

PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT OF BULLYING POLICY

CESA Commitment Statement

To every child in a catholic school. We are committed to knowing you deeply. We value you as a capable and competent learner and will support your active engagement in the learning process.

In partnership with you and your family, we commit to high expectations for your learning process, well-being and achievement. You matter to us.

Introduction

The Prevention and Management of Bullying Policy supports the growth of each child, their dignity, uniqueness and their relationship with others.

The development of social and emotional competencies and personal and social responsibility contribute to the life long learning of all children.

This policy strengthens the effective teaching and learning practices already occurring at St Francis Xavier's Catholic School that support children's behaviour, learning and wellbeing.

St Francis Xavier's Catholic School is committed to providing a safe and supportive school environment that is free from inappropriate behaviour and will take all reasonable steps to minimize any form of bullying or harassment and to treat all people with equity and dignity. It is in this context that the bullying of any person is not tolerated.

Principles

This policy is formed within the mission and values of the Catholic social teachings: love, compassion, justice, reconciliation and hope.

Every person is part of the Body of Christ and includes their physical, spiritual, social and emotional growth. Each child's growth is nourished by the many opportunities to develop positive relationships, build resilience and form deep connections in a learning community.

Behaviour is driven by the needs of the individual. The values of justice and reconciliation guide the school community to determine consequences for behaviour. The consequences include the opportunities for learning new behaviours and addressing the underlying needs of children.

Policy Statement

St Francis Xavier's Catholic School seeks to protect personal and school community safety, enhance wellbeing, foster responsibility, enable personal growth, inspire positive behaviours, restore relationships and encourage reconciliation.

The development of a safe and supportive learning environment for all children includes the implementation of curriculum and a variety of practices that aim to build respectful relationships, address bullying and harassment, personal safety, resilience and specific social skills.

St Francis Xavier's Catholic School seeks to respond to bullying behaviour related issues at the earliest opportunity and with regard to the uniqueness of each situation, the stage of development of those involved, the opportunities for continued growth in personal and social responsibility and with an understanding of the cultural and special needs of all members of the school community.

Responsibilities

All members of the St Francis Xavier's Catholic School community contribute to the development of positive behaviour practices and the successful implementation of related policies.

At St Francis Xavier's Catholic School, we believe it is a shared responsibility of children, staff and families to:

- Uphold the St Francis Xavier's Catholic School Prevention and Management of Bullying Policy.
- Be proactive in promoting positive behaviours and constructive social relationships.

Responsibilities of Children

- To contribute to a safe and supportive learning and play environment for themselves and others.
- Must not engage in bullying or harassing behaviours.
- Be an upstander, not a bystander.
- Report all acts of bullying or harassment.
- Must respect the authority of the school staff.
- Read, understand and adhere to the St Francis Xavier's Catholic School ICT Use Agreement.

Responsibilities of Families

- To act as role models in the development of positive relationships.
- To support and respect school staff in maintaining a safe and supportive learning and play environment for all children.
- Speak with the school if they believe their child is being bullied or has witnessed incidents of bullying.

Responsibilities of Staff

- To provide a safe and supportive learning and play environment for all children.
- To develop and maintain inclusive and engaging teaching and learning programs and initiatives for all children with a focus on building social and emotional competencies and the development of personal and social responsibility.
- To implement the processes, procedures and practices in preventing and managing bullying.
- Engage families to work collaboratively in a process of follow up and that ongoing communication is maintained.

PROCEDURES

St Francis Xavier's Catholic School seeks to respond to bullying behaviour related issues at the earliest opportunity and with regard to the uniqueness of each situation, the stage of development of those involved, the opportunities for continued growth in personal and social responsibility and with an understanding of the cultural and special needs of all members of the school community.

What to do if you are bullied

- Tell the person who is bullying you it is unacceptable and to stop.
- Remove yourself from the situation.
- Do not respond with physical aggression - it is safer to walk away.
- Report the bullying every time it occurs. Tell someone in your trust network and seek help.
- Hang around people who help you feel good about yourself.
- Stay positive and be confident.

What to do if you are cyber bullied

- Keep all evidence of the bullying. 'Print screen' all offending messages.
- Do not respond - remove yourself from the situation.
- Walk away from the computer/phone. A cyber bully only has power when you read the message.
- Ask for help to turn on a block so you don't get the bullying posts or texts.
- Report the bullying. Tell someone in your trust network and seek help.

