

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Statement of 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 tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. We are a *TELLING* school. This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff.

What Is Bullying?

Bullying is the use of aggression with the apparent intention of hurting another person. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim. Note that some kinds of bullying listed below cross over into other areas of abuse as well, such as child abuse or violent/threatening behaviors; such behaviors may be dealt with according to these other school policies as well.

Bullying can be:

- Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures), ridiculing
- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, any use or threat of violence, or any unwanted physical contact
- Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumors, teasing [could be racist or sexual in content]
- Cyber - All areas of internet, such as email & internet mobile threats or insults by text messaging & calls, misuse of associated technology, i.e. camera & video facilities

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. Students who are bullying need to be confronted with and repent of the harm they are doing to others and to themselves, and they need to learn different ways of behaving. Schools have a responsibility to respond promptly and effectively to issues of bullying.

Objectives of this Policy

- All staff, students and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- All staff should know what the school policy is on bullying, and follow it when bullying is observed or reported.
- All students and parents should know what the school policy is on bullying, and what they should do if bullying arises.
- As a school we take bullying seriously. Students and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported.
- Bullying will not be tolerated.

Signs and Symptoms

A child may indicate by signs or behavior that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school
- begins to skip school or class
- becomes withdrawn, anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning
- begins to do poorly in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions or money which is lost or damaged

- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (lunch has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating or develops an unhealthy interest in dieting/eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received

These signs and behaviors could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated

Procedures

1. Student, Teacher, or Staff member report bullying incidents to staff (adviser or teacher or administrator)
2. The teacher will complete a Bullying Incident Report and give a copy to the principal
3. The teacher and principal (possibly with a counselor) will decide an appropriate course of action, including some or all of the following measures:
 - a. The teacher or principal will investigate the incident.
 - b. The teacher or principal will meet with the students involved in an attempt to bring repentance and reconciliation
 - c. Parents will be informed and asked to come in for a meeting
 - d. Counseling will be offered to or arranged for the victim
 - e. The bully will be required to sign a contract, which will include a detention, a commitment to change their behavior and an agreement to meet regularly with a mentor (selected or approved by the school) who will work to help the bully change behavior and will monitor the situation to see that the contract is being kept. In severe cases, the bully may be suspended without having a prior contract.
4. In cases where bullies have not kept their agreement (in the contract) or have shown a clear lack of repentance, further correction will be assigned. Normally, this will include suspension.
5. In cases of persistent and serious cases of bullying which continue beyond at-home suspension, expulsion may be considered.

Goals

We will strive to meet the following goals through monitoring, accountability and restorative programs along with consequences/discipline as needed.

1. Repentance (sorrow and change) on the part of the bully.
2. Healing for the student being bullied.
3. Reconciliation of all parties concerned.
4. The end of bullying.

Prevention

We will display information about bullying and will help children to prevent bullying. As and when appropriate, these may include:

- writing a set of school rules
- signing a behavior contract
- writing stories or poems or drawing pictures about bullying
- reading stories about bullying or having them read to a class or assembly
- making up role-plays
- having discussions about bullying and why it matters

[ONLINE Child Protection Reporting Form](#)