



St Vincent's School

Dealing with Bullying and Harassment Policy (Students)

RATIONAL

As a community who strives to Make Jesus Real, we are called to create a safe and engaging learning community based on respect and dignity for all. At our school each person is recognised as a unique individual bringing special qualities and gifts to share and so we all have a right to be respected and a responsibility to respect each other.

Therefore, we do not tolerate bullying or harassment in any form. All members of our community are committed to ensuring a safe and supportive environment, which promotes personal growth and fosters positive self-esteem for all. We aim to maintain an environment in which everyone feels valued and respected and where individuals are appreciated, understood and accepted.

DEFINITIONS

Bullying is:

- A wilful, conscious desire to repeatedly hurt, threaten, or embarrass someone.
- Repeated and unjustifiable behaviour, after the child has been made aware that their behaviour is hurtful.
- Intended to cause fear, distress and/or harm to another.
- May be physical, verbal or indirect/relational.
- Conducted by self-empowered individual or group.
- Against a target individual who is unable to effectively resist.

Harassment:

Harassment is any unwanted, unwelcome or uninvited behaviour, which makes a person feel humiliated or offended. Harassment can be seen as one form of bullying, the terms are often used interchangeably.

POLICY OBJECTIVES

The objectives of our whole-school Bullying Policy are to:

- Raise awareness amongst staff, students and parents about what bullying is.
- Actively counter bullying at our school.
- Provide strategies to resolve conflict and respect differences.
- Create a school environment where all students, staff and parents feel welcome and safe.
- Create a climate where it is okay to talk about bullying and ask for help.
- Promote positive mental health.

BULLYING MINIMISATION

St Vincent's School takes measures to minimise the number and severity of bullying incidents. We will:

- Encourage acknowledgement and greeting of each other. Names are to be used by all staff and students when addressing people. When we do this, we acknowledge the humanity in the person we are speaking to.
- Conduct regular and explicit teaching about bullying in classes, especially at the beginning of the year.
- Make students aware of their responsibilities with regard to the Bullying Policy by sending home information brochures at the start of each year for parents to discuss with their child.
- Implement lessons to help develop resilience to bullying.
- Have duty teachers attend to instances of inappropriate behaviour and inform class teachers.
- Treat information regarding bullying confidentially.
- Encourage students to express themselves to those who hurt them, for example, "I don't like it when you..."

MANAGEMENT OF BULLYING INCIDENTS

When an incident of possibly bullying has been observed by, or reported to a staff member by students, or parents, we will:

- Investigate whether the bullied student has let the other party know their behaviour is causing distress (eg. I don't like it when you say/do that).
- Protect the bullied child from further harm.
- Write down the name/s of the bullied child/ren, and who reported the incident and bystander/s.
- Interview the bullied child to find out what happened.
- Interview the child/ren identified as the bully/ies.
- Suggest strategies that the bullied student might use to avoid being bullied in the future.
- Individually interview the bystander/s. Discuss strategies these students might use to stop bullying or avoid bullying in the future.
- Advise the Principal of the bullying incidents.
- Monitor the situation over the following days.
- Where necessary, speak to the class without using names or identifying students.
- Where appropriate and using discretion, work with parents of the bullied child to assist the prevention of their child being bullied in the future. Keep them informed of progress and the measures taken.
- If necessary, where appropriate and using discretion, inform the parents of the child who is bullying and work with them to establish joint strategies for behaviour modification.

CONSEQUENCES FOR BULLYING BEHAVIOUR

When a bullying incident has been confirmed, the following are some of the possible consequences St Vincent's School will employ:

- Parent notification on the same day the incident has occurred and only after thorough investigation.
- Parent education, if necessary.
- Counselling programme for the students involved.
- Removal of recess and lunch play times.
- Loss of privileges.
- Behaviour education and expectation of behaviour change.
- In school, or at home suspension.

REVIEW

This Policy will be reviewed in 2020 or earlier should a need arise.

REVIEW HISTORY

Originally released - May 2000

Reviewed - 2005

Reviewed - 2013

Revised and reformatted - 2016

To be reviewed: 2020