What to do if you witness bullying (bystander)

The actions of a supportive bystander can stop or decrease the incidents. They can also help someone recover from it.

- Step in and tell the offender to stop.
- Encourage your friends to walk away.
- Offer support for the child being bullied - get away and go somewhere safe.
- Report the bullying. Tell someone in your trust network and seek help.

What to do if your child is being bullied

- Listen calmly and get the full story.
- Reassure your child they are not to blame.
- Ask your child what they want to do and what they want you to do.
- Learn some strategies to talk about with your child.
- Report it - Contact the school.
- Check in regularly with your child and stay in contact with the school.

What the School will do

St Francis Xavier's Catholic School recognises that various types of bullying can occur and therefore the school will make use of the most appropriate response to individual cases of bullying.

In the first instance, school staff will enact the School Response Flow Chart (see Appendix).

When incidents are reported the school will work to facilitate change and positive outcomes for all involved.

The purposes of strategies implemented will be to:

- impress on the children involved that what they have done is unacceptable
- enable them to understand and have empathy for the harm they have done and put right the harm
- deter children from repeating the behaviour
- signal to other children the behaviour is unacceptable
- address the needs of the child who has been bullied

The appropriate plan of action and follow up may include:

- Discussion with classroom teacher
- Discussion with the Deputy Principal/Principal
- Meetings with parents
- Support from the school counsellor
- School community service
- Class discussions
- Mediation
- Restorative Conferences
- Method of Shared Concern

- Development of a behaviour plan
- Exclusion from class/play
- Increased supervision
- Involvement in a social skills program
- Strengthening the target's social skills and strategies
- Decreasing the contact the children have with each other
- Changes to technology access
- Referral to support agencies
- Suspension
- Expulsion

DEFINITIONS

What is Harassment?

Harassment is behaviour that targets an individual or group due to their identity, race, culture or ethnic origin; religion; physical characteristics; gender; ability or disability and that offends, humiliates, intimidates or creates a hostile environment.

Harassment may be an ongoing pattern of behaviour, or it may be a single act. It may be directed randomly or towards the same person(s). It may be intentional or unintentional ie words, or actions that offend and distress one person may be genuinely regarded by the person doing them as minor or harmless.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is when one child (or a group) **repeatedly** and deliberately behaves in a way that is meant to upset or hurt another child. There is usually an imbalance of power.

Bullying can be:

- Physical – it includes eg hitting, kicking, tripping, punching, damaging property etc.
- Verbal – it includes eg name calling, insults, teasing, racist remarks etc.
- Psychological – it includes eg personal attacks and jokes about a person, intimidation, manipulation etc.
- Social – it includes eg lying and spreading rumours, excluding, embarrassing and humiliating someone etc.
- Cyber – it includes using technology to bully (chat rooms, social network sites, emails, phones).

What is not Bullying?

Although it is neither respectful nor acceptable if someone behaves in a mean or aggressive way on one occasion, it is not bullying. It is not bullying if you have a disagreement, argue, fight or quarrel.

What is Aggression?

Aggression is words or actions (both overt and covert) that are directed towards another and intended to harm, distress, coerce or cause fear.

What is Violence?

Violence is the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against another person(s) that results in psychological harm or physical injury. Violence may involve provoked or unprovoked acts and can be a single incident, a random act or can occur over time.

What is a Bystander?

A bystander is someone who sees or knows about maltreatment, aggression, violence, harassment or bullying that is happening to someone else.

What is a Target?

A target is someone who is bullied.

