



Calvary Chapel Sydney Anti-Bullying Policy

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Contents

1. Statement.....	3
2. Definition of Bullying	3
3. Rights and Responsibilities	4
3.1 CCS Children’s and Youth Ministries Responsibilities	4
3.2 Leader Responsibilities.....	5
3.3 Child’s Responsibilities	5
3.4 Parent/Carer Responsibilities	5
4. Responding to Reported Bullying	5
4.1 The Bullying Test	5
4.2 The Level Test	6
4.3 CCS Children’s and Youth Ministries will ensure:	6
5. Procedures and Protocols	6
6. Methods of Investigation.....	7
6.1 A Disciplinary Approach.....	7
6.2 Strengthening the Victim.....	7
6.3 Mediation.....	7
6.4 Restorative Practice	7
6.5 The Support Group Method.....	7
6.6 The Method of Shared Concern.....	7
7. What Bullying Is Not	7
8. Appendix	9

1. Statement

The Calvary Chapel Sydney (CCS) policy regarding bullying is provided by the CCS Child Protection Policy. This Anti-Bullying Policy document has been prepared to further describe the CCS Policy regarding instances of bullying. It is supplementary to the CCS Child Protection Policy and should be read and interpreted in conjunction with the CCS Child Protection Policy.

CCS Children's and Youth Ministries are committed to loving, quality care that promotes the wellbeing of everyone within the CCS community. The wellbeing of each person encompasses his/her spiritual, emotional, social and physical development and safety, and thus each child has a right to feel safe, secure and accepted at our children's and youth programs.

CCS acknowledges bullying does regrettably occur. Bullying behaviour is recognised as anti-social and unacceptable. Victims, perpetrators and those who witness bullying can often be negatively affected. Bullying behaviours can have a profound negative short and long-term effect on people and the culture of churches and children's and youth ministries.

The ministries of CCS aim to work with children, parents and leaders to prevent bullying, raise awareness and to encourage reporting. This Anti-Bullying Policy applies to all staff and volunteers in our Children's and Youth Ministries and includes children, youth, parents/caregivers and congregants. It is the responsibility of all members of the CCS community to be aware of, support and enforce this Anti-Bullying Policy.

CCS aims to create a safe, supportive and caring Christian environment free of intimidation where people are loved, accepted, and respected. CCS Children's and Youth Ministries will not tolerate any behaviour that contradicts this philosophy.

All information received by CCS will remain confidential and secure except where:

- information is subpoenaed by a court
- failure to disclose the information would place the person or another person at risk

2. Definition of Bullying

Bullying is ongoing physical, emotional or verbal aggression by one or more people against others that creates a risk to mental and/or physical health and the safety of victims. Bullying behaviour has three key features:

- it involves the intentional misuse of power in a relationship
- is ongoing and repeated
- it involves behaviours that can cause harm.

Bullying can involve physical contact or be more of a psychological nature. It can be direct, as in name-calling and hitting, and be done indirectly by excluding or rumour spreading. Harmful behaviours may manifest in the form of ongoing harassment, social vilification, and ridicule.

Cyber-bullying which is a form of bullying carried out through computing, mobile devices or internet services such as e-mail, chats, discussion board, online social networking, apps, memes or websites. Bullying can be done through mobile phone technologies such as SMS, voice and/or video recordings and still photography.

	Direct	Indirect
1) Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hitting • Kicking • Spitting • Throwing object • Biting • Tripping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persuading another person to physically assault or prank another person
2) Non-physical a. Verbal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal insults • Name calling / teasing • Threats • Offensive slurs or racial remarks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spreading rumours • Persuading another person to insult someone
b. Non-verbal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Threatening or obscene gestures / written material • Cyber-bullying 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Removing or hiding belongings • Deliberate exclusion from a group • Ignoring • Mimicking
3) Cyber-bullying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sending texts, emails etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating a webpage or post online to defame.

