

The Commonwealth Code sets as an offence the use of a carriage service (such as a mobile or internet) in a way that is menacing, harassing or offensive. The maximum penalty for committing the offence is 3 years imprisonment.

'Sexting' is an occurrence that may be considered bullying. Under present legislation perpetrators place themselves in the serious position of making, viewing and or sending inappropriate and unlawful material.

Conflict or fights between students or single incidents are not usually defined as bullying.

3. RATIONALE

The role of the Catholic school, in partnership with parents and caregivers, is to nurture young people by providing optimum levels of support in learning, positive interpersonal relationship experiences and social support networks. The culture and atmosphere of the school plays a significant role in students developing a balanced approach to life and learning. With this in mind Bullying behaviour is in conflict with the core values and purpose of a Catholic school. Bullying needs to be recognised, named and addressed to ensure all schools work towards an authentic Christian school culture.

".....the school must be concerned with constant and careful attention to cultivating in students the intellectual, creative, and aesthetic faculties of the human person; to develop in them the ability to make correct use of their judgement, will, and effectivity; to promote in them a set of values; to encourage just attitudes and prudent behaviour; to introduce them to the cultural patrimony handed down from previous generations; to prepare them for professional life, and to encourage the friendly interchange among students of diverse cultures and backgrounds that will lead to mutual understanding. For all these reasons, the school enters into the specific mission of the Church." (Lay Catholics in Schools: Witness to Faith p.110)

4. AIMS

This policy aims to:

- 4.1. Provide clear directions for schools to formulate an Anti bullying school policy
- 4.2. Assist schools in the prevention, reduction and response to bullying behaviour (including cyber bullying)
- 4.3. Promote a proactive attitude to and clear understanding of school processes when addressing allegations of bullying
- 4.4. Facilitate a consistent approach to the management of school record keeping processes in relation to bullying investigations
- 4.5. Ensure the right of students and staff to expect a school that is actively promoting a school environment free from the fear of bullying, harassment, intimidation and victimisation.

5. IMPLEMENTATION

- 5.1. Each Diocesan school will develop its own Anti bullying policy.
- 5.2. The implementation section of the policy will include:

5.2.1 Preventative programs:

- a. programs and strategies to promote positive behaviours and prevent bullying within the school (including programs to be used)

- b. early intervention strategies when given notice of an enrolment of a student who has been identified as having been bullied or having engaged in bullying behaviour in a previous school
- c.

5.3 RESPONSIBILITIES

5.3.1 The Principal will:

- a. Develop a shared understanding with staff and community members of bullying behaviour that involves all forms of bullying including cyberbullying
- b. Ensure the development, implementation and evaluation of preventative strategies and programs to promote student safety and wellbeing
- c. Provide support to any student who has been affected by, engaged in or witnessed bullying behaviour
- d. Be responsible for the implementation of the school's anti bullying policy and procedures
- e. Initiate police support (Police liaison officers) and or intervention when required
- f. Provide regular updates to parents or caregivers regarding the management of specific incidents
- g. Ensure that an annual communication of the contents of the policy be made to the school community
- h. Maintain an ongoing and annual evaluation process of the policy with students, staff and caregivers
- i. Monitor student understanding and satisfaction of school processes
- j. Identify patterns of bullying behaviour and initiate school action to address them
- k. Engage students in the evaluation of anti bullying processes within the school

5.3.2 School staff will:

- a. Respond to a student's call for assistance, after his/her reporting of inappropriate behaviours in relation to all forms of bullying. This includes the use of technology (e.g. text messaging or social networking site usage). Failure to take action may indicate a breach in the duty of care owed to the student (see Support Document 3)
- b. Seek advice from their supervisor(s) if they require confirmation or clarification regarding an incident of alleged bullying behaviour
- c. Maintain an up to date knowledge of school policies relating to bullying behaviour

5.3.3 Students will:

- a. Promote positive relationships that respect and accept individual difference and diversity
- b. Follow the school procedures in reporting and responding to bullying behaviour
- c. Work collaboratively with staff and peers to resolve incidents of bullying

7. EVALUATION

- 7.1 The school will annually revisit the procedures explicit within the Anti bullying policy and evaluate their currency
- 7.2 As part of the school Policy review and development cycle, the Anti bullying Policy will be reviewed by staff/committee at regular interval