

# Bullying Policy

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## Lumen Christi College Policy on Bullying

Lumen Christi College is a Catholic learning community which seeks to exemplify the Gospel values by fostering a safe and supportive learning environment where each child is valued as unique and treated with absolute dignity and respect. To this end we designate the whole school environment a *'Bully Free – No Put Down Zone'* and state our ongoing commitment to developing a school culture that demonstrates:

- the practice of settling differences through mediation and problem-solving approaches
- the eradication of power imbalances that foster bullying type behaviours
- the involvement and commitment of every member of the school community in challenging witnessed or known incidents of bullying
- a climate where asking for help with bullying issues is encouraged and accepted as the norm

### What is Bullying?

Bullying is behaviour that hurts, threatens or embarrasses a child. Bullying has the following characteristics:

- it is repetitive
- it involves an imbalance of power
- it is defined by the effects on the victim, not by the intent of the perpetrator/s doing the bullying
- it may be verbal, physical, social or psychological and includes all electronic forms

### Some Examples of Bullying Include:

- using 'put-downs', belittling other's abilities and achievements
- any form of physical violence such as hitting, shoving, pushing or spitting on others
- using offensive names, teasing or spreading rumours about others or members of their families
- interfering with another person's property by stealing, hiding, damaging or destroying it
- hurtfully excluding others from a group
- making denigrating comments about a person's cultural, social or religious background or their appearance
- writing offensive notes or graffiti about others
- using email, text messages, or other electronic forms against others
- stalking, dirty looks, threatening gestures or words
- forcing others to act against their will

### Signs of Bullying

For the victim, bullying can result in any number of the following effects:

- social withdrawal
- mood swings
- sleep disturbance
- disruptive behaviour
- truancy and/or lateness
- unwillingness to go to school
- anxiety
- a pattern of headaches and stomach aches
- damaged clothing or bruising
- requests for money
- decline in work standards or output

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### **The Lumen Christi College “Whole School Approach” to Bullying Involves Staff, Students and Parents, and Aims to:**

- Raise student awareness of the abusive nature of bullying and promote understanding of the potential seriousness of its effects.
- Encourage student bystanders and staff to break the code of silence that fosters bullying by challenging harassment in all its forms and reporting witnessed or known incidents of bullying.
- Deal with individuals who bully others in order to help them take responsibility for their behaviour and make a commitment to changing it. This can be done with the help of counselling available through the College. If behaviour is resistant and ongoing, strong action for the protection of other students will be implemented. Repeat offenders may face a period of school suspension and/or have an interview with the Director of Pastoral Care or Deputy Principal. Such an interview will also include the student’s parents and may involve discussions about the continued enrolment of the student at the College.
- Support group members involved in bullying by teaching skills to counter peer pressure.
- Teach vulnerable students assertiveness skills and self-protective behaviours to reduce victimisation.

#### **The Role of Staff**

Staff members are expected to:

- act as positive role models for students
- actively counteract bullying
- take all reports of bullying seriously and where necessary, refer to the relevant Pastoral Coordinator
- adopt positive classroom management strategies
- ensure that all areas of the school have a visible staff presence at breaks, between lessons, before and after school

#### **The Role of Students**

Students are expected to:

- show respect and consideration for others in and outside the classroom
- accept responsibility for their actions
- respect the property of others
- actively discourage bullying
- report any incident of bullying to a trusted adult
- seek help and advice if they are bullied

#### **The Role of Parents**

Parents - is your child being bullied?

- be vigilant for signs of distress in your child - reluctance to attend school, requests for extra money, a pattern of illness
- assist your child by encouraging them to discuss the problem with a trusted member of the school community. If they fail to act on your advice, contact the school yourself
- discourage any planned retaliation, either physical or verbal. Brainstorm ways of finding an alternative solution to the problem. The College Psychologist can assist with such strategies
- reinforce the fact that your child is not to blame for the inappropriate behaviour of others. It is their right to expect a safe learning environment
- be willing to inform the college of any cases of suspected bullying even if your child is not directly involved or affected
- do not try to deal directly with the other students involved in an incident or their parents. Work through and with the College
- Assistance with any bullying issues is always available through the respective Head of House, the Deputy Principals or the Principal. As staff, students and parents work together to create a ‘*Bully Free Zone*’, the holistic and optimal development of each student will be enhanced.

