

Anti-Bullying Policy



Bullying and Mean-on-purpose are never accepted at Emmanuel Christian School. All members of the community should look after and encourage each other. This policy is an attempt to provide consistent guidance in ensuring students are safe at school.

The Bible provides some powerful verses to guide successful relationships:

Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the LORD your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Deuteronomy 31:6

Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. Ephesians 4:29

If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. 19 Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. Romans 12:18-19

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself. Luke 10:27

Do to others as you would have them do to you. Luke 6:31

The National Centre Against Bullying provides a solid definition of bullying and what we refer to as Mean-on-purpose. They explain:

The definition of bullying is when an individual or a group of people with more power, repeatedly and intentionally cause hurt or harm to another person or group of people who feel helpless to respond. Bullying can continue over time, is often hidden from adults, and will probably continue if no action is taken.

While the bullying definition is broad and can occur in a variety of environments it usually is a relationship problem and requires relationship-based solutions. These are best solved in the social environment in which they occur: in a child or young person's life, this is most often the school.

What bullying is not:

- *single episodes of social rejection or dislike*
- *single episode acts of nastiness or spite*
- *random acts of aggression or intimidation*
- *mutual arguments, disagreements or fights.*

These actions can cause great distress. However, they do not fit the definition of bullying, and they're not examples of bullying unless someone is deliberately and repeatedly doing them.

The 'bullyingnoway' website states 'Bullying has three main features:

- It involves a misuse of power in a relationship
- It is ongoing and repeated, and
- It involves behaviours that can cause harm.'

A bully may be a student picking on a number of students where their action is repeated.

Bullying is never tolerated and will always be dealt with. Mean-on-purpose is treated seriously. Both acted on swiftly.

Process for dealing with a situation where a student has reported being bullied or bullying is suspected:

1. Victim identified and information gathered.
2. Victim put in a safe space/situation
3. Witness evidence gathered
4. Bully separated from students
5. Parents notified of both victim and bully and meetings organised.
6. Support plan established for the victim. The Counsellor and Chaplain will be part of this.
7. Consequences are given and plan established for the bully.

Proactive responses to be taken by the school:

- Students challenged to report issues to staff
- Stand Up email address (standup@emmanuel.tas.edu.au) put up around the school to remind students to use it.
- Bully address in assemblies, Care Group and by student Media Crew.
- Programs like Strength and Shine to be delivered to students
- Inquiry time to be used to explore mental health issues, anti-bullying teaching etc.
- External agencies to support students will be engaged as they become available and needs/opportunities arise.
- The Counsellor and Chaplain to be proactive in identifying student needs with staff.

Restoration of Relationships - The Restorative Justice circle will be a key tool to re-establish relationships.

Consequences may include:

- Internal and/or external suspensions
- Daily report
- In unresolvable cases or severe instances, the bully will have their enrolment reviewed by senior staff.

Mean-on-purpose

Mean-on-purpose may be one-off or bullying that is yet to be discovered. Remorse and likelihood of repetition should be considered.

Similar consequences to bullying may be necessary and a warning may be sufficient.

Recording Incidents

All instances should be recorded in SEQTA. Senior staff may only put in a brief summary or a note to say an issue is being dealt with. Separate, detailed notes must be kept. This is done in SEQTA using the Pastoral care workspace and the Counter-Bullying tab. This 'form' asks for the relevant detail to be filled in.

The Deputy Principal will guide Senior Staff in the supervision of 'Open' and 'Closed' incidents.

Any staff can instigate a Counter-Bullying report if they feel they comfortable to do so. Senior Staff should be overall reports. A simple statement to be put in Pastoral Care to note a Counter-Bullying report is being used.

Resources

<https://www.ncab.org.au/get-help/>

<https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/WhatIsBullying/DefinitionOfBullying>

<https://www.ncab.org.au/bullying-advice/bullying-for-parents/definition-of-bullying/>