happen in person or online, and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert).

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders. Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.

Cyber bullying:

Cyber-bullying includes causing hurt via information and communication technologies, such as the Internet, social media, and using mobile phones and other devices.

Harassment:

Harassment is on-going verbal or physical attacks on another person.

Procedural Fairness:

Procedural fairness applies to investigation of an allegation of bullying, and any decisions made, will be impartial and without bias.

A person against whom an allegation has been made will be:

- informed of the allegations being made, and other information which will be considered; informed of the process to be followed in investigating the matter; given opportunity to respond to the allegations.
- and informed of the process to seek a review of any decision made in response.



Restorative Practices:

Restorative practice encourages children to take responsibility for their behaviour by thinking through the causes and consequences of their actions. It aims to shift away from a punitive approach to discipline and is instead relational. Students are equipped to respond to conflict with supportive and respectful behaviour through explicit teaching of skills pertaining to empathy, repair and harm. The approach is grounded in the notion of Biblical relationships being core to how we live.



6 POLICY

Emmaus Christian School Canberra (Emmaus) is committed to providing an educational environment in which students are valued and feel secure. Emmaus rejects all forms of bullying.

- The school does not tolerate, condone or trivialise bullying.
- All students and staff have the right to feel and be safe in the school grounds, and when travelling to and from school.
- All students and staff have the right to be treated fairly and with dignity in an environment free from disruption, intimidation, harassment, victimisation and discrimination.
- No student, employee, parent, caregiver or community member should experience bullying within the learning or working environments of the school.
- All members of the school community contribute to preventing bullying by modelling and promoting appropriate behaviour and respectful relationships.
- Each member of the school community has a responsibility to ensure the safety of each other member of the community.
- Victims of bullying, and witnesses to bullying, are encouraged to report the incident.
- All reports of bullying will be taken seriously and investigated according to principles of procedural fairness.
- Cyber bullying which is engaged in while not at school, which impacts upon the learning of any student, will be addressed by the School, in conjunction with parents. The appropriate response will depend on circumstances.
- The school will have a suitable program of anti-bullying education
- Serious incidents or threats of violence may be reported to the Child and Youth Protection Services as required by law; and/or to the Police, depending on circumstances.



7 PROCEDURES

7.1 Creating a Supportive and Caring School Culture

School Curriculum will include age-appropriate programming:

- to educate students about bullying, social responsibility and building personal resilience
- to educate students to exercise digital responsibility in the appropriate use of technology
- to ensure that students understand what constitutes bullying
- to stop bullying behaviour
- to rebuild relationships based on a Biblical pattern
- to develop appropriate social skills and attitudes in the victims, perpetrators and bystanders of bullying; and empower students to resist bullying
- to promote and reinforce the Christian ethos of care and respect for each individual at Emmaus Christian School

Teacher Professional Learning will address and staff meetings will review instances of bullying:

- to help staff identify bullying when and where it occurs
- to provide clear procedures to deal with bullying
- to adopt classroom management techniques that discourage opportunities for bullying
- to present a vigilant watchfulness in playground duty and other supervision
- to support and restore those who have experienced bullying

7.2 Communication

The School communicates its values and practices for the prevention of bullying behaviour, and receives feedback, through a combination of the following:

- Anti-Bullying Policy published on the School's website
- Enrolment interviews
- Promotion of a safe, caring environment in school communications and meetings
- Incorporation of anti-bullying guidelines in the Student Code of Conduct
- Confidential student surveys; including experiences of bullying behaviour, and personal feelings related to bullying
- Parent/ teacher meetings



7.3 Responding to a Report of Bullying Behaviour

- Take all reports, allegations or observations of suspected bullying behaviour seriously.
- Stop any altercations, violent or intimidating acts immediately.
- Ensure safety of all students involved, and care for anyone injured or upset.
- Inform the Director of Teaching and Learning, and relevant Head of School, of all allegations or incidences of bullying as soon as practicable.
- Acknowledgement (by staff) of the allegation of bullying, and initial assessment of student safety, must take place as a matter of priority.

7.4 Investigating Reports or Allegations of Bullying Behaviour

- Investigations into bullying allegations must be undertaken in a timely manner and should be carried out in such a way as to minimise the risk of escalation.
- Establish facts from alleged victim, bully and bystanders.
- Conduct interviews in a manner intended to reduce the risk of making matters worse for the alleged victim; nor allow the perpetrators to take some action in revenge.
- Establish whether an alleged incident is isolated, or an ongoing pattern of behaviour (bullying).
- Emphasise that it is the school dealing with the behaviour, rather than students being brought into a confrontation.
- All incidents are to be documented in FACTS. Additional, detailed confidential reports will be kept on the Executives' confidential files.
- Inform appropriate staff about all incidents of bullying so they may be aware of any issues between students.
- Inform parents of victim and bully, and possibly parents of bystanders, throughout the process. Any serious consequences, and disciplinary action, will be communicated to parents in writing. An interview will also be requested.
- Serious issues will be reported to the Board.
- The School Wellbeing Team is available for support of all students involved in bullying incidents; with a view to changing inappropriate attitudes and building resilience, in line with restorative practices.
- Should bullying continue, further action will follow in line with the school's Discipline Policy. This can include behaviour contracts, suspension or, in the case of continued bullying, removal from the school.
- Serious incidents involving violence, or threats of violence by any means, may be reported to Child and Youth Protection Services, as required by law; and/or to the Police, if deemed necessary by the Principal or Executive team.
- The School may recommend further professional counselling as necessary.



7.5 Procedures for Students

- Always be respectful towards other students, staff and members of the school community.
- Report any instances of being bullied to school staff and parents or carer.
- Students who witness, or know of, bullying should report it to a teacher.

7.6 Procedures for Parents

- Keep the school informed of concerns about behaviour, your child's health issues or other matters of relevance.
- Report bullying concerns to the school. It is important that parents allow the school to investigate allegations of bullying, and not intervene in the process.
- Understand that the whole story may be quite complex and may take some time to resolve.
- If dissatisfied with the outcome of the investigation and subsequent actions taken by the school, an appeal may be made as described in the school's Dispute Resolution Policy.
- Children bullied physically on the way home may be a matter for reporting to the Police.
- Report cyber bullying to your service provider, or the internet site. Cyber bullying, such as Facebook comments, may also be a matter for the Police. In cases where cyber bullying happens at school, for example on Google Classroom, please report it to the school.
- For further support, please contact the school to access the Wellbeing team.



