

## St Bernard's Anti-Bullying Policy

### Related Policies

CE Policies and Procedures  
St Bernard's Student Welfare and Support Policy  
CE Exclusion, Expulsion and Transfer of Students Policy  
Code of Conduct and Child Protection Policy  
Internet Policy Mobile Phone Policy  
Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment CE Policy

### Definition

Bullying is the misuse of power, position and privilege. It is targeted and repeated. It is done to intimidate, coerce, to engender fear, and to control. Bullying can take a number of forms:

Physical:	Pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching, threats.
Verbal:	Name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing, swearing.
Emotional:	Excluding, tormenting, ridicule, humiliation.
Racist:	Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.
Sexual:	Unwanted physical contact or abusive comments.
Cyber/SMS:	Sending inappropriate messages by internet or mobile phone.
Covert Bullying:	Baiting behaviour

Examples of bullying include:

- Any form of repeated physical violence such as hitting, punching or kicking others.
- Interfering with another's property by stealing, hiding, damaging or destroying it.
- Using offensive names or spreading rumours about others and their families. □ Using put downs, belittling others' abilities and achievements.
- Writing offensive notes about others. This includes writing offensive words.
- Using ICT to spread rumours about others, or to threaten others.
- Hurtfully excluding others from a group.
- Using intimidation in order to force others to act against their will.
- A group of students, operating as a unit, verbally or physically harassing another student. This behaviour need not be repeated to be considered an example of bullying.

Conflict or fights between equals and single incidents are **not defined** as bullying. Bullying behaviour is not:

- children not getting along well
- a situation of mutual conflict
- single episodes of nastiness or random acts of aggression or intimidation.

### Steps to counter bullying: Preventative Measures

St Bernard's school community is proactive in providing a safe and supportive environment for all members of the school community. In order to ensure that St Bernard's is a bullying free environment, the following preventative measures exist. They are implemented as proactive measures to minimise opportunities for bullying to occur.

### Teachers:

- Teachers are positive role models. They model inclusiveness, compassion, respect and good conflict-resolution skills. They play a major part in ensuring that classrooms are environments in which the harassment of others does not take place.
- Teachers are vigilant in recognising signs of distress or suspected incidents of bullying.
- Teachers actively supervise areas during playground duty. Mobile phones/Walkie Talkies are used in the case of emergency only.
- Teachers are to avoid unnecessary distraction while supervising students.
- Teachers arrive at class lines on time. Many incidents of verbal or physical abuse take place in the few minutes at the end of recess/lunch breaks, before classes begin formally. Arriving promptly to class lines reduces the likelihood for tensions to escalate towards an unfortunate outcome.
- All teachers at St Bernard's will spend the first term of each school year teaching their students the skills to identify bullying and how they can deal with it. Strategies to solve conflict situations are explored, including role playing scenarios that might be considered examples of bullying. Students will be taught the 'Three Steps' approach to dealing with an unwanted situation, 'Talk', 'Walk' & 'Tell'. Teachers will encourage students to follow these steps on the playground as a first attempt to deal with an unwanted situation.
  1. Talk: 'Do not XXX to me. I don't like it. It makes me feel XXXX when you say that to me.'
  2. Walk: Students walk away from the offending party and say, 'I have asked you to stop XXX. I don't like it. I am now going to tell an adult.'
  3. Tell: The student informs a teacher of what has happened.

**Note: This strategy applies to low level behaviour eg. a student taking (as a one-off occasion) another child's ruler. Any act of actual violence, be it physical or verbal is to be dealt with immediately by telling a teacher. Students are NOT to employ the Talk, Walk & Tell strategy in situations that involve violence. They are to get immediate help from a teacher.**

