Bullying Prevention & Management Policy

Clayfield College

Intent

Clayfield College is committed to the prevention of bullying within its community and beyond. Despite this the College recognises that while prevention is the best approach there are instances of bullying in all human institutions and thus an action plan in the event of such is required. This policy articulates the processes and procedures employed by the College to ensure both the prevention of bullying behaviour and the actions which will be taken in the event of its occurrence.

Scope

This policy pertains to students, parents and employees, including full-time, part-time, permanent, fixed-term and casual employees, as well as contractors, volunteers and people undertaking work experience or vocational placements. There are responsibilities associated with all stakeholders (detailed below).

Relevant Legislation and Associated Policies

- Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2017
- Australian Education Act 2013 (Cth)
- Australian Education Regulation 2013 (Cth)
- Clayfield College Positive Behaviour Management Policy
- Clayfield College Student Code of Conduct
- PMSA Child Protection Policy

Definition

Bullying is an ongoing repetitive misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/ or social behaviour that causes harm. It may involve an individual or a group, occur in person or online, be overt or covert (Understanding bullying. (2019). Retrieved from https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/UnderstandingBullying).

Bullying may include:

- Physical bullying: using physical actions to bully, such as hitting, poking, tripping or pushing. Repeatedly and intentionally damaging someone's belongings is also physical bullying
- Verbal bullying: repeated or systematic name calling; insults; homophobic, misogynist or racist remarks and/or verbal abuse

- Covert bullying: lying about someone, spreading rumours, playing a nasty joke that makes the person feel humiliated or powerless, mimicking or deliberately excluding someone
- Psychological bullying: threatening, manipulating or stalking someone
- Cyberbullying: using technology, such as email, mobile phones, chat rooms and/or social networking sites to bully verbally, socially or psychologically

Bullying does not include:

- A child or children not liking another child
- Not including every child in a social activity
- Accidental physical contact
- Assertiveness (interpreted as bossiness or aggressiveness)
- Disagreement (which is natural in a setting where many different personalities are expressing themselves in a relatively small space)
- Single acts of meanness

The key elements of the bullying definition are power imbalance, intention to cause harm and repetition.

Processes, procedures and responsibilities

The College will create a culture which prevents bullying by:

- Ensuring there is a shared understanding of what bullying is, how it impacts on people and how bullying is responded to at the school
- Acting to create an environment which will discourage bullying (refer to Clayfield College Positive Behaviour Management Policy, Clayfield College Student Code of Conduct)
- Encouraging staff, students and parents to model positive behaviours and interactions at all times
- Educating students and parents on how to respond to bullying and how to report it
- Educating employees on how to appropriately respond to bullying
- Developing and promoting effective social skills and positive relationships amongst students

This will occur through:

- Personal Development Programs which focus students on positive relationships, how to recognise and respond appropriately to bullying behaviour, refraining from unhelpful communication, and how to work effectively in groups.

- The Hearts of Clayfield program in the secondary school which seeks to enhance inclusiveness in the College through education, activities and peer support

- Helping Hands in the primary school which provides peer support during breaks

- House/Pastoral Care Group systems which encourage supportive networks across years

- Purposeful creation of connections amongst students in class groups

- An Outdoor Education Program which builds resilience and confidence

The process for reporting instances of bullying is:

- Speak to a trusted adult

- Report to Head of House or Head of Primary

- Discuss with Dean of Pastoral Care (Secondary) or Deputy Principal (Primary)

The Principal will be informed.

The College will demonstrate no tolerance for bullying through the following responses:

- Investigating and acting upon all reports of bullying

- If a report of bullying behaviour is confirmed it will be treated with the utmost seriousness and the following will occur:

  - The parents of students involved will be informed

  - All students involved will receive support and counselling as appropriate

  - Behaviours will be addressed according to the College's Positive Behaviour Management Policy

  - Detailed records of the incident and actions will be kept

Parents are encouraged to

- Watch for signs of distress in their child such as unwillingness to attend school or a pattern of headaches or stomach upsets.

- Contact their child's teacher, Head of Primary, Head of House, Dean of Pastoral Care or any other member of staff if they believe their child is being bullied.

- Encourage their child to report bullying.

- Not encourage their child to retaliate.

- If it is cyberbullying, report the material to the social media service involved, collect evidence through screen shots or photographs or copying URLs, report to the Office of the cSafety Commissioner (esafety.gov.au/reportcyberbullying), and ensure the child blocks the person on all social media platforms

Review Process

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Dean of Pastoral Care. Any amendments are discussed at an Executive meeting before final approval is given by the Principal.