

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

B8.2

St Lucy's School is an independent Special School which is part of Dominican Education Australia (DEA). In the Catholic Dominican tradition, it is a community enriched by difference; inspiring learning for a life of purpose.

Introduction

St Lucy's is an independent Catholic special school, providing education for students with disabilities.

The Anti-bullying policy and related procedures are to be applied considering factors related to each student's disability that may impact their behaviour(s) towards others. Some of the factors related to a student's disability that may impact their ability to meet the expectations of the school context including appropriate interactions with others may include; cognitive functioning, complex communication needs, lower inhibition, difficulty problem solving, difficulty reading social and emotional cues, and sensory sensitivities.

Students' behaviour(s) towards others listed under the heading Types of Bullying (below) are considered in relation to the definition of bullying which notes the ongoing deliberate misuse of power, and intention to cause harm.

St Lucy's supports the development and maintenance of pro-social and respectful behaviours through Positive Behaviour Support strategies and Wellbeing interventions using Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS).

Purpose

At St Lucy's School, staff are committed to ensuring a safe and supportive environment, free from bullying, where all members of the school community have the right to feel safe and be respected. St Lucy's seeks to provide an environment that is secure, caring, and physically, emotionally and intellectually safe where students can fulfil their potential.

Scope

This anti-bullying policy applies to the students of St Lucy's School.

Policy

The School rejects all forms of bullying, harassment, victimisation and discrimination and takes any allegations or occurrences of bullying seriously. All members of the School community contribute to preventing bullying by being alert to signs of bullying and modelling, teaching and promoting appropriate behaviour and positive relationships. The School works collaboratively with the student(s) involved and their families to resolve incidents of bullying if they occur.

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Definition of Bullying

The National definition of bullying for Australian Schools (bullyingnoway.gov.au) *is the ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/ or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening. Bullying can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time (for example, through sharing of digital records). Bullying of any form or for any reason can have immediate, medium and 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.*

Types of bullying:

- Verbal bullying which includes name calling or insulting someone about their physical characteristics such as weight or height, or other attributes including race, sexuality, culture, or religion
- Physical bullying which includes hitting or otherwise hurting someone, shoving or intimidating another person, or damaging or stealing their belongings
- Social bullying which includes consistently excluding another person or sharing information, images or other digital content that will have a harmful effect on the other person.

Verbal, physical and social bullying can occur in person or online, directly or indirectly, overtly or covertly.

- Direct bullying includes behaviours which are obvious and easily observed by others, that is, the identity of the person displaying bullying behaviours is usually known. Examples of direct bullying include pushing, kicking, name calling and excluding others from social activities.
- Indirect bullying is not always immediately observable and acknowledged as bullying. Indirect bullying can be discreet and anonymous, and the person experiencing the bullying behaviour may not realise until after it has occurred. Examples of indirect bullying can include damaging another person's social reputation, relationships and self-esteem through actions such as jokes shared with a group demeaning someone's personal attributes, discreetly stealing personal belongings from a bag or anonymously sharing unflattering images or information online without that person's permission.
- Overt bullying involves physical actions such as punching, kicking or pushing, or observable verbal actions such as name-calling and insulting. Overt, direct, physical bullying is a common depiction of bullying (this is sometimes called 'traditional bullying').
- Covert bullying can be challenging for people outside the interpersonal interaction to identify. It can include repeatedly using hand gestures and weird or threatening looks, whispering, excluding or turning your back on a person, restricting where a person can sit and who they can talk with.

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 and intentionally using power over a peer.

St Lucy's takes bullying seriously and recognises the potential harm it can cause both physically and psychologically.

The School implements its *Anti-Bullying Procedures* for preventing, identifying and responding to bullying.

Students, parents/carers and staff are encouraged to report any allegations or incidents of bullying to the school in accordance with the anti-bullying procedures.

Related Policies and Procedures

Anti-Bullying Procedures
Child Protection Policy and Procedures
Complaints Handling Policy and Procedures
Discipline Policy and Procedures
Positive Behaviour Support Policy and Procedures
Wellbeing Policy and Procedures

Resources

Bullying No Way
Kids Helpline
eSafety Commissioner: Online Safety

Monitoring the Policy

St Lucy's monitors the implementation of the policy and regularly reviews its contents to ensure relevance and accuracy and updates as needed.

Date Approved/Reviewed	2025
Contact Person	School Principal
Approval Authority	School Principal