

Bullying Prevention Policy

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1. Purpose

- 1.1. This Policy aims to identify and address inappropriate behaviours that may constitute bullying, harassment or discrimination and provide a mechanism to enable workers within CST to engage in mutual protection, support and encouragement.
- 1.2. Bullying behaviour in the workplace is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

2. Scope

- 2.1. This Policy applies to all workers of Christian Schools Tasmania.
- 2.2. This Policy does not replace any legislation, and if any part of it is in conflict, the relevant legislation will take precedence.
- 2.3. This policy does not form part of a worker's contract of employment or engagement. CST may vary, replace or terminate this policy from time to time.

3. Policy

3.1. Guiding Principles:

- CST is a caring community, filled with people committed to serving each other and building one another up. We expect all relationships within CST to be built on justice, love and truth, and obedience to Christ.
- CST affirms the right of all workers to feel safe and to learn and work in an environment free from humiliation, intimidation and hurt. There is no place within the CST community for bullying and harassment.
- CST recognises that positive outcomes, physical health and emotional, psychological and spiritual wellbeing can be adversely affected by bullying and harassment.
- CST is committed to the wellbeing, safety and health of all workers, and this commitment informs school policies, programs and actions.
- It is the responsibility of staff and other workers to work together to create a culture of appreciation and acceptance, free from any form of bullying, harassment, discrimination or intimidation.
- A strong partnership, common understanding and effective communication between staff and other workers are central to the success of this process and the building of this culture.

3.2. Workplace bullying:

3.2.1. As defined under the Fair Work Act 2009 (Cth), workplace bullying occurs when:

- an individual or group of individuals repeatedly behaves unreasonably towards a worker or group of workers at work which can include behaviour which humiliates, intimidates or offends a worker in the workplace; and

- the behaviour creates a risk to health and safety; and
- reasonable management action conducted in a reasonable manner **does not constitute workplace bullying**. (Source: Fair Work Act)

3.2.2. Bullying typically involves:

- hurtful behaviour (physical, verbal or relational);
- a desire and intention to hurt;
- an imbalance of power;
- unwise and unjust use of power;
- targeted and repetitive behaviour intended to be hurtful.

3.2.3. The nature of bullying behaviour may be:

- verbal (e.g. name-calling, put-downs, threats);
- belittling or humiliating comments;
- teasing, practical jokes or 'initiation ceremonies';
- exclusion from work-related events;
- physical (e.g. hitting, tripping, punching, throwing objects, stealing);
- aggressive or intimidating conduct;
- social (e.g. ignoring, hiding, ostracising, the exertion of peer pressure);
- unreasonable work expectations including too much or too little work or work below or beyond a team member's skill level;
- psychological (e.g. stalking, threatening looks, spreading rumours, damaging personal possessions);
- displaying offensive material;
- the pressure to behave in an inappropriate manner.

3.2.4. Not all unacceptable, unkind or inappropriate behaviour constitutes bullying. It is important to respond appropriately as a community to actions which are aggressive, hostile, unkind, antisocial, inappropriate, threatening or in other ways, damage a positive culture of appreciation and acceptance within our community. It is equally important to recognise and label bullying behaviour correctly.

Behaviours that do not constitute bullying include:

- mutual arguments and disagreements (where there is no power imbalance);
- not liking someone or a single act of social rejection;
- one-off acts of meanness or spite;
- isolated incidents of aggression, intimidation or violence.

However, these conflicts still need to be addressed and resolved.

3.2.5. Any reasonable management action carried out in a reasonable manner is not bullying and includes the following:

- directing the way in which work is performed;
- undertaking performance reviews and providing feedback (even if negative);
- disciplining and counselling staff;
- having a difference of opinion;
- conflicts and personality clashes;
- allocating work to a worker in a transparent way;

- fairly rostering and allocating working hours;
- transferring a worker for legitimate and explained operational reasons;
- deciding not to select an employee for promotion, after following a fair and documented process;
- implementing organisational changes or restructuring;
- following performance management processes.

3.2.6. Bullying behaviour can not only cause distress at the time of the bullying taking place but also create fear by the threat of future bullying. It can have a lasting impact and cause persisting anxiety.

