ANTI-BULLYING POLICY FOR ST ROSE

June 2010
St Rose School Policy Against Bullying

Purpose
At St Rose believe that all members of the community have the right to a learning and work environment free from intimidation, humiliation and hurt. We all share a responsibility to foster, promote and restore right relationships. We believe that bullying is unacceptable and we students, staff and parents all share a responsibility for preventing it.

This policy builds on the St Rose Pastoral Care and Behaviour Management Policy to provide clear procedures and strategies to prevent, reduce and respond to bullying.

Policy Framework
Flowing from the Christian vision expressed in the Diocesan Pastoral Care Policy, schools are called to establish relationships which are grounded in love, compassion, reconciliation and justice. In witnessing Christian values we reject ideas, beliefs and behaviours which marginalise or victimise people.

Definition
Whilst there is no universally accepted definition of bullying, there is general consensus that bullying behaviour:

- is deliberate and often repeated
- intends to cause fear, distress, hurt or harm to another
- is action by a more powerful individual or group over a less powerful individual or group

What is Bullying?
Bullying is when a student or group keep on picking on another student. They try to hurt their body, feelings, property, reputation or social acceptance. This behaviour is repeated and directed towards the same person. A fight or disagreement between equal students isn’t bullying.

Bullying takes many forms, all of which will cause distress. Examples of bullying include:

- Physical - hitting, pushing, tripping, kicking, spitting on others etc
- Verbal - teasing, using offensive names, ridiculing, spreading rumours etc
- Non-Verbal - writing offensive notes or graffiti about others, using e-mail or text messaging to hurt others, rude gestures etc
- Exclusion - deliberately excluding others from group, refusing to sit next to someone etc
- Extortion - threatening to take someone's possessions, food or money etc
- Property - stealing, hiding, damaging or destroying property etc
- Cyber - any form of bullying which is carried out through electronic means such as email, chat room, 'sms', web page etc

How do we prevent bullying at St Rose School?
Research suggests that prevention strategies that involve the whole school community; students, staff and parents are more likely to reduce bullying. Therefore, at St Rose School we recognise that we all share the responsibility to prevent bullying. The Christian values which represent the antithesis of bullying will be taught explicitly, continually modelled, clearly demonstrated and generously affirmed across all facets of school life.
At St Rose School we adopt the following strategies to prevent bullying:

- Explicit teaching of positive behaviours embedded within the curriculum addressing positive relationships, conflict resolution, resilience, bystander action etc
  - Positive Behaviours For Learning (PBL), Peer Support Program, PDH Resource (Diocese of Broken Bay)

- Regularly recognising and acknowledging students who demonstrate appropriate behaviours that promote and restore right relationships
  - Student of the Month
  - PBL focus highlighted in weekly merit awards
  - PBL focus highlighted at daily assemblies

- Vigilant classroom, playground and transition supervision
  - Teachers are to actively supervise children at all times.
  - Teachers should note supervisory duties for the day and turn up promptly to duty.
  - Relief teachers are informed of school rules and relevant information relating to playground behaviour and expectations
  - Teachers are asked to be aware of playground ‘hotspots’ – toilets, stairwells, canteen area and visit these areas regularly throughout their supervision duty.
  - Teachers collect, record and analyse data relating to bullying behaviours
  - Non punitive time out arranged for specific students in office area to avoid escalation of inappropriate behaviours (on a needs basis)

- Provision of safe and structured playground spaces and activities at break times
  - Well supervised playground with easily identified teachers in fluro vests
  - Provision of a variety of lunchtime activities e.g. lunch club, Rock and Water, knitting club, library, debating, chess, band etc
  - Timetable for new adventure playground
  - Splitting of second half lunch duty to back playground for Infants and Primary on allocated days

At St Rose students are encouraged to:
- take positive action to stop the bullying if they are involved in an incident e.g. Five Finger approach, Hassle Box Form
- report the bullying incident to a teacher as soon as possible
- make it clear to their peers that bullying is not accepted
- take positive action if they observe an incident e.g. report to a teacher and/or tell the student who bullied to stop

At St Rose, staff are expected to:
- take positive action to stop the bullying when they observe an incident e.g. investigate the incident and if needed remove the student who bullied from the area
- fill in ‘time-out’ slip when an incident occurs
- pass on information about any reported or observed bullying behaviours to the Principal / Assistant Principal / classroom teacher (if occurring on the playground) for further action
- in event of major incident send the student who bullied to the Principal’s office to fill in a Restoring Behaviours Sheet

At St Rose parents are encouraged to:
- listen to their child and encourage their child to speak to their teacher /teacher on duty at school if an incident occurs
- contact the school if they have a concern

How do we respond to bullying at St Rose School?

Bullying is viewed as a major breach of the school rules and behavioural expectations and therefore follow up action will align with our School’s Behaviour Management Policy (PBL).

Any reports of bullying will be investigated and appropriate action will be taken promptly.

The response to bullying will include:
1. guidance and other support for the recipient of the bullying (eg re-skilling and re-teaching of strategies, resilience and social skills, counselling, conflict management skills, social networking, Dolphin, Shark, Jellyfish strategy, Bibliotherapy etc)

2. guidance and support for ‘bystanders’, ‘supporters’ and witnesses of the bullying (e.g. intervention strategies e.g. Dolphin, Shark, Jellyfish strategy, Bibliotherapy)
3. age appropriate and consistent sanctions for the student who bullied e.g. PBL Classroom and Playground Procedures

4. interventions and support for the student who bullied included in a Behaviour Support Plan / Students Presenting Challenging Behaviours Plan (e.g. specific interventions developed to reduce the bullying behaviour, teaching of replacement behaviours, reinforcers etc)

5. informing parents and involving them in any action and follow up

Procedures for investigating bullying and follow up

- Preliminary Interview(s) will be conducted to ascertain the specific nature of the bullying. These interviews should be with individuals initially (i.e. student being bullied, students witnessing bullying, student engaging in bullying behaviour, staff etc)

- The initial interviews should focus on the safety of individuals. This should include:
  - a clear statement on the consequences if the bullying continues or if there are any reprisals as a result of the reporting of the incident
  - immediate preventative actions that will be implemented to avoid further incidents.

- Decisions will be made as to the level of severity of the incident and whether the parents of those involved need to be informed.

- Follow up interviews should focus on appropriate strategies to assist and support all involved within a Behaviour Support Plan / Students Presenting Challenging Behaviours Plan. This Plan will specifically identify the inappropriate behaviours, name the replacement behaviours, outline strategies to support the replacement behaviours and reinforcers (both negative and positive) when behaviours occur.

- A record of the separate interviews should be kept.

- Regular monitoring and follow up with the students involved is necessary (e.g. daily, prior to and after break times etc)

- Review of the Behaviour Support Plan / Students Presenting Challenging Behaviours Plan will take place to modify strategies and supports.

- Any further recurrence of bullying will require advice sought from the Catholic Schools Office (CSO) Policy and Procedures.