RELATED DOCUMENTS/LINKS

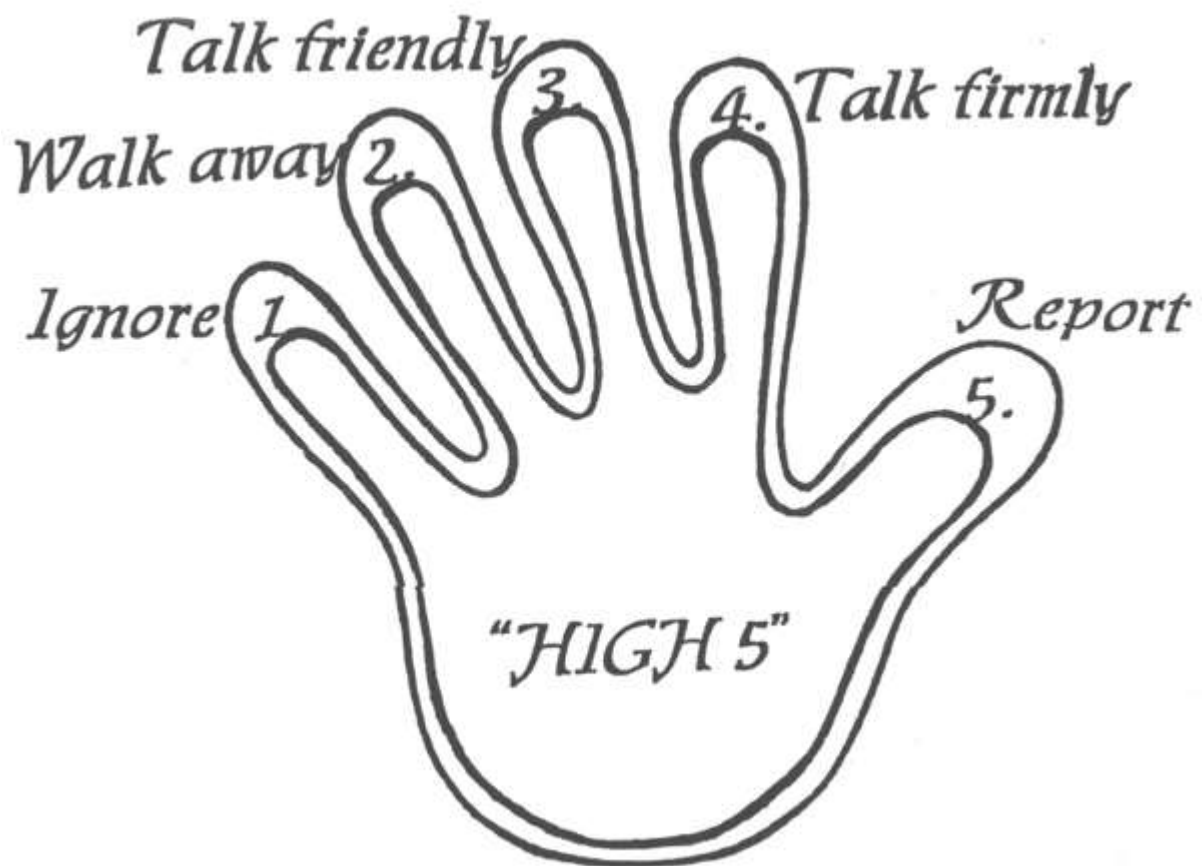
- Keeping Safe - Child Protection Curriculum
- National Safe Schools Framework, 2010
- Six methods of intervention in dealing with bullying, Rigby 2010
- Bullying, No Way
- ACARA Health Curriculum
- The Three R's: Reaching the Learning Brain – www.beaconhouse.org.uk

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ST FRANCIS XAVIER'S CATHOLIC SCHOOL

School Response Flow Chart

1. Listen carefully and calmly, and document what the student tells you	Ensure a private place to talk. Do not dismiss a student's concerns or make them feel they are at fault. Listen to their account fully first and then ask them (and maybe others) questions to get more detail. Clarify if there are immediate safety risks and let the student know how you will address these. Write a record of the conversation.
2. Collect additional information	Ask for any evidence from the student. Speak with all students involved. Keep records.
3. Discuss a plan of action with the student(s)	Once you are confident you have a comprehensive picture of the situation, discuss a plan of action with the student(s). Invite suggestions from students as appropriate. Inform all students involved of your intention to inform their parents/guardians. If appropriate, involve the parents and other caregivers in developing the plan of action.
4. Inform the student(s) what you intend to do	Provide as much information as you can without violating the privacy of other students or parents. Also inform them about when you are planning to follow up with them after implementing the plan.
5. Set a date for follow up reviews	Changing behaviour can require sustained effort, particularly if situations are long standing. Reviews are critical to check in with students, and to ensure the school's efforts have not caused other problems.
6. Notify appropriate personnel	Ensure that the leadership team and/or school counsellor is aware of the issue.
7. Contact the parent/guardian about the incident and the plan of action	If parents/guardians have not yet been communicated with, advise them of the incident and the resulting course of action.
8. Follow up with student(s) over the next several weeks and months	It is essential to be alert to ongoing behaviour and the possibility that the behaviour can 'reappear' in another form some time later.



St Francis Xavier's Regional Catholic School
Whole School Approach to Building Positive Relationships and Well-being