Table of bullying behaviours

3. Rights and Responsibilities

All who attend events held by CCS have a right to:

- enjoy a safe environment free from fear of bullying, harassment and intimidation
- know their concerns will be taken seriously and addressed
- receive appropriate support

Pastors, staff, teachers, helpers, and volunteers at CCS have a responsibility to:

- refrain from engaging in bullying behaviours
- report bullying of self and/or others
- assist with implementing the CCS Anti-Bullying policy

3.1 CCS Children's and Youth Ministries Responsibilities

CCS Children's and Youth Ministries must:

- provide access to the Anti-Bullying Policy to all church staff and volunteers
- provide and follow procedures and protocols for the management of reported bullying incidents

- demonstrate and teach the Biblical values associated with anti-bullying and our call as followers of Jesus Christ to walk in love towards all
- provide restorative support and encouragement to victims of bullying
- intervene to stop bullying and provide restorative support for those who bully
- work with the parents/caregivers of victims and those who bully to resolve issues and restore healthy relationships
- review and evaluate the Anti-Bullying Policy annually

3.2 Leader Responsibilities

Leaders must:

- model anti-bullying attitudes and behaviour in love
- encourage respect and acceptance of others despite differences
- be alert to signs of distress or suspected incidents
- listen honestly and without negative judgments to reports of bullying
- ensure the immediate safety of the victim and provide appropriate support
- report an incident of suspected bullying as soon as possible to the ministry coordinator.

3.3 Child's Responsibilities

Children must:

- show respect for all staff, coordinators, teachers and helpers of CCS
- refrain from and repent of bullying behaviour
- speak out against bullying and report it when they see it
- report bullying if they are victims

3.4 Parent/Carer Responsibilities

Parents/Carers must:

- promote the values of love, respect and acceptance of others
- be alert to signs of distress or anxiety in their child
- report bullying and help their child to identify and report bullying
- work with CCS to resolve a bullying incident involving their child should one arise

4. Responding to Reported Bullying

Different responses may be appropriate depending on the nature and level of seriousness of bullying.

4.1 The Bullying Test

The bullying test will be used initially to determine if the incident is in fact bullying. The one investigating an incident determines:

- Does it involve an imbalance of power, unprovoked words or actions intended to hurt, harm or frighten? and
- Has this occurred on more than one occasion?

If the answer to these questions is Yes, then it is considered bullying.

If it is not a bullying incident it could be:

- conflict that may require the aid of a teacher/helper to facilitate restoration
- one which requires disciplinary action and repentance
- an opportunity for growth and learning support

- an incident which may require further investigation, support or referral.

4.2 The Level Test

The following guidelines are used to decide whether the incident is a low-level or high-level incident:

Low level

- victim is not typically teased or harassed and/or
- the one exhibiting bullying behaviour is not a repeat offender and/or
- bullying behaviour appears less harmful

High level

- victim is often harassed and/or
- those guilty of bullying are engaged in a pattern of such behaviour and/or
- bullying behaviour is causing distress or harm

4.3 CCS Children's and Youth Ministries will ensure:

- procedures and protocols are followed
- parents are informed and included in discussions
- a loving, patient, and restorative approach is taken
- methods of intervention will be appropriate for the level of seriousness of the bullying

5. Procedures and Protocols

Should an instance of bullying be reported, the ministry coordinator or Pastor (or an Elder or Director chosen for this purpose) will implement an investigation in a timely manner and will ensure accountability with confidentiality. Appropriate pastoral support, management and resolution of reported bullying incidents will be offered to all persons involved.

Documentation gathered will include:

- what was allegedly said and done to the complainant or alleged victim
- the date, time and the place where the incident(s) happened
- names of statements of witnesses relating to the incident
- the reaction of the complainant
- notification of the incident to parents/carer of the young people directly involved
- follow-up actions to be taken

Follow-up actions by ministries of CCS will ensure:

- assessment of the level of seriousness of the bullying act (low or high)
- the use of the method of shared concern if it is a first offence for the offender or the use of an appropriate method of intervention (see 6.6) according to the level of bullying and whether there is group involvement
- the application of appropriate consequence if it is a subsequent or high-level offence
- resolution of the problem in a restorative and loving manner to all involved
- continued monitoring of the situation
- appropriate feedback and communication with the parents of children involved

6. Methods of Investigation

There are several approaches taken to investigate and resolve cases of suspected bullying.

