



St Andrew's Catholic Primary School

Companions on the Journey

Policy Statement

Original released 2004;

Reviewed: 2008; 2014; 2016

Dealing with Bullying, Harassment and Violence (Students)

Rationale

Saint Andrew's School has a responsibility to provide an educational environment that promotes the dignity and respect of the person and, therefore, aims to eliminate bullying and harassment in all forms.

Learning outcomes, physical health, emotional, psychological and spiritual well being can be adversely affected by bullying and harassment.

Definitions

Bullying involves:

- A desire to hurt
- Hurtful behaviour (physical, verbal or relational)
- An imbalance of power
- An unjust use of power
- Typically repetition
- Is experienced by the target of the aggression as oppressive, and by the perpetrator as enjoyable. (Adapted from Rigby, 2001)

Harassment is any unwanted, unwelcome or uninvited behaviour which makes a person feel humiliated, intimidated or offended. (Adapted from CEO Policy, Harassment in Schools, 1998). Harassment can be seen as one form of bullying. The terms are often used interchangeable.

Bullying can be characterized as:

- Repetitive, causing distress, not only at the time of the attack but also by the threat of future attacks
- An imbalance of power (that is inappropriate and where there is an intention to hurt)
- Its nature may be:
 - Verbal – name calling, put downs, threats (spoken, written or electronic)
 - Physical – hitting, tripping, punching, throwing objects, stealing

- Social – ignoring, hiding, ostracising
- Psychological – stalking, threatening looks, spreading rumours, damaging possessions (Mind Matters, 2000).
- Unlike bullying and harassment, violence is not necessarily associated with an imbalance of power. It can occur between people of equal power. It implies forcefulness, (usually but not always) of a physical kind. (Rigby, cited in the NSSF, 2003)

Principles

1. Saint Andrew's school has a duty of care to its students.
2. Saint Andrew's School provides supportive environments, which promote respect for self and others, physical/ emotional well-being and positive mental health.
3. Dealing with bullying and harassment requires a whole school approach within Saint Andrew's Pastoral Care Framework and Evangelisation Plan.
4. When bullying and harassment are ignored or overlooked, it serves to condone and reinforce the behaviour.

Policy Development – Background Information

1. St Andrew's Catholic Primary School has developed a whole-school approach to bullying and harassment.
2. This whole-school policy is based on assessment of the school's bullying and harassment prevalence and awareness.
3. This policy includes whole-school common understandings about the school's response to bullying, clear, consistent procedure for the management of bullying and harassment incidents, identification and promotion of positive behaviours and reporting and monitoring of bullying and harassment incidents.
4. This bullying policy is implemented and promoted to the whole-school community. A copy of St Andrew's CPS 'Policy on Bullying – Information for Parents' is sent home to every family annually.
5. An Incident File is kept in the Assistant Principal's office. Incidents of bullying and harassment are recorded in this file and on SEQTA where necessary. Follow-up letters or contacts with parents are recorded in this file. Consultation with outside agencies in respect of students is also recorded in this file.

Whole School Ethos

1. School leadership is committed through policy and practice to a shared vision of a safe and friendly school.
2. A whole-school ethos and environment that provides safety, security and support for students is developed and maintained.
3. Awareness is raised to increase understanding of this bullying policy.
4. A shared understanding of bullying behaviour is promoted.
5. Teaching and non-teaching staff behaviour and attitudes are consistent with the school policy.

6. Positive peer support and influence to reduce and prevent bullying is encouraged and valued.
7. Students understand they have the right to seek help to resolve bullying and harassment issues.
8. Participation of the whole-school community in addressing bullying is encouraged and valued.
9. Confidentiality is maintained when bullying incidents occur.

St Andrew's School will not tolerate bullying, harassment, aggression and violence. We encourage all members of the school community to take a pro-active stance that promotes safety and wellbeing.

Student Support

1. Professional development is offered to staff to assist in the identification of bullying incidents.
2. Key staff members, including members of the Administration team, develop problem-solving methods and endeavour to use restorative practices in seeking reconciliation between students.
3. Support is provided for students involved in bullying situations to develop positive behaviours, including students who are bullied, students who are bullying and bystanders.
4. Awareness is raised about the purpose of positive behaviour strategies and support programmes.
5. Peer support is encouraged to support students in the development of positive behaviours and social skills.

Classroom Practice

1. Teachers understand their responsibility as behavioural role-models.
2. Teaching and learning activities actively engage students in developmentally appropriate ways to address bullying, including cyberbullying in any form. The 'Friendly Schools and Families' programme was implemented in 2008 as a whole school approach to reducing and preventing bullying at St Andrew's CPS.
3. School rules are displayed and discussed in classrooms.
4. Teachers use positive behaviour management in the classroom.
5. Cooperative learning methods and activities are used to foster appropriate social behaviours.
6. Peers are encouraged to take action to reduce bullying.
7. Making Jesus Real awards and Merit awards help promote tolerance and an acceptance of difference.

Family Links

1. Open channels of communication are encouraged with families.
2. Information about school policies and procedures are provided to families.
3. Parents are encouraged to identify and report incidents of bullying or harassment.
4. Parent contact about bullying incidents is managed by a member of the Administration team and the classroom teacher.
5. Opportunities for families to link with community professionals are facilitated.

Physical Environment

1. An attractive, friendly school environment is maintained.
2. Positive ways of behaving in the playground are developed, encouraged and rewarded at a whole-school level.
3. Appropriate, highly visible supervision of the school grounds is provided.
4. Play areas, out-of-bounds areas and safe areas (library) are identified and clearly defined to students.
5. Bullying incidents are recorded and managed.
6. Opportunities for social interaction, games and rules development are provided.

(Ref: Friendly Schools and Families – Whole-School Policy Development)

Examples of behaviours that are considered to be bullying, harassment, aggression and violence:

Name calling	Teasing	Punching	Pinching
Hair pulling	Kicking	Biting	Spitting
Inappropriate texting	Inappropriate social media comments	Inappropriate photography	Excluding others from games
Verbal threats	Tormenting	Rumours	Nasty notes

School and student rights and responsibilities in relation to safety issues that occur inside and outside of school hours and off school grounds that involve or affect students and staff:

Students have a right to:	Students have a responsibility to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • learn in a purposeful and supportive environment. • work and play in a safe, secure, friendly and clean environment. • respect, courtesy, honesty and have their possessions respected. • demonstrate and promote pride in their school. • be proud of their school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure their behaviour is not disruptive to the learning of others. • ensure that their school environment is kept neat, tidy and secure. • attend school and be punctual, polite prepared and display a positive manner. • behave in a way that protects the safety and well-being of others. • treat others with respect and courtesy.