



Lake Joondalup Baptist College

Relationship Management Policy #: 38

Policy reviewed date: 2024

Lake Joondalup Baptist College is committed to the National Child Safe Organisation Principles, and to providing a child-safe environment which safeguards all students and promotes practices which provide for the safety, wellbeing and welfare of our children and young people. Lake Joondalup Baptist College expects all College community members including Board members, staff, volunteers, students, visitors and contractors to share this commitment.

Relationship Management (Bullying) Policy

Purpose

Our purpose is to nurture young people to discover and confidently express their unique God-given gifts in service to their community.

The Relationship Management (Bullying) Policy and Student Code of Conduct aim to ensure a safe and supportive environment for learning and behaviour that reinforces College values. The Policy and Code outline the responsibilities of staff, students, and parents to promote appropriate and positive conduct and to prevent or minimise non-compliant and aggressive behaviours.

Policy Statement

Guidelines

Lake Joondalup Baptist College respects the right for every student to obtain the best education possible. Through respect for ourselves and for others, a friendly, safe and welcoming College environment can be created. The Student Code of Conduct is the focus for self-discipline for each student. Lake Joondalup Baptist College is committed to ensuring that the environment fosters positive relationships free from unlawful discrimination, harassment and bullying.

Aims

- to foster positive relationships within the College
- to foster an environment where all members of the College community are treated with kindness, dignity, courtesy and respect
- to create an atmosphere where students, teachers and others feel and are safe
- to promote appropriate standards of conduct at all times
- to encourage the reporting of inappropriate behaviour
- to provide an effective procedure for resolving complaints in a sensitive, fair and timely manner
- to employ forgiveness.

Bullying

There is no universally accepted definition of bullying. It is important to have a clear understanding of exactly what bullying is, in order to deal with it effectively. Some behaviours which may be distressing to a student, such as arguments, would not be considered as bullying.

Bullying is an ongoing misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that causes physical and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing power over one or more persons.

Bullying can happen in person or online, and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long term effects on those involved, including bystanders.

Single incidents and conflicts or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying. However, these conflicts still need to be addressed and resolved.

Bullying is usually done with the intent to disrupt physically or emotionally, but it can also be an unintentional process, where people are insensitive to the feelings of others and the effects of their actions. It is "recipient defined", i.e. "It was only a joke" or "They don't mind" is never an acceptable excuse for bullying behaviour.

Harassment is behaviour that targets an individual or group due to their identity, race, culture or ethnic origin; religion; physical characteristics; gender; sexual orientation; marital; parenting or economic status; age; ability or disability and that offends, humiliates, intimidates or creates a hostile environment.

Harassment may be an ongoing pattern of behaviour, or it may be a single act. It may be directed randomly or towards the same person/s. It may be intentional or unintentional (ie words or actions that offend and distress one person may be genuinely regarded by the person doing them as minor or harmless).

Bullying and harassment can affect students, staff and other members of the College community including parents, visitors and workplace participants at the College.

Actions that dislocate relationships

Verbal

- putting 'people down' through comments, jokes or mimicking
- name calling
- teasing about another's appearance or beliefs
- derogatory comments made on the basis of race, culture, sexuality, socio-economic status or any other individual difference
- intimidation or verbal abuse directed towards a person with different abilities
- intimidating or harassing telephone calls or texts
- practical jokes which may be hurtful.

Visual/Physical

- non-verbal gestures which are designed to intimidate eg, negative body language
- displaying offensive materials, pictures or objects
- writing offensive notes, letters and graffiti
- cyberbullying: offensive use of email, mobile phone, internet or other technology
- pushing, hitting, pinching, kicking and other unwelcome physical contact used intentionally to intimidate or hurt someone
- unwelcome touching or brushing against another
- damaging, stealing, hiding or destroying another's property or possessions
- disrespect for, or invasion of, personal space and property eg, going through personal belongings eating food purchased by an individual for their own consumption, borrowing without permission, listening into phone conversations, etc.