6.1 A Disciplinary Approach

This method uses the imposition of sanctions or consequences (which could include removal from the group or church fellowship) on the offender. This Biblical approach is outlined in the Calvary Chapel Sydney Constitution under Article IV, section 5 (included in Appendix)

6.2 Strengthening the Victim

This approach aims to teach and support the victim to act more assertively. This is limited to bullying which is verbal.

6.3 Mediation

This approach requires those facing a conflict to work together with a mediator to find a mutually acceptable way of resolving their problem. It requires the willingness of the parties involved to meet and seek a solution.

6.4 Restorative Practice

This approach requires the offender to reflect upon his or her unacceptable behaviour, respond to conviction and regret by repentance, and take appropriate actions to restore the damaged relationship with both the victim and the church community. It relies on the readiness of the victim to accept the offender's restorative action.

6.5 The Support Group Method

This approach involves the persons who have been identified as bullying someone being confronted at a group meeting with evidence of bullying and the victim is usually not present.

6.6 The Method of Shared Concern

This approach involves working first with the victim, with witnesses and finally with one suspected of bullying behaviour in one-to-one meetings. When progress has been made, a meeting is held with the suspected bully on what the problems are and how to resolve them. Once there is agreement subsequently they are joined by the victim to discuss restoration.

When someone repeatedly bullies others:

- a first-time incident will be dealt with using the Method of Shared Concern.
- subsequent incident(s) will incur successively the following scaled responses, notified of their position in the process at each incident:
 1. Suspension from CCS activities
 2. Expulsion from CCS activities

7. What Bullying Is Not

Many distressing and unacceptable behaviours are not examples of bullying, even though they are often unpleasant and require leader intervention and management.

In mutual conflict situations, there is an argument or disagreement between people but does not necessarily include an imbalance of power. Both parties are upset and desire a resolution to the problem. However, unresolved mutual conflict may develop into a bullying situation with one person becoming targeted repeatedly for retaliation in a one-sided way.

Single episodes of nastiness, meanness, a random act of aggression or intimidation are not the same as bullying. As a church CCS has a duty of care to provide all volunteers, children and

congregants with a safe and supportive environment where single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression will not be ignored or condoned, and instances of bullying are recognised and resolved in a Biblical manner.

8. Appendix

(cited from Article IV of the CCS Constitution)

5. Church Discipline: The church reserves the right to discipline congregants in accordance with Biblical principles (Matt. 18:15-17, 1 Cor. 5, 2 Cor. 2:6-8, and Gal. 6:1) with the purpose to restore a professing believer to fellowship with Jesus Christ and the church.

- a. There shall be a discipline committee consisting of the Chairman, board, and/or elders. This committee, led by God's Word and the Holy Spirit, shall have sole authority in determining heretical deviations from the Statement of Faith.
- b. Congregants are expected to demonstrate loyalty and loving concern for one another. When a congregant becomes aware of an offense that hinders spiritual growth and testimony, he is to go alone to the offending party and seek to restore his brother. Before he goes, he should first examine himself according to scripture. His attitude and heart should be one of humility and with the goal of restoration.
- c. If reconciliation is not reached, an officer or director (either an elder, pastor, or board member) is to accompany the one seeking to resolve the matter. This second step should also be preceded by self-examination, and exercised in a spirit of humility with the goal of restoration.
- d. If the matter remains unresolved after the steps outlined in subsections (b) and (c) have been taken, a discipline committee established by the Chairman and Directors shall hear the matter. If the matter is not resolved during the hearing before the discipline committee, the committee shall bring forth the issue before the congregation so they, after self-examination, make an effort personally to go to the offending congregant for the purpose of restoration.
- e. No matter may be heard by the discipline committee or the church unless the steps outlined in subsection (b) and (c) have been taken, except in the case of a public offense.
- f. If the matter is still unresolved after the steps outlined in subsections (b), (c), and (d), a congregant who refuses to repent and be restored is no longer considered a congregant upon a majority vote of the discipline committee. With the exception of family members, contact with him is to be limited strictly for the sake of restoration (Matt. 18:17, 1 Cor. 5:11-13).

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