



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

The implementation of the Anti-Bullying Policy reflects the school's commitment to the Diocesan Vision and Mission and the Vision and Mission statements of the school.

POLICY

Students and staff of St Joseph's have the right to expect that they will spend the school day free from the fear of bullying, harassment and intimidation. Bullying is taken seriously and is not acceptable in any form.

There are structures set up within the school to reduce and prevent bullying and teasing and to equip children with appropriate social skills to counter bullying.

Instances where bullying and teasing do occur are dealt with in a way that provides support for both the victim and the bully, providing a framework to reduce and prevent further bullying.

Teachers, students, parents, caregivers and members of the wider school community have a responsibility to work together to address bullying.

Any inappropriate behavior that prevents or limits teaching and learning in schools and interferes with the wellbeing of students is not accepted.

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

Bullying is when someone is deliberately causing hurt.

It is intentional and ongoing.

It is directed by a more powerful group or person against someone less powerful.

Bullying behaviour:

- devalues, isolates and frightens.
- affects an individual's ability to achieve and interact with confidence.
- has long-term effects on those engaging in bullying behaviour, those who are the subjects of bullying behaviour and the onlookers or bystanders.

Bullying behaviour can be:

Verbal

- ongoing calling, teasing, abuse, putdowns, sarcasm, insults, threats.
- Rude comments.
- Making fun of someone because of their appearance, physical characteristics or cultural background.
- Making fun of someone's actions, talents, disabilities or achievements.
- Teasing.
- Offensive words.
- Threats, laughing, whispering and put downs.

Physical

- Hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting, pushing, shoving.
- Making inappropriate gestures.
- Taking or damaging another's personal property.
- Forcing others to hand over food, money or something that belongs to them.
- Making someone do something they don't want to do.
- Harassment.

Psychological

- Deliberate or nasty remarks designed to ridicule or embarrass another child.
- Whispering and conspiring to exclude someone.

- Excluding others from the game or group.
- Body language, standing over, turning back on, running away or chasing.
- Spreading untrue stories about others, phone calls to harass.
- Unfair rules within games.
- Cyber bullying, malicious SMS and email messages, inappropriate use of camera phones or other technological devices.

Bullying is not

- single episodes of social rejection or dislike
- single episode acts of nastiness or spite
- random acts of aggression or intimidation
- mutual arguments, disagreements or fights.

These actions can cause great distress. However, they're not examples of bullying unless someone is deliberately and repeatedly doing them.

PROCEDURES

At St Joseph's, we believe that the best way to address bullying is to help students, staff and the wider community develop positive relationships.

We strive to do this through our daily interactions with students, Religious Education Program, Personal Development and Health Programs including leadership and social skills programs.

Specific understandings, skills and strategies that encourage respect and inclusion will be taught by classroom teachers to help prevent bullying and to deal with incidences as they occur. Specific in class programs may help students who have difficulty in forming or maintaining positive friendships.

Teachers are expected to be proactive in promoting respect and positive relationships amongst the students.

One on one assistance for students may be sought with the assistance of the school counsellor or the pastoral care worker.

IMPLEMENTATION

Strategies

Teaching and Learning Programs: -

1. All teaching and learning programs are to promote respect of others and incorporate opportunities to develop skills in collaborative learning, problem solving, communication and assertiveness. This will teach our children the skills to build their self-esteem and empower them to take responsibility for themselves.
2. Openly teach and talk about bullying, what it is and is not, how it affects individuals and what can be done to counter it.
3. Regular modelling of restorative practices.

Responsibilities of staff

1. To model appropriate behaviour at all times.
2. To deal with all reported and observed incidences as set out in this policy.
3. To ensure that students are supervised at all times.
4. To follow the guidelines of the anti-bullying policy and to disseminate this policy to the school community.
5. To teach children strategies to manage bullying behaviours.
6. To report back to parents or carers who have made a bullying report, on the progress and management of the complaint.
7. To maintain records of bullying complaints and follow up courses of action.
8. To advise parents if their child is engaged in bullying behaviour.

Responsibilities of children

1. To report if they are being bullied either at school or on the way to and from home.
2. To report if someone else is being bullied either at school or on the way to or from school.
3. To help someone who is being bullied. To not be a 'bystander.'
4. Not to bully others.

5. To report any incidents of cyber bullying of which they become aware.

Responsibilities of parents

1. To watch for signs which indicate that their child may be being bullied or bullying.
2. To speak to someone on staff if their child is being bullied or if they suspect that this is happening.
3. To instruct their child to report if they are being bullied.
4. To advise the school if their child is engaged in bullying behavior.

REPORTING OF BULLYING

Incidences of bullying can be reported to any teacher and if necessary, the principal by the student or their parents. Teachers must inform the assistant principal or principal of any bullying that comes to their attention.

Time, date, of a bullying incident are to be recorded, electronically or diarised by the teacher, assistant principal or principal.

Any bullying incidences that are dealt with will be recorded.

RESPONDING TO REPORTED INCIDENCES OF BULLYING

When dealing with the bully, behavior management steps are followed in accordance with the Behaviour Policy.

When a bullying incident is reported or observed, the following steps are to be taken:

1. The teacher on duty, other nominated teacher or classroom teacher will talk to the children involved about the incident and remind them that such behaviour is not acceptable, comfort the victim and discuss how he/she feels. Provide the victim with strategies. The teacher will strive to support the bully to change behaviour.
2. The classroom teacher will be informed and the incident will be recorded in the daily message folder.
3. The class teacher will monitor the children involved following this mediation.
4. If the bullying is repeated, the bully will be separated from the group for coaching.

5. A child who is repeatedly a victim will receive appropriate coaching and support.
6. If the child continues to bully, he/she will be sent to the Principal / Assistant Principal who will contact the parents. The Principal / Assistant Principal will remind the parents of the policy and ask for their co-operation in stopping the child from bullying. All staff to be informed at a staff meeting.
7. If there is a repeated incident, the Principal will have an interview with the child and his/her parents and a system of checks will be set up and followed through by the Principal.
8. Support to help the bully change his/ her ways will be provided in helping them to form positive friendships and to build self-esteem.
9. If none of the steps succeed in stopping the child from being a bully, she/he will be excluded either from the playground, from representing the school or be suspended from school for a short period of time.
10. Counselling and support will be sought from external providers to support the student and family.
11. Procedures will be as per the school discipline policy.

OUTCOMES

There will be a reduction in reported or observed incidences of bullying.

Clear and consistent procedures will be followed.

The school community will regard bullying and teasing as unacceptable.

The following steps will take place:

1. A record of event/s is noted- and recorded electronically or in paper form.
2. Those involved are counselled by the classroom teacher, teacher on duty, assistant principal or principal, whichever is most appropriate in the situation.
3. The School Counselor and/or Pastoral Care Worker may be asked assist both the bullied and the bully.
4. Parents will be informed of the incident and action taken to date. Where necessary a meeting is arranged. The child may be asked to be present where appropriate.
5. Staff to be made aware of the situation as part of a regular item, 'Student Welfare'. Discussion during this time is not minuted for privacy.

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