

Anti-Bullying Policy

Updated 2022

Our Intent:

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our students so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere.

Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school.

If bullying does occur, all students should be able to report it and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Anyone who knows that bullying is happening is expected to report it to the staff.

Bullying will not be tolerated at our school.

What Is Bullying?

Bullying is the **deliberate, repeated**, psychological, emotional and/or physical **harassment** of one student by another (or a group).

Bullying can be:

- **Emotional** - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures), intimidation.
- **Physical** - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence.
- **Racial** - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures, comments, names.
- **Sexual** - unwanted physical contact, sexual gestures, sexually abusive comments or focusing on the issue of sexuality, sending sexual images via phone or internet.
- **Verbal** - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing, abusive or threatening phone calls
- **Cyber** - any bullying done through the use of technology, including abuse using email, instant messaging, text messaging, websites, social networking sites, etc.

Why is it Important to Respond to Bullying?

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Bullying can cause loneliness, depression, anxiety, poor academic achievement, lead to low self-esteem and increased susceptibility to illness. Students who are bullying need to learn appropriate ways of behaving. Students who bully have a higher likelihood of depression, aggression and incarceration as adults.

Schools are expected to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

What to do if your child is being bullied:

If your child is being bullied, please **REPORT** it.

Provide as much detail as possible about each of the incidents.

Encourage your child to report bullying as soon as it happens.

This is vital for a timely and effective response.

Written details of bullying incidents should include: *when, where, what happened, who was involved (including bystanders) and any action your child may have taken to stop it.* This will ensure the school can respond effectively.

Please do not approach any children involved or their parents.

Who to report to

Tell any staff member you feel comfortable talking to. This could be your child's teacher, the counsellor, the PCW (Chaplain), the principal or deputy.

How to report

- Arrange a meeting for you and your child with the appropriate staff member.
- Bring to the meeting the facts in writing.
- Work with your child and school staff on a plan to keep your child safe, including strategies to avoid being bullied and responses to future bullying.

Advice for Parents:

- *If you are worried that your child is being bullied, ask him/her directly.*
- *Avoid blaming your child for the bullying.*
- *Don't tell your child to fight back.*
- *Give your child a chance to vent his/her feelings about being bullied.*
- *Access the school for resources about bullying.*
- *Follow up with the school what action has been taken to stop the bullying.*
- *Be a role model for your child – treat people with tolerance, kindness and respect. Be assertive rather than aggressive. Speak kindly of yourself and others.*
- *Contact the school counsellor for more parent help and advice.*

What the school will do when bullying is reported:

- In all cases of bullying, staff will record the incidents.
- The role of bystanders in bullying situations will be acknowledged and recorded details will include who was a bystander.
- Where appropriate, parents will be informed and asked to meet with the counsellor
- The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying will be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly. Responses may take the form of counselling, support groups or adult mediation.
- All responses will maintain a "Restorative Justice" focus (giving the person using bullying behaviours the opportunity to repair damage done).
- **If the bullying behaviour continues**, the following sanctions may be imposed
 - *Removal from the group (in class)*
 - *Withdrawal of recess and lunchtime privileges*
 - *Withholding participation in any school trips or sports events that are not an essential part of the curriculum*
 - *A fixed period of **Internal Suspension***
 - *A fixed period of **exclusion***
- Students using bullying behaviours may attend counselling in order to make changes to their behaviour. Parents may be asked to attend some or all of these sessions in consultation with the counsellor &/or teacher.
- After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.

If the bullying continues, TELL someone IMMEDIATELY.