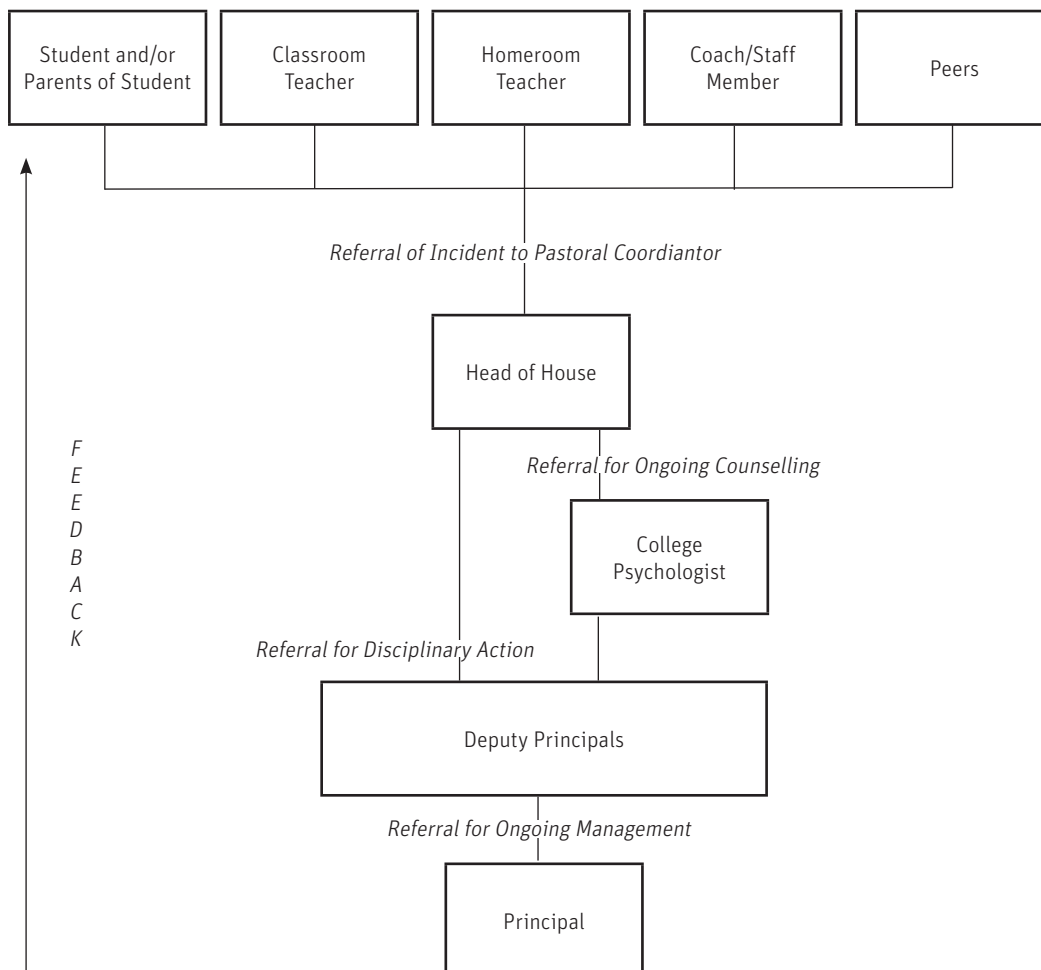
Incidents of bullying will be dealt with in accordance to the *Procedure for Dealing with Issues of Bullying*.

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## Lumen Christi College Procedure for Dealing with Issues of Bullying

### Referral Process



### Suggested Actions

- active listening and affirmation
  - management of initial incident
  - strategy of 'Shared Concern'
  - feedback to initial person/s
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  - management of initial incident
  - strategy of 'Shared Concern'
  - feedback to initial person/s
  - regular follow up
  - recording of relevant data
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- management and resolution
  - feedback to initial person/s
  - regular follow up
  - parent notification