St Ambrose Catholic Primary School, Pottsville

Workplace Bullying Policy
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SCOPE

This Workplace Bullying Policy guides the prevention and management of workplace bullying at this school and within its community.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Policy is three-fold:

1. To define workplace bullying within the context of Work Health and Safety,
2. To acknowledge the risk that bullying poses to the health, safety and wellbeing of the people in this school/college
3. To provide guidance in relation to the management of allegations of workplace bullying in this school/college

This Policy forms a part of a wider commitment to ensuring a safe and productive work environment, a healthy workplace and an anti-bullying ethos in this school/college.

DEFINITIONS

Workplace bullying shares some of the features of harassment, but harassment usually centres on unwanted, offensive and intrusive behaviour with a sexual, racial, or physical component, and is addressed by specific ant-harassment legislation.

Bullying, according to the Law Society of NSW, can be defined as “unreasonable and inappropriate workplace behaviour that may intimidate, offend, degrade, insult or humiliate a worker (or another person), possibly in front of others and which can include physical or psychological behaviours”.

POLICY FRAMEWORK

This school/college is committed to ensuring that everyone, irrespective of their status or position, is treated with dignity and respect by colleagues, superiors and others with whom they may come in contact as a result of their work.

St Ambrose Catholic Primary School, Pottsville is therefore committed to providing worker and students with a safe and healthy work environment free from workplace bullying.

WORK HEALTH & SAFETY CONTEXT

Workplace bullying creates an unsafe working environment and poses a risk to people’s health and well being.

Under the model Work Health and Safety Act 2011 and the WHS Regulation 2011, the person conducting a business or undertaking (PCBU) must ensure, so far as is practicable, the health and safety of all people legally in their workplace. Employers also have a duty of care under common law to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, and maintain a safe place of work. Additionally, employers are vicariously liable for the acts of the workers committed within the course of employment unless it can be shown that all reasonable steps were taken to prevent workers engaging in bullying behaviour.
Workers, similarly, have a responsibility under the WHS legislation to take reasonable care for their own safety and health at work, to co-operate with any reasonable policy or procedure in relation to work health and safety and not by their acts or omissions adversely affect the health and safety of other persons create or increase the risk to another person.

Workers who consider that they are victims of workplace bullying have a responsibility to bring this matter to the attention of the appropriate person and cooperate with the employer in adopting measures to address workplace bullying.

Workplace bullying, if allowed to continue, can have very negative effects on the health of the organisation.

**POLICY CONTENT**

Workplace bullying, as defined above, is based on the misuse of power and creates a risk to health and safety. It is often repetitive behaviour, or occurs as a behavioural pattern aimed to ‘torment, wear down, or frustrate a person’ (Einarsen 1999, p16). Although a single incident of workplace harassment is not considered to be bullying behaviour it can be distressing for the recipients and can still cause injury. Single incidents can also be a ‘warning sign’ and should be addressed promptly.

The legitimate exercise of rights and responsibility by an employer, in a professional and appropriate manner, does not constitute workplace bullying. All employers have a legal right to direct and control how work is done and managers have a responsibility to monitor workflow and to give feedback on performance.

Workers at this school who experience or witness workplace bullying are encouraged to report such behaviour to Mr Brian Laybutt (Principal) who is responsible for handling reports of bullying in this school/college. Reporting workplace bullying is a legitimate and positive contribution to the wellbeing of the people in our school/college community.

Allegations of bullying, when raised, will be treated seriously and will be investigated promptly, confidentially and impartially. The reporting and investigation procedures for dealing with bullying can be located in the *Procedures for the Management of Workplace Bullying*.

**PROCEDURES**

All workers will:

- Be made aware of, and given information and skills to assist them to identify and address, workplace bullying
- Have made available to them an appropriate mechanism for prompt investigation and resolution of any alleged bullying
- Have allegations of bullying taken seriously, managed promptly and appropriately
- Have allegations of bullying responded to in a manner which respects and recognises the innate dignity of each person
• Be provided with appropriate, effective training programs relevant to their area of responsibility to assist them to contribute towards develop a workplace culture that discourages workplace bullying.

• Be provided with written guidelines and appropriate training for the correct application of this Policy and its associated procedures for preventing and managing workplace bullying allegations and occurrences

Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against a person who:

• Bullies or harasses a worker or another person, or
• Victimises someone who has made a compliant, or
• Makes malicious, frivolous or vexatious complaints.

The school/college will publish and promote the Workplace Bullying Policy to worker, parents and, when appropriate, the wider community.

EXPECTATIONS

At this school, it is expected that:

• All worker will respect the rights of others and refrain from any form of bullying of any other person
• All worker will actively promote a bullying-free environment, and conduct themselves in a manner that does not condone any form of bullying of or by any person
• All worker will respond appropriately to any report of workplace bullying, promptly bringing any such report to the attention of Mr Brian Laybutt (Principal), nominated in this Policy as responsible for handling such reports.

POLICY ADMINISTRATION

This Policy will be reviewed within 12 months of its adoption, then periodically and not less frequently than every three years form its date of implementation, and in the event of any information or incident that indicates the need for a review, and following relevant legislative or organisational change.

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