



St Anthony's Catholic Primary School

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

We want our school to be:

(As stated in our Vision and Mission Statements)

- *A safe learning environment*
- *Friendly and encouraging*
- *A school that fosters positive relationships*
- *A place that builds student's confidence*
- *Inclusive*

At St. Anthony's we all work to encourage a positive environment in our school, an environment that celebrates diversity and protects the rights of the individual.

All students are encouraged to identify and discourage all types of bullying, reporting continued instances to the teacher.

What is Bullying?

'Bullying' is a proven pattern of bullying behaviours. It is when someone, or a group of people intimidates another, it involves a real or perceived imbalance of power with the more powerful individual or group abusing those who are either perceived to be less powerful or are less powerful. The power imbalance may be social power and/or physical power.

Types of bullying

There are three broad categories of bullying.

- Direct physical bullying e.g. hitting, tripping, and pushing or damaging their property.
- Direct verbal bullying e.g. name-calling, insults, homophobic or racist remarks, and verbal abuse.
- Indirect bullying - This form of bullying is harder to recognise and often carried out behind the bullied student's back. It is designed to harm someone's social reputation and/or cause humiliation. Indirect bullying includes:
 - lying and spreading rumours
 - playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate
 - mimicking
 - encouraging others to socially exclude someone
 - damaging someone's social reputation and social acceptance
 - cyber-bullying, which involves the use of email, text messages or chat rooms to humiliate and distress. (Please note these incidents can be one off and of a most serious nature)

THE BULLY

Common statements by bullies

"I was only mucking around!"
"It was only a joke!"

"We were only playing."

"It was an accident."

Why this is not acceptable

To put someone down, make fun of them, make them feel uncomfortable or to hurt them is not a joke.

If a person is hurt in any way, then it is not a game.

If the bully does not assist the victim then it cannot be accepted as an accident.

THE VICTIM

Common thoughts of a person being bullied

"I'll ignore it and it will go away."

"I do not want to cause trouble."

"Everyone gets bullied at some stage."

Have you considered

If anything, ignoring it will make it worse. You may give the bully the impression that things are OK when, in fact, they are not.

Most cases of bullying are sorted out quickly, especially if they are reported straight away.

Everyone has the right to feel safe and secure at all times. It is not acceptable for anyone to be bullied.

WHAT STUDENTS CAN DO:

Victim

- If you are being bullied - **tell someone**. If they do not help **tell someone else**. Keep asking until you receive help. You can report it in writing - stay away from places where you might be bullied and from people who bully you
- Stay in areas where there are lots of children
- If confronted, ignore, stay calm and confidently walk away
- Try to remember it is not your fault
- Walk tall with your head held high. Try to think strong, good thoughts about yourself
- Keep a diary of the bullying - when it happened, what happened, how you felt. Show this to an adult you can trust.
- Tell the bully "I don't like what is happening and I would like it to stop." If it continues, repeat the request adding that "If it continues I will tell an adult."

Other students

- Celebrate the gifts of others
- Do not bully others, do not join in. Being part of a group which is bullying, is just as bad as doing it yourself
- Report the incident to a teacher/adult for assistance
- Remind the bully that their words/actions are hurtful and not fair, but mean and should stop.

WHAT THE SCHOOL AIMS TO DO:

- Encourage a spirit of generosity, peace, forgiveness, respect, acceptance, kindness and concern for others
- Provide a safe, secure, happy environment for students, staff, parents and visitors to the school
- Provide a supportive environment of co-operation, which encourages positive relationships
- Provide structures within the school that will equip the students to develop positive values and provide support for all students, e.g. Buddy system, Peer Support program, House teams, You Can Do It program.
- Educate the senior students to assist in implementation of this policy
- Educate all students to be aware of what constitutes bullying and strategies to bully-proof yourself
- Provide support and counselling for both victim and bully
- Teachers on playground supervision will reward positive behaviour
- All incidents of bullying will be recorded and followed up by staff
- Stamp out bullying with appropriate education, support, encouragement and consequences

WHAT PARENTS CAN DO:

- **Teach positive values**
Children learn values of *honesty, peace, compassion, respect, forgiveness, tolerance, acceptance of others*, best from their parents and the example they set.
- **Teach children to celebrate diversity**
Children learn from home to respect and accept each person as unique, as made by God and gifted by God, to celebrate diversity in all of God's creation.
- **Report all incidents of bullying to the school**
Open communication between the school and parents is vital if problems are to be addressed and a bully-free environment is to be maintained at St. Anthony's. This is particularly important if your child is being bullied.

NB: DO NOT address the issue, bully or threaten the suspect bully nor their parents. In some cases, where necessary conciliation meetings between the students and their parents may be conducted at school.

CONSEQUENCES OF BULLYING:

Discussion of incident - discussion of this policy: what constitutes bullying and what will be the consequences of repeat instances.

- Time-out from the playground and/or classroom.
- Student removed from playground/bus/classroom.
- Detention with completion of behaviour sheet.
- Parent notified of behaviour.
- Discussion with student, parent, class teacher and principal with the aim of developing goals for modifying the student behaviour.
- Reconciliation through discussion between bully and victim guided by the class teacher and principal.
- Victim and bully will be guided to develop skills to deal with these situations.
- Internal/external suspension
- Expulsion (Higher Education authorities are engaged at this level of seriousness)