



**KOROWAL SCHOOL**  
Human-centred education ♦ Kindergarten to HSC

**Korowal School Limited**

**Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedures**

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# 1. Document Control

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**Document name:** Anti-Bullying Policy  
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Version	Date	Updated by	Description
1.0	28/3/19	Executive Team	Final

## 2. Policy Statement

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- 2.1 Korowal School aims to create a safe and supportive environment in which students, employees and families feel valued.
- 2.2 The School does not tolerate bullying in any form.
- 2.3 The School believes that it is essential to an individual's personal growth to flourish in connection with other people.
- 2.4 The School establishes strategies and practices to encourage appropriate behaviour according to the documented School's values, the Student Code of Conduct, and Student Rights and Responsibilities.
- 2.5 The School addresses inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour, including bullying, to change behaviours as outlined in the Student Discipline Policy.

## 3. Purpose

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The purpose of this Policy is to:

- Minimise the 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.
- Promote respect for each other, and the values and ethos of the School.
- Provide equal opportunity for all.

## 4. Scope

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This policy applies to all members of the Korowal School community including students, parents and staff.

## 5. Related Policies

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This policy is part of the Safe and Supportive Environment Statement and should be read in unison with that document. This policy is also related to the School's other policies including but not limited to:

- *Codes of Conduct for Students and Parents Policy*
- *Student Discipline Policy*
- *Whole of School Wellbeing Policy*
- *WHS Policy*
- *Suspension and Expulsion Policy and Procedures*
- *Complaints Handling Policy*

## 6. Legislation

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This policy has been drafted to comply with the following legislation:

- *Education Act 1990 (NSW)*
- *Australian Education Act 2013*
- *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*

## 7. Definitions

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For a full list of definitions relevant to the School policies refer to the [Definitions Register](#)

## 8. Principles

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The School adheres to the following principles:

### 8.1 **Safe and Supportive Environments**

The Policy supports the commitment by the School to create safe and supportive environments for students, employees and families. A safe environment is one where the risk of significant harm is minimised and students, employees and families feel safe and secure.

### 8.2 **Respectful Relationships**

The School values relationships, in which an individual's personal growth can flourish in connection with other people. The goal when dealing with matters relating to bullying is to restore respectful relationships between those involved. To this end we:

- support the person who is the recipient or target of the bullying behaviour
- support the person who is the person involved in bullying behaviour
- provide appropriate skill building for all those people impacted by this behaviour
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### 8.3 **Accountability**

The school is committed to holding students, parents and teachers accountable for their actions, ensuring open and honest communications are fostered.

### 8.4 **Enhanced development for Students**

A supportive environment facilitates and enhances the social, academic, physical and emotional development of students, employees and all those involved with the work of the School.

### 8.5 **Protection of Students**

The School is committed to fostering the wellbeing of students and to protecting them from any form of exploitation, abuse or neglect.

### 8.6 **Culture of Safety**

The School is committed to maintaining practices that create a culture of safety within which students and employees are supported and protected.

### 8.7 **Identifying and Responding to Concerns**

Where concerns arise about alleged bullying behaviour, the School is committed to maintaining robust systems for identifying and responding to such concerns. In dealing with allegations, the School will uphold the principles of procedural fairness and any finding and actions will be based on a thorough and fair assessment of evidence.

### 8.8 **Procedural Fairness**

Korowal School acts on procedural fairness as a basic right for all when dealing with authorities. Procedural fairness refers to what is sometimes described as the 'hearing rule' and 'right to an unbiased decision'.

The 'hearing rule' includes the right of the person against whom an allegation has been made to:

- know the allegation related to a specific matter and any other information which will be taken into account in considering the matter.
- know the process by which the matter will be considered.
- respond to the allegation.

- know how to seek a review of the decision made in response to the allegations.

The 'right to an unbiased decision' includes the right to:

- impartiality in an investigation and decision making.
- an absence of bias by a decision-maker.

### **8.9 Evidence-based Practice**

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.

## **9. Context**

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- 9.1** Korowal must comply with the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) requirement to provide a safe, inclusive and supportive environment for students.
- 9.2** Ways to prevent or respond to student bullying behaviour are addressed through teaching and learning programs across the key learning areas including 'The Self and Relationships' strand of the mandatory Personal Development, Health and Physical Education curriculum.
- 9.3** This policy relates to student bullying. The WHS Policy applies to all employees, contractors and volunteers. When bullying involves a student and staff member, both policies apply.

## **10. Responsibilities**

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The School requires all stakeholders to support our Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedures.

### **10.1 Teachers**

- support the school in maintaining a safe, inclusive and supportive learning environment
- model and promote respectful relationships and appropriate behaviours
- promote a school culture where bullying is not acceptable
- teach students to identify, report and respond to bullying at school and online
- manage reports of bullying and escalate matters to the principal (or delegate) when necessary.

### **10.2 Non-teaching staff**

- refer any report of bullying to a teacher or school executive staff.

### **10.3 Principal (or their delegate)**

- maintain a positive school climate which includes respectful relationships
- identify patterns of bullying behaviour and initiate school action to respond
- manage complaints about bullying in accordance with the Complaints Handling Policy.

