



# Anti-Bullying Policy

*July 2016*

## Rationale

At St Brigid's we believe, value and acknowledge that:

- each member of the school community is a unique and worthy individual created and loved by God,
- each member of the school community should show love and respect on the basis of this,
- each member of the school community is committed to a safe and caring environment where personal growth and positive self-esteem can develop,
- each member of the school community should feel safe whilst at school,
- the responsibility rests with each member of the school community not to take part in bullying,
- it is the responsibility of each member of the school community, including parents, to inform the school or classroom teachers of any bullying situations of which they are aware.

## Definition

Bullying is when a person or group of people repeatedly act in ways that deliberately cause emotional, physical and psychological hurt, fear or embarrassment to another person, even though they have been asked to stop. Bullying and harassment are considered synonymous. It can take the following forms:

- Verbal bullying: name calling, put-downs, rumours about the child or their family, belittling others abilities and achievements, ridiculing appearance, degrading comments about a student's cultural, religious or social background
- Physical bullying: striking, kicking, spitting, practical jokes, damaging, hiding or taking belongings
- Gestural bullying: rude gestures, poor body language, facial contortions, glares
- Relational bullying: deliberate and repeated social exclusion, reputation damage by the spreading of rumours or innuendo, offensive notes or graffiti, forcing others to act against their will.
- Cyber bullying: involves the use of information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behavior by an individual or group, that is intended to harm others.



- Intellectual bullying: put-downs due to being good at school work or having problems with school work

## **Bullying is not one-off acts of:**

- aggression
- nastiness
- conflict
- social rejection
- assertive behaviour

## **Prevention**

At St. Brigid's we will not tolerate any actions, which undermine the right of others to feel safe. We also understand the need to be proactive in building relationships and skills that will develop resilience and strength of character in dealing with difficult situations.

## **Preventative measures may include:**

- The school's religious education program
- Values programs
- Social and Emotional learning programs
- Buddy system
- Professional development for teachers
- Adequate classroom and playground supervision
- Adult modelling of non-bullying behaviours
- Reporting acts of bullying
- Acting on reported cases of bullying
- Student Surveys that assist with identifying places in the school where students may feel unsafe
- Student Insight SRC Survey
- Counselling



## Responsibilities

Bullying is a concern for the entire school community and consequently all students, staff members and parents have a role to play in eliminating it from our school.

### Students should:

- Take appropriate steps to discourage or prevent bullying
- Advise a staff member of bullying
- Discuss these experiences with their parents

### Staff members should:

- Be alert to bullying behaviour and signs of distress in students
- Respond to incidences of bullying according to the policy of the school
- Model anti-bullying behaviour

### Parents should:

- Encourage their children to be open with them about bullying behaviour
- Be alert to signs of distress in their children
- Advise the school of any concerns regarding bullying using the appropriate processes
- Model anti-bullying behaviour for their children

## Implementation

### When bullying occurs at St. Brigid's:

- Between students: a report is to be made to the classroom teacher, other teacher, principal or deputy principal, either by the recipient or a witness
- Between students and adults: a report is to be made to the principal or deputy principal
- Between adults: a report is to be made to the principal or deputy principal
- Reports may be made either verbally or in writing

### When a report is made at St. Brigid's:

- The procedures and guidelines in the document 'Procedures to Follow After An Act Of Bullying' will be carried out

## PROCEDURES TO FOLLOW AFTER AN ACT OF BULLYING INVOLVING STUDENTS



## **A When an act of alleged bullying is reported, the person receiving the complaint shall:**

- Interview the recipient, the person who is accused of bullying and bystanders, if necessary, to establish the facts.
- If verification of bullying does not occur after questioning, incident is to be recorded in the central register by the teacher. This Incident Register form is to be sent to the principal and may be used as a reference point in the future.
- **If an act of bullying is verified**, counsel students so that the student who bullied is aware of the inappropriateness of their behaviour and the effect it had on the recipient.
- Fill out an Incident Register form and forward to the principal who will record the incident on a database and file the form.
- Ensure that a written or verbal apology is given to the recipient of bullying by the person who bullied.
- Report incident to the appropriate person if necessary (i.e. class teacher, principal, deputy principal).
- The parent will be notified through a phone call and a copy of the Incident Register form will be sent home to parents for their signature.
- File the Incident Register form in a central register. These forms will be checked regularly by the principal to identify patterns of individuals, locations and targeted individuals.
- If no repeat of bullying occurs within the next 12 months, the Incident Register forms will be destroyed

## **B If bullying is repeated by the same person, the school shall:**

- Notify the parents, both parties, and make interview times to discuss the issue and how it is being dealt with.
- Take steps appropriate with the Discipline Policy (Step 5)
- Record incident on an Incident Register form to be filed in central register and kept as a permanent record.
- In collaboration with the principal, teacher, parents and student, create and implement an Individual Behaviour Management Plan, making consequences of repeat occurrences clear.
- Recommend to parents to initiate counselling for the student on a private basis.

## **C Ongoing disregard of the Bullying Policy may lead to:**

- Internal (removal from classroom, playground or bus) or external suspension of the student. Refer to Step 7 of Discipline Policy
- Consult with external support groups such as Catholic Education Office, Anglicare.
- Termination of the student enrolment. This action will be made by the principal in conjunction with the parish priest, Catholic Education Office, the classroom teacher, student wellbeing coordinator and the student's parents



## **Evaluation**

This policy will be reviewed annually by staff and the Leadership Team as part of the review process.

## **Ratification**

Date of policy: July 2015

Date of last major review: July 2015

Date of next major review: July 2016