3.2.7. Cyber-bullying:

- the use of the Internet and mobile technologies provides individuals and groups with a powerful means of communicating instantly with others in both positive and negative ways;
- cyber-bullying is bullying in which one uses these technologies as a means of targeting and victimising others. It is the use of an Internet service or mobile technologies (e.g. email or instant messaging) and/or social media forums (e.g. Facebook) with the intention of harming another person;
- there are some distinctive features of cyber-bullying behaviour, including:
 - it has anonymity at its core, allowing the perpetrator to cause great pain, all whilst remaining anonymous;
 - the perpetrator does not generally have to face the hurt they have caused and may not recognise how damaging their behaviour can be;
 - the bullying behaviour can often occur in a very public forum or carry the implicit threat of being made public by its very nature, carrying a new form of intimidation and threat of humiliation;
 - the bullying behaviour encroaches quickly into 'personal space', meaning there is often no respite from it by going home, and there are no clear physical boundaries to protect a person from it;
 - there is a greater potential for there to be a lasting record of the bullying;
 - like all forms of bullying, cyber-bullying may involve varying levels of severity, ranging from occasional messages to frequently repeated and highly disturbing threats to a person's life;

3.3. **Duty of Care:**

3.3.1. All workers must use every endeavour to keep themselves and others safe and well and therefore have a responsibility to report any instances of bullying or suspected bullying within the workplace.

3.4. **Procedure:**

3.4.1. Workplaces will provide professional development and appropriate resourcing to meet the needs of the workers in developing and implementing strategies and practices which anticipate, identify and prevent all forms of bullying.

3.4.2. In developing safe workplace culture, it is important to recognise deterring such behaviour requires a multi-faceted approach, which includes:

- a culture of appreciation and acceptance of individuals, modelling appropriate attitudes between staff and students;
- an ethos that models respect, compassion and cooperation;

- communication outlining firm action and appropriate consequences in cases where bullying and harassment are identified;
- appropriate supervision in schools of all students by staff;
- communication between staff and other workers.

3.5. Response:

3.5.1. Where any incident of bullying is observed or reported, it will be responded to:

- in a timely manner. This will confirm our duty of care to protect all workers within our communities and also model what is appropriate and acceptable behaviour within the community;
- with sensitivity and confidentiality.
- When dealing with any such incident, the CST community will:
 - facilitate appropriate communication and mediation between those involved;
 - communicate adequately and appropriately with parents where required;
 - communicate adequately and appropriately as a staff body;
 - have systems in place to identify where a person may be subject to repeated inappropriate behaviour;
 - maintain confidentiality, only divulging information where absolutely necessary;
 - use procedurally fair processes where an investigation is required;
 - ensure that there is adequate and appropriate reporting, data collection and recording procedures in place when investigating incidents.

3.5.2. All incidents of inappropriate or bullying behaviour will be dealt with adequately and appropriately, recognising that the behaviours do often vary widely in severity and seriousness.

3.5.3. The response to all incidents of inappropriate or bullying behaviour will be proportionate with its level of severity and the specific circumstances surrounding the bullying behaviour.

3.6. Breach of the Bullying Prevention Policy:

3.6.1. Any worker who is found to have breached this policy will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with the CST Disciplinary Policy, up to and including termination of employment or engagement.

3.6.2. Any worker who becomes aware of any actual or potential breach or breaches of this policy must report this information to CST as soon as the worker becomes aware of the actual or potential breach. Failing to report an actual or potential breach may result in disciplinary action in accordance with the CST Disciplinary policy, up to and including termination of employment or engagement.

3.7. Documentation:

3.7.1. Where any incident of an inappropriate nature is reported, thorough notes of the incident, communication and response will be maintained by the person responsible for dealing with the incident.

3.7.2. All actions identified as part of any resolution or restoration process will be recorded within the notes.

4. References and Additional Related Documents

- CST Conflict Resolution Policy
- CST Grievance Response Policy
- CST Work Health & Safety Policy

5. Record Keeping

- 5.1 This Policy is to be kept for three (3) years until review, unless there is a significant legislative or organisational change requiring earlier review.
- 5.2 The master copy is kept in <https://www.cst.tas.edu.au/services> under Policy Documents, online in read-only in PDF form. Any printed or downloaded copies are deemed uncontrolled.

GENERAL DEFINITION OF TERMS:

Where referred to in this document:

Christian Schools Tasmania (CST) means an association of Christians who, through their Board of Directors, are legally responsible for Calvin Christian School, Channel Christian School, Emmanuel Christian School and Northern Christian School.

The School refers to the CST school to whom the Policy applies.

The Board means the Board of Directors of Christian Schools Tasmania.

Executive is a forum including the Chief Executive Officer, Principals and the Business Manager.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is the person appointed to the position of Chief Executive Officer of the Association, or a person acting from time to time in that position.

Principal means the person charged with responsibility for the operation of an Association school, or a person acting from time to time in that position.

Compliance Manager is the person appointed to the position of Compliance Manager of the Association, or a person acting from time to time in that position.

Business Manager is the person appointed to the position of Business Manager of the Association, or a person acting from time to time in that position.

Manager means a person appointed to a managerial position within CST.

Staff is any person either employed by CST either on a casual, part-time or permanent basis as well as volunteers, contractors and sub-contractors engaged in working at a CST School.

Parent is a person who is the legal guardian of a child enrolled at a CST school.

Child means any student enrolled at a CST school.