Relational

- hurting others by damaging or manipulating relationships eg, spreading rumours that cause individuals to be rejected by others
- social exclusion by deliberately excluding another from a group of friends
- writing, sending or delivering harassing notes
- telling others not to associate with or like someone.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying involves the use of information and communication technologies such as e-mail, mobile phone, gaming, social media platforms and APP's, to support the repeated, harmful and negative behaviour by an individual or group towards another individual or group.

According to Bernard and Milne (2008) the main forms of cyber bullying are:

- Flaming: online fights using electronic communication with angry or vulgar messages
- Harassment: repeatedly sending nasty, mean or insulting messages
- Denigration: posting or sending gossip or rumours about a person to damage his/her reputation or friendships
- Outing: sharing someone's secrets or embarrassing information or images online
- Exclusion: Intentionally and cruelly excluding someone from an online group
- Cyber stalking: repeated, intense harassment and denigration that includes threats or creates significant fear.

Extortion

Pressuring and intimidating others to act against their will eg, giving up possessions, money, buying food and drink for bribery purposes, doing work for others or committing minor offences for them.

Behaviours that are not bullying

While it is important to understand and define what bullying is, it is also important to be clear which behaviours are NOT bullying.

The National Centre Against Bullying acknowledges that while the following behaviours are often upsetting to those involved, they do NOT constitute bullying:

- isolated incidents of aggression, intimidation or violence
- 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.

While these behaviours would not be considered bullying because they do not involve deliberate and repeated harm and a power imbalance, they need to be addressed in the same way as other inappropriate student behaviours. If parents are concerned about these behaviours, they should contact their child's Primary classroom teacher or Secondary Head of House.

Dealing with harassment and bullying

Lake Joondalup Baptist College is committed to ensuring that all staff, students and members of the College community are treated with dignity, courtesy and respect. The College takes all complaints and concerns received from staff, parents, students and other complaints from outside of the College, seriously. Our aim is to ensure that grievances are handled objectively and with sensitivity. In doing so, we will seek to identify both the specific and (where applicable) systemic issues raised by a grievance (thereby enabling future improvements to be identified and implemented). Please refer to the Grievances Policy (Community) on the College website for further information.

You are also encouraged to take one of the following approaches:

- the student speaks directly to the person(s) causing the offence and informs them that it is unwelcome and to stop
- talk to a friend or family member who is understanding for support or advice and who will inform the College
- talk to a classroom teacher/Connect teacher
- talk to a member of Primary Leadership/Head of House
- talk to a Chaplain.

Please note: Parents should contact the relevant Primary classroom teacher, secondary Head of House or relevant Dean in all cases of alleged bullying.

Role of the Primary classroom teacher/Head of House

- to follow up on any incidents which cause disharmony on campus
- to treat all reports of bullying and harassment seriously, promptly and discreetly
- to take all reasonable steps to prevent bullying and harassment from occurring in any context directly related to the College, including behaviour that occurs while travelling to and from the College, during co-curricular activities, camps and other College functions
- to ensure that complainants and those involved in the process do not suffer further disadvantage, retaliation or threats
- to offer support/counselling to all students involved
- to raise awareness of the effects of bullying on relationships.

Response to alleged bullying on campus

On the report of an incidence of alleged bullying, the Primary classroom teacher/Secondary Head of House will interview the complainant.

1. The safety of the complainant and their welfare is considered at this stage. Where a child is distressed a staff member will ensure the child is in a safe monitored environment.
2. The respective staff member will discuss a possible plan going forward to resolve the complaint
3. Witnesses and bystanders are required to complete an incident report and are interviewed.
4. The respondent/s write(s) an incident report and is interviewed, allowing them to speak freely, offering their perspective of the situation.
5. Where bullying is evident, this will be discussed with the bully. The bully is also warned regarding any revenge/having friends take revenge and further bullying of the complainant.