### **10.4 Directors, Educational Leadership**

- manage complaints about how the school has responded to a report of bullying in accordance with the Complaints Handling Policy.

## **11. Definition of Bullying Behaviours**

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

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

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

[www.NCAB.org.au](http://www.NCAB.org.au) (National Centre Against Bullying)

### 11.2 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 the School setting, travelling to or from the School or outside the School, involving members of the School community
- be illegal if it involves intimidation, victimisation and harassment, including that based on sex, race, religion, disability, or sexual orientation, both online and offline.

### 11.3 Types of Bullying:

- Physical - e.g. pushing, pulling, hitting, any unwelcome physical contact, pinching, poking; removing, hiding or damaging someone else's possessions.
- Verbal - e.g. spreading rumours, threats, demanding money or possessions, put downs, name calling, teasing, and ridiculing others and their achievements.
- Sexual - e.g. 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 - e.g. 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 - e.g. 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.

### 11.4 Bullying is not:

- Rude behaviour - Carelessly offending others through unpleasant, off-hand, tasteless and/or disrespectful words or behaviour.
- Mutual conflict – e.g. 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 rude, mean or aggressive behaviour. These will not be ignored or condoned, as they are unacceptable behaviours. However, they are not the same as bullying.

## 12. Procedures

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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 developmental ages and abilities. The School reserves the right to respond according to the nature of the incident, the age of the student and the student's previous behaviours.

## 12.1 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, family member, employee and may also arise through incidental conversation, disclosure to the School counsellor or from a member of the public.
- An allegation or report of inappropriate, unacceptable or unkind behaviour made to an employee from any source requires a timely and consistent response.

## 12.2 Immediate response

Assess the situation. In the case of alleged bullying behaviour, a teacher must decide if:

- there is a physical injury that requires attention, then apply First Aid
- there is a risk of further escalation, separate the students and/or seek assistance
- adjustments need to be made to School travel, then inform the appropriate Co-ordinator
- parents of students need to be contacted immediately, then inform the appropriate Co-ordinator.

## 12.3 Key Questions

In order to ascertain if there is enough evidence to sustain the allegation of bullying, teachers can ask key questions.

### To the person making the complaint

1. Who is being unkind, and to whom?
2. What has s/he been doing?
3. Was anybody else involved?
4. Has this ever happened before?

### To the recipient or target

1. Who is being unkind to you?
2. What has s/he been doing?
3. Was anybody else involved?
4. Has this ever happened before?
5. How have you been responding?
6. How did this make you feel?
7. What needs to happen to make things right?
8. What can you do if this happens again?
9. Would you like to see the School Counsellor?

### To the 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?

If the teacher establishes that there is enough evidence to sustain the allegation of bullying the Principal is informed as soon as possible to allocate a staff member to conduct an investigation. Arrangements are put in place to ensure that the students involved are not in direct contact until the



investigation is complete.

#### **12.4 Investigation**

The Principal nominates an appropriate staff member to undertake an investigation. The High School or Primary School Deputy Principal will inform the parents of the students involved that an investigation into an allegation of bullying will take place, and that we will report back to them within an agreed timeframe.

The investigation process includes interviewing all relevant persons:

- targeted student
- reporter
- bystanders
- peers who are not closely associated with students involved
- teacher/s
- person accused of bullying behaviour

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.

#### **12.5 Procedural Fairness and The Right of Appeal**

The Principal arranges to meet with and present findings to the parents and students, who will be informed of their right to procedural fairness, and be offered the right 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.

#### **12.6 Disciplinary Procedures**

The disciplinary procedures undertaken by the School will be in accordance with the Student Discipline Policy, and the Suspension and Expulsion Policy, with variance according to the seriousness of the 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 as outlined in the Student Discipline Policy, and will undertake the following incremental consequences, depending upon the severity of the bullying undertaken:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Offence: In-school suspension - Student is to continue work at school but not with their peers or home class
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Offence: School suspension - Suspension from attending school for up to 4 days
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Offence: Extended suspension - Suspension from attending school for up to 20 days

If however the behavior of a high school student is found to have been ongoing and unreported, and that the impact of this behavior on the targeted student has had dire effects, the school reserves the right to skip stages in the consequence chain.

#### **12.7 Termination of Enrolment**

Termination of enrolment is the decision of the Principal. This may also be considered during a long suspension.

## **13. Records**

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It is essential that records are kept of allegations, responses, investigations and disciplinary procedures. so that appropriate tracking can take place. These will be recorded in the School's administrative records.

The school maintains records of disciplinary actions taken in its administration system for a period of seven years after enrolment ceases.

## 14. Further Information

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Current resources are directly available through

- Beyond Blue <https://www.beyondblue.org.au/>
- Be You <https://beyou.edu.au/>
- Headspace <https://www.headspace.org.au/>

Implementation documents:

1. *Restorative Practice*
2. *5w's Form*
3. *Teacher Questions*
4. *Allegation / Complaint Flowchart*

Should you require further information about this policy, please contact the Principal.