### School/Class Programs:

- Assisting children to develop the skills required to solve problems by enacting role plays in class.
- Having definition of bullying and school expectations clearly articulated to the community.
- School Rules to be displayed in classrooms and around school.
- 'Rule reminders' during the week. □ Children negotiate class rules and consequences with teacher at the beginning of the year and revisit these regularly.
- Focus on strategies to promote positive behaviours and resilience.
- Continual exposure to and participation in class and school prayer celebrations to form in children the values that St Bernard's seeks to uphold.
- Parents are informed at the beginning of each year on the school's bullying policy. Information on warning signs is provided that may help in identifying whether a child is being bullied, or is doing the bullying. Parents are encouraged to contact the school immediately if they think that their child is the victim or perpetrator of bullying.
- Leadership team support
- Councillor referral when appropriate
- Choice of activities and resources on the playground will be monitored by teachers.
- Whole staff briefing of behavioural issues as required
- A letter outlining the school's proactive approach is sent to all families at the beginning of each year. (See Appendix 1)

### **Students:**

- Students are encouraged to inform adults when they are being bullied or see a bullying incident.
- Students are encouraged to be positive role models to others, particularly younger students.
- Students are to tell someone on their 'safety network' of any incidents. A student's safety network is a social network of adults with whom the child feels safe. The student nominates the members of his/her own safety network. Typically, a model such as a hand is used to demonstrate the network: for each finger and the thumb, the student nominates one adult with whom they feel safe. The adults on a child's safety network are adults with whom the child can confide in, or express fears and anxieties.
- Students explore themes in Religious Education programs and make connections between our Catholic values and the way in which we treat others at school and in the wider community.
- No put downs. This includes any verbal comments designed to put down or humiliate the victim. Calling the victim names, swearing at the victim, using threatening language and using language in order to ostracise or exclude are all examples of 'put downs'.
- Role playing incidents to give practical examples.

### **Parents/Caregivers:**

- Support their children to become responsible citizens and to develop responsible on-line behaviour
- Be aware of the school Anti-bullying Policy and assist their children in understanding bullying behaviour.
- Support their children in developing positive responses to incidents of bullying consistent with the school Anti-bullying Policy
- Report incidents of school related bullying behaviour to the classroom teacher
- Work collaboratively with the school to resolve incidents of bullying when they occur.

### **Steps to counter bullying: Management Measures**

St Bernard's Primary School prides itself on healthy and positive relationships. This reflects the school's Catholic ethos and spirituality and the belief that all people are sacred. In this light, the Anti Bullying Policy seeks to restore relationships that are damaged by bullying. It can be said that St Bernard's undertakes a restorative approach to incidents of bullying. However, in the event that an incident of bullying is found to have taken place, there are also consequences for the bully. These include bullying behaviour addressing ways that he/she can mend the relationship, but, depending upon the frequency and seriousness of the bullying behaviours, the bully may be excluded from the playground for a period of time.

### **Playground Incidents**

Any acts of physical or verbal violence (verbal violence here means swearing at a child or calling him/her a name) that take place on the playground will result in a student being removed from the playground. The teacher on duty will deal with the situation accordingly in line with our school procedures.

If the incident is a case of bullying, steps will be followed in accordance with the Pastoral Care and Welfare Policy procedures.

For example, if a teacher judges that a playground incident is not of sufficient seriousness to warrant being sent off the playground but is nonetheless unsavoury to some degree, the teacher may determine that the child have some 'time-out' of the game/activity and sit out of

the game for a period. The classroom teacher is notified by an email from the supervising teacher as a courtesy.

Classroom incidents of poor behaviour are dealt with by the supervising teacher. However, any incidents that involve violence of any description directed from one student to another, while still being dealt with by the supervising teacher, are discussed with a member of the executive team. Teachers are encouraged to call for assistance for the child to be removed from the classroom.

If the teacher in conjunction with the Principal/Assistant Principal judges that an act of bullying has taken place, the Pastoral Care and Welfare Policy Guidelines are followed.

#### POLICY REVIEW

The policy will be reviewed not less frequently than once every three years.

POLICY DATES			
Formulated	2015	Adopted	2016
Implemented	2016		
Next Review Date	2019		
POLICY AUTHORISATION			
Principal		Signature	

References <http://www.michaelcarr-gregg.com.au/> McGrath, H & Noble, T; Bullying Solutions, N.S.W., Pearson Education, 2006.