6. Parents of other students who were identified as being affected by the incident will be informed of the incident by the Primary classroom teacher/Secondary Head of House.
7. The parents of the bully will be called in for a meeting and the bully issued with an appropriate consequence.
8. The complainant is provided with ongoing support structures from their Primary classroom teacher/Secondary Head of House, keeping parents informed.
9. A copy of the Incident Report Forms will be saved on files of the bully and complainant
10. A record will be kept of all reported incidents on the College database.
11. Primary classroom teacher/Secondary Head of House check in with their respective students

Response to bullying that has occurred off-campus

Lake Joondalup Baptist College reserves the right to interview students and, if appropriate, impose formal discipline strategies when any act which takes place on or off-campus which results in disharmony or threatens to cause a substantial disruption or interference with the rights of students to feel safe and secure on campus.

This includes, but is not limited to:

- bullying or intimidation at shopping centres, on public transport, on social media, gaming platforms or mobile devices or the result of sleepovers
- sanctions may include but are not limited to detentions, suspension or exclusion from the College, even for one off incidences.
- Responses to Inappropriate Behaviour
- Child abuse, corporal or degrading punishment is not condoned or permitted in any form at Lake Joondalup Baptist College. It is contrary to the College's guiding principles for supporting behaviour for learning. Please see relevant definitions in the Definitions section of this policy.

Information provided regarding students who bully

The College cannot discuss personal information about other students due to privacy laws. Therefore, parents are expected to focus on supporting their own child and trust the College will deal with the situation. The College is also unable to provide specific information about disciplinary measures, as each incident is assessed on a case-by-case basis, taking the individual students into consideration.

Definitions

Child abuse

Four forms of child abuse are covered by WA law and are defined by the Department of Communities:

- (1) Physical abuse occurs when a child is severely and/or persistently hurt or injured by an adult or caregiver
- (2) Sexual abuse occurs when a child is exposed to, or involved in, sexual activity that is inappropriate to the child's age and developmental level, and includes sexual behaviour in circumstances where:
 - (a) the child is the subject of bribery, coercion, a threat, exploitation or violence;
 - (b) the child has less power than another person involved in the behaviour; or
 - (c) there is a significant disparity in the developmental function or maturity of the child and another person involved in the behaviour.
- (3) Emotional abuse includes:
 - (a) psychological abuse; and
 - (b) being exposed to an act of family and domestic violence.
- (4) Neglect is when children do not receive adequate food or shelter, medical treatment, supervision, care or nurturance to such an extent that their development is damaged or they are injured. Neglect may be acute, episodic or chronic.

Corporal punishment

Any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light; typically involving hitting the child with the hand or with an implement; can also include, for example, forcing the child to stay in an uncomfortable position. It does not include the use of reasonable physical restraint to protect the child or others from harm [UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, General Comment No. 8 (2006)]

Degrading punishment

Any punishment which is incompatible with respect for human dignity, including corporal punishment and non-physical punishment which belittles, humiliates, denigrates, scapegoats, threatens, scares or ridicules the child [UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, General Comment No. 8 (2006)].

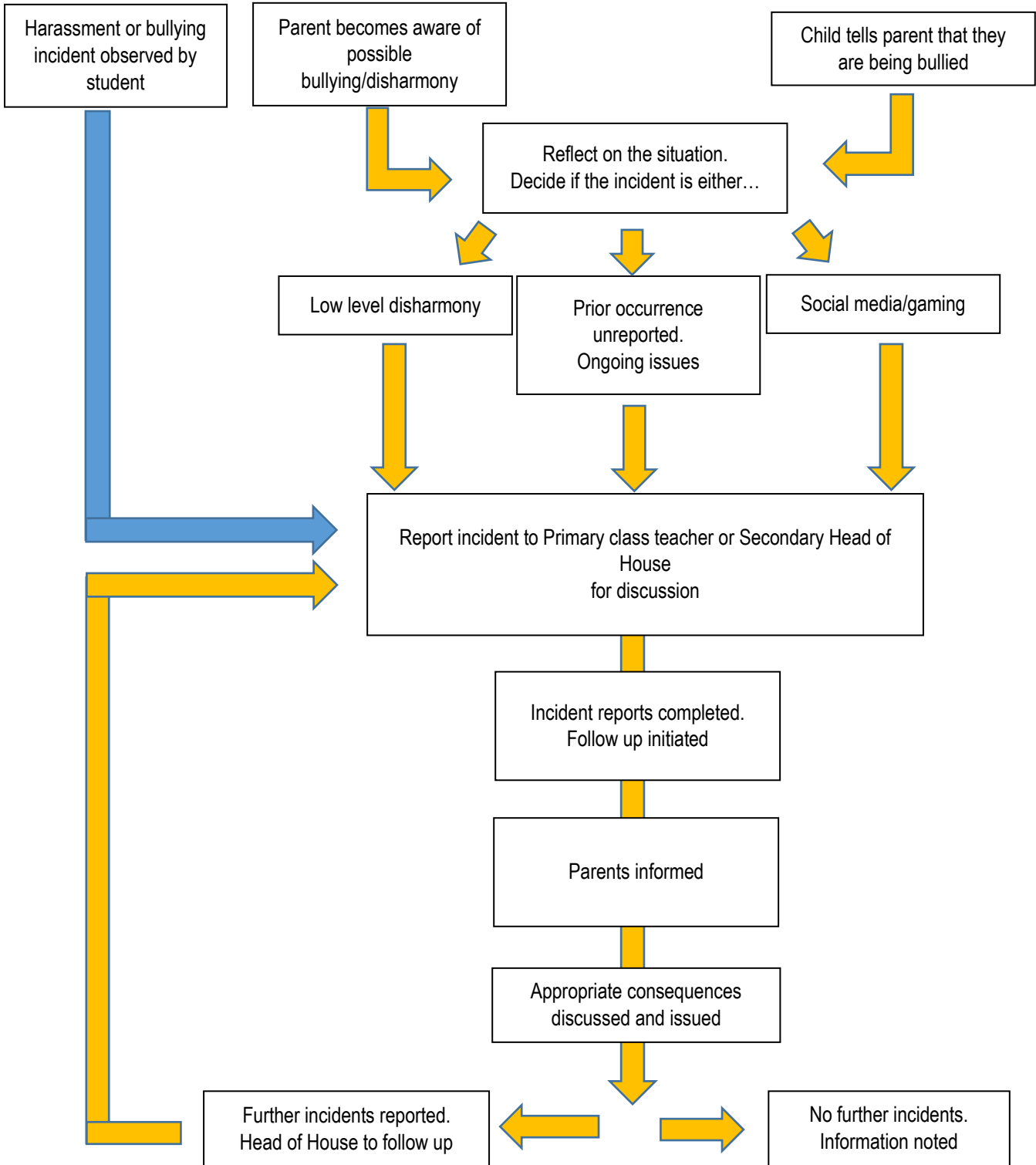
Legislation

Criminal Code Act (1995)
WA Criminal Code Act Compilation Act 1913
Criminal Code Amendment (Cyber Predators) Bill 2005
Equal Opportunity Act WA 1984
Work Health and Safety Act 2020

Related Policies

- 30 Enrolment Policy
- 41 Child Protection Policy
- 42 Learning Technologies Policy
- 55 Secondary Yard Duty Procedures
- 56 Duty of Care to Students Policy
- 57 Primary Yard Duty Procedures
- 58 EO, Discrimination and Harassment Policy
- 77a Grievances Policy (Community)
- 77b Grievances Policy (Student)
- 88 Sexual Discrimination
- 98 Workplace Health and Safety Policy
- 120 Code of Conduct
- 140 Parent Code of Conduct
- 145 Student Code of conduct

Response to Behaviour Which Causes Disharmony



This policy is to be read in conjunction with the Grievances Policy (Community) and Grievances Policy (Student)