



Policy Statement

Wellbeing

One of Korowal School's aims is to create a safe and supportive environment in which students, teachers and families feel valued. Korowal School does not tolerate bullying in any form. The School seeks to promote a learning environment where we:

- minimise risk of harm
- support the physical, social, academic, spiritual and emotional development of students
- provide policies and programs that develop a sense of self-worth and foster personal development
- are mutually supportive
- respect each other, the values and ethos of the School
- provide equal opportunity for all.

We believe that it is essential to an individual's personal growth to flourish in connection with other human beings. One of our roles as educators is to assist students who behave in ways that are inappropriate or unacceptable within the context of the School's values. We are interested in changing these behaviours in such a way that they feel that they belong to our community. What remains important is that unacceptable or inappropriate behaviour is dealt with and change is achieved.

Definitions of behaviours

Rude

Carelessly offending others through unpleasant, off-hand, tasteless and/or disrespectful words or behaviour.

"Inadvertently saying or doing something that hurts someone else" (Whitson, 2012).

Mean

Intentionally causing or engaging in behaviour which is received as unpleasant, disagreeable, hurtful, spiteful, malicious, cruel or lacking in kindness.

"Purposefully saying or doing something to hurt someone once (or maybe twice)" (Whitson, 2012).

Harassment

Harassment is experienced as unwanted or annoying behaviour that is uninvited, unwelcome or offensive. It can be systematic or continued and is perceived as provocative or bothering.

Bullying

Bullying occurs when a person is subjected to all three of the following:

1. behaviour intended to cause harm,
2. repeated behaviour, and
3. a real or perceived power imbalance within relationships.

“Bullying is a relationship problem and requires relationship based solutions”.

www.NCAB.org.au (National Centre Against Bullying)

Bullying behaviours can:

- be overt or covert.
- have long-term effects on those engaging in bullying behaviour, those who are the subjects of bullying behaviour and the onlooker(s) or bystander(s).
- occur within a School setting, travelling to or from School or outside the School, involving members of the School community

Types of Bullying:

- Physical - eg pushing, pulling, hitting, any unwelcome physical contact, pinching, poking; removing, hiding or damaging someone else's possessions.
- Verbal - eg spreading rumours, threats, demanding money or possessions, put downs, name calling, teasing, and ridiculing others and their achievements.
- Sexual - eg behaving in a sexual nature that is humiliating, offensive or intimidating, expressing unwelcome sexual comments about another person, unwanted attention or physical contact.
- Social/psychological - eg deliberately ignoring, spreading rumours, revealing secrets, excluding from friendship groups in order to cause feelings of alienation, shunning, *hazing, manipulating social standing, threatening removal of friendships, non-verbal gesturing, intimidating.
**making students perform humiliating acts in order to be accepted into the group.*
- Vilification - ie verbal or physical aggression, antagonism, prejudice or name calling based on race, religion, sexuality, gender, abilities or conditions.
- Cyber bullying - eg to gossip, spread rumours, insult, reveal secrets or block from peer groups through the malicious use of information technologies such as mobile phones, websites, social media or similar means of communicating.

Bullying is not:

- Mutual conflict – eg an argument or disagreement between people.
- Social rejection or dislike –people do not like everyone around them. Verbal and non-verbal messages of “I don’t like you” are not acts of bullying unless they involve deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.
- Expression of unpleasant thoughts or feelings, verbal or non-verbal. In human communication there are disagreements and some form of judgement about each other’s attitude and behaviour.
- Single episode acts of nastiness or aggression. These will not be ignored or condoned, as they are unacceptable behaviours. However, they are not the same as bullying. For example if someone is verbally abused or pushed on one occasion, they are not being bullied. Nastiness or physical aggression towards a number of people is not the same as bullying.

Agreed Terminology:

- The terms recipient or target are preferable to the term victim, as they do not imply powerlessness or weakness.
- The term the student involved in bullying or bullying student is preferable to the bully, which may demonise individual students.
- The term in a less powerful (or more vulnerable) position is preferable to weaker when talking about a student who has been the target of a bullying student.

Procedural fairness

Korowal School acts on the following definition of procedural fairness:

Procedural fairness is a basic right of all when dealing with authorities. Procedural fairness refers to what is sometimes described as the ‘hearing rule’ and ‘right to an unbiased decision’.

To support procedural fairness it is required that confidentiality is held around matters being dealt with between the School and the parents and students involved.

Appeal Process

The Principal will reach a decision in relation to the allegation, and any consequence to be imposed and advise those involved of that decision. If any party requests that this decision be reviewed they must submit new information to the Principal for due consideration. The Principal will then make a final decision. The matter is then closed.

Anti-Bullying Statement

In a School that values relationships, we require all stakeholders to support our proactive and responsive anti-bullying processes. Our goal when dealing with matters relating to bullying is to restore a respectful relationship between those involved. To this end we:

- support the person who is the target of the bullying behaviour
- support the person who is the perpetrator of the bullying behaviour
- provide appropriate skill building for all those people impacted by this behaviour

The School's response to bullying is built on an evidence-based framework that is informed by current research and includes the Method of Shared Concern and Restorative Practices.

Policy reviewed	April 2016
Next review	April 2017
Principal's signature: <i>B. Fitzgerald</i>	

Procedural Guidelines: Wellbeing Policy

In matters relating to students from Kindergarten to Year 12 we will consider and reflect upon the diverse needs inherent across such a range of ages and abilities. The School reserves the right to vary these guidelines according to the nature of the incident, the age of the student and the student's previous behaviours.

Allegations of bullying

People may be reluctant to report incidents of bullying so when a report is made, it will be taken seriously.

A report of an incident or allegation can come from a student, student witness, parent or colleague. Reports of incidents may also arise through incidental conversation between staff and students, disclosure to the School counsellor or from a member of the public.

An allegation or report of unkind behaviour made to a staff member from any source requires a timely and consistent response.

In order to ascertain what category this behaviour falls into i.e. rude, mean, harassing or bullying, the decision tree on **page 7** will be used.

Key Questions for teachers to ask:

Student making complaint

1. Is there a physical injury that requires attention?
2. Who is being unkind to you?
3. What has s/he been doing?
4. Was anybody else involved?
5. Has this ever happened before?
6. How have you been responding?
7. How did this make you feel?
8. What would you like to happen to fix the situation?
9. What can you do if this happens again?
10. Would you like to see the School Counsellor?

Person named by complainant:

1. Who have you been unkind to?
2. What were you saying or doing?
3. How do you think this may have made that person feel?
4. What do you think you can do to fix this situation?
5. Would you like to see the School Counsellor?

Teacher reflects upon situation:

- do the students need to be separated
- is there a risk of further escalation
- do adjustments need to be made to School travel
- do parents need to be contacted immediately?

If so, report immediately to executive member.

If the teacher establishes that there is enough evidence to sustain the allegation of bullying the Principal is informed as soon as possible.

The Principal nominates an appropriate staff member to undertake an investigation. The HS or PS co-ordinator will inform the parents of the students involved that an investigation into an allegation of bullying will take place. Explain that the complaint is being taken seriously and we will report back to them within an agreed timeframe.

The investigation process includes interviewing all relevant persons:

- targeted student
- bystanders
- peers who are not closely associated with students involved
- teacher/s
- alleged offender

Following this the investigator will provide a written report to the Principal with recommendations. The Principal will make a decision, as to whether or not the allegation is upheld.

The Principal arranges to meet with and present findings to the parents and students, who will be informed of their right to a Fair Hearing and be offered the right of review of appeal. The School's commitment to the restoration of respectful relations will be discussed and planned. A buddy system will be implemented for the students directly involved. The buddy may be a fellow student or a teacher.

The disciplinary procedures undertaken by the School vary according to the seriousness of the alleged offence.

When an allegation of bullying behaviour is upheld, the offending student/s will be informed that future behaviour will be being closely monitored. The student/s will be required to sign an agreement outlining expectations for future behaviour and:

- in-School suspension (1st offence),
- suspension (2nd offence) and
- discussion regarding status of enrolment at the School (third and final)

It is essential that records are kept of these conversations/contracts and lodged on Edumate so that appropriate tracking can take place.

Allegation / Complaint

