SACRED HEART PARISH SCHOOL STUDENT ANTI-BULLYING

POLICY

Definition

Bullying is when someone or a group of people, deliberately set out to intimidate, exclude, threaten, and or hurt others repeatedly. Bullying is a clear form of harassment. There are many different types of bullying which may include:

Physical bullying: Physical bullying includes hitting, kicking, spitting, tripping, pinching and pushing or damaging personal property.

Verbal bullying: Verbal bullying includes name calling, insults, teasing, intimidation, homophobic or racist remarks, or verbal abuse.

Social bullying: Social bullying includes, lying and spreading rumours, negative facial or physical gestures, menacing or contemptuous looks, playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate, mimicking unkindly, encouraging others to socially exclude someone, damaging someone's social reputation or social acceptance.

Cyber bullying: Cyber bullying occurs through digital platforms and can include, abusive or hurtful texts, emails or posts, images or videos, deliberately excluding others online, nasty gossip or rumours imitating others online or using their log-in.

Rationale

The school will provide a positive culture where bullying is not accepted, and in so doing, all will have the right of respect from others, the right to learn or to teach, and a right to feel safe and secure in their school environment. Bullying in any form is unacceptable and consequences exist for students who choose to bully others.

Aims

To reinforce within the school community what bullying is, and the fact that it is unacceptable.

Everyone within the school community to be alert to signs and evidence of bullying, and to have a responsibility to report it to staff whether as an observer or victim.

To ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are followed up appropriately and that support is given to both victims and perpetrators.

To seek parental and peer-group support and cooperation at all times.

Implementation:

Parents, teachers, students and the community will be aware of the school's position on bullying.

Teachers will be regularly reminded of their duty of care regarding protection of students from all forms of bullying.

Where bullying occurs, the following will apply:

1. Individual meetings are held with each of the students involved in the bullying incident: the student or students bullying, the person being bullied and any bystanders who may have seen what was happening. An Situation Sheet will be filled in by all involved.
2. Each student is asked about the problem and to suggest ways he or she personally could help to improve the situation.
3. The student being bullied is also given the opportunity to discuss what happened and encouraged to think of ways to improve the situation.
4. There are follow-up meetings, discussions and planning that give students the opportunity to change and improve attitudes and behaviours and to put these into practice in a supportive environment.

The school will adopt a four-phase approach to bullying.

A. **Primary Prevention:**
- Professional development for staff relating to bullying, harassment and proven counter measures.
- Community awareness and input relating to bullying, its characteristics, its effects on victims and the school's programs and response.
- To provide programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving. Eg. Values program
- Each classroom teacher to clarify with students in the Student Wellbeing Week at the start of each year school expectations and protocols on bullying, including cyber-bullying.
- Processes to be put in place to ensure tracking of student activity on digital devices. Firewalls to be installed to eliminate outside traffic into the school's network and internet.
- The curriculum to include anti-bullying messages and strategies.
- A vigilant and accountable yard duty roster for teachers