

# LAMEROO REGIONAL COMMUNITY SCHOOL

## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

### Rationale and Aims

International and national evidence is conclusive that the effects of Bullying on the victim can be extremely damaging. The potential consequences for any victim subjected to bullying are a long term detriment to their health and welfare.

The 2011 Review of Procedures and Processes in DECS related to bullying and violence in schools by Mr Bill Cossey noted that:

- “Education systems throughout Australia and across the world are faced with similar problems and challenges”.
- “International evidence strongly indicates that Australian and South Australian schools are amongst the safest in the world”
- “Enquiries made of researchers during this review revealed that the research to date suggests that, overall, bullying in schools is not increasing and may even be slightly in decline although there is an apparent shift towards more cyber bullying”.
- “Results from the same research indicate that the incidence of bullying in South Australian schools is lower than in schools interstate”.
- **“However, there is no doubt that any level of bullying is too high and the community’s tolerance is decreasing”.**

At Lameroo RCS all members of the school community are entitled to a safe, secure and caring environment. It is **everyone’s** responsibility to ensure this happens.

Bullying and harassment are issues which are treated very seriously as they can adversely affect a person’s ability to work and learn, therefore we work hard to find solutions to stop bullying.

Evidence suggests that the development of resilience and positive self-esteem can help protect people from the harmful effects of bullying, as well as help them build positive peer relationships.

The school policy on anti-bullying needs to be both preventative and responsive in nature.

### The following principles and objectives are at the core of our approach:

- ***Our school aims to provide a safe, inclusive, supportive and ordered learning environment free from bullying, harassment and violence. Bullying, including cyber bullying, harassment and violence, is not acceptable in this school and will be dealt with seriously and expediently.***
- ***Our school will work with the school community and other services and agencies to support its students in being responsible and productive members of the community.***
- ***At Lameroo RCS, everyone has the right to feel safe and valued and every member of the school community has a responsibility to ensure that this happens.***

#### Rights

To feel safe  
To learn  
To be respected  
To be valued

#### Responsibilities

To respect yourself  
To respect others  
To use common sense  
To support others

## Definition – “What are bullying behaviours”

### Bullying is:

- A repeated, unjustifiable behaviour that may be physical, verbal and/or psychological.
- Intended to cause fear, distress, or harm to another
- Perpetrated by a more powerful individual or group
- Against a less powerful individual who is unable to effectively resist.

### Examples of Bullying are:

#### **Physical Bullying**

- Hitting, kicking, poking, and throwing objects.
- Any form of deliberate, unwelcome physical contact.

#### **Verbal Bullying**

- Name calling, using offensive language, verbal teasing, aggressive shouting.
- Spreading rumours or lies
- Sharing personal information about someone without their permission.
- Ridiculing by put downs, laughing at others
- Threats

#### **Emotional (Psychological) / Social Bullying**

- Excluding people from groups or games.
- Threatening gestures.
- Ganging up on a student.
- Racial / sexual harassment.
- Interfering with another’s personal belongings.
- Hurtful notes / graffiti etc.
- Hurtful text messages / e-mails / social media postings etc. i.e. **Cyber Bullying**

**Note: The school will take action, including possible Suspensions & Exclusions for incidents of Cyber Bullying, even if they occur before or after school, weekends and holidays.**

#### **Racial or Sexual/Gender / Homophobic harassment**

- Remarks about a person’s physiology, cultural or family background.
- Assault ( ranging from unwanted touching to violent & verbal incidents)
- Persistent and unwelcome invitations for sexual favours or social comment
- Smutty jokes, innuendo and suggestive comments, leering and ogling, belittling jokes/comments/putdowns.
- Displays of sexually graphic materials.
- Suggestive comments about a person’s private life or sexual gender preference.
- Gender discrimination ( eg.dumb girl/boy,” you’re a girl-to a boy, being called “gay”
- Derogatory comments based on race or gender

**Note: Sexual Harassment is unlawful if students are over 16.Police involvement is likely.**

## What are Bystander Behaviours

A Bystander is a person who is present when someone is bullying someone else and does nothing to stop it. That is they do not tell them to stop, get a teacher or walk away.

- If you are present when someone is bullying another student you must support the victim without retaliating.
- You could say, “**Stop! You are bullying, if you continue I will get a teacher.**”
- If you do not feel confident enough to say this you must walk away. If you remain and do nothing, you will be a bystander and will receive a consequence as a result.

## What Can Students Do About Bullying at School?

### **Prevent Bullying**

- Respect yourself and others.
- Provide support to anyone you observe being bullied.
- Be assertive.
- Be tolerant and accept differences.
- Report incidences of bullying by using our Grievance Procedures , as outlined on wall posters
- and E- mailing the details to **graham.alder@lameroorcs.sa.edu.au**
- Do not be a Bystander

### **Use the ‘Stop, Think, Talk’ strategy if being bullied**

#### **Stop – What is happening to me?**

- How do I feel?
- Is the situation really bothering me?
- Is this a bullying situation?

#### **Think – What can I do?**

- Can I handle this situation **by telling** the bully to stop and walk away?
- Ask for help?
- Report this behaviour?

#### **Talk – Who can I talk to?**

- Who is the best person to talk to? (Teacher, Counsellor, Principal, Deputy Principal, Christian Pastoral Support Worker, SSO?)
- What do I want this person to do for me?
- How could I talk about it? (Discussion with a staff member, anonymous report?)

## **If you witness bullying behaviour:**

### **DO:**

- Care enough to **report** it to a teacher.
- Give accurate information about the situation.
- Report it using the email address: **graham.alder@lameroorcs.sa.edu.au**

### **DO NOT**

- Be a Bystander
- Protect the bully by remaining silent.
- Watch and show amusement

## **What will staff do about incidents of bullying at Lameroo RCS?**

### ***The staff at Lameroo will:***

- Listen and talk to the victim, the bully and any bystanders.
- Put negotiated consequences in place for the perpetrator/s. These may include time out or removal of privileges and in extreme cases, suspension or exclusion from school.
- **Immediately** report to parents all instances involving violence that requires medical treatment beyond school first aid.
- Use an appropriate counselling process to help everyone involved repair and improve their relationships with each other and to feel a sense of justice.
- In the most serious of cases report the matter to the police.
- Follow up to ensure bullying has ceased.

***At Lameroo RCS we do not use ‘a one size fits all’ approach. This is because each person is different and each incident of bullying is different. Such factors as age, disability and prior incidents need to be considered in determining the most appropriate response.***

## What Can Parents Do About Bullying?

- Talk with your child about what has happened at school. Talk about the differences between not getting on, having an argument or disagreement, and persistent and bullying behaviour.
- Be positive about your child's qualities and encourage them to be tolerant and caring.
- Encourage your child to resolve conflict without aggression and report all bullying.
- Encourage your child to be appropriately assertive, involve them in activities to build their confidence/self esteem eg sports, art, music, self defence etc.
- Be an advocate for all students by reporting incidents which threaten safety and wellbeing ([graham.alder@lameroorcs.sa.edu.au](mailto:graham.alder@lameroorcs.sa.edu.au) wherever possible talk to the class teacher ASAP to get a full picture and to work out any immediate responses.
- Do **not** deal directly with the other children or their parents but work through and with the school.

## School Strategies in the Prevention of Bullying Behaviours

### *Preventative strategies include:*

- Adopting positive classroom and schoolyard management strategies with friendly behaviours embedded in the curriculum.
- Class & Home group lessons/discussions regarding bullying
- Teaching students the value of diversity.
- Providing professional learning for staff.
- Developing programs to help students have a say in their learning.
- Implementing and reviewing policies which promote student safety.
- Promoting local programmes for parents

### *Intervention strategies include:*

- Counselling children who have been bullied, bystanders and perpetrators.
- Talking with parents about situations.
- Putting consequences in place for those who bully others.
- Ensuring that all staff know how to address bullying effectively.
- Undertake annual bully audits" to collect anecdotal feedback from students.

### *Post-intervention strategies include:*

- Monitoring any issues between the students to ensure that their safety and wellbeing are maintained
- Talking with parents or caregivers about strategies
- Reviewing yard duty procedures to ensure they are effective.
- Dealing with 'hot spots' in the yard identified by data.
- Reviewing and evaluating behaviour codes and policies.

*At Lameroo RCS we are committed to establishing and maintaining a safe environment by developing positive relationships between students, parents and staff based on care, mutual respect and open communication.*

*Bullying can have long term, detrimental effects on both victims and bullies.*

## Approval, Review & Information Sharing

- This policy was ratified by the School Governing Council at its meeting on 23rd July, 2012
- The policy will be reviewed annually.
- Regular reports on Bullying will be provided to the Governing Council at its meetings and once per term through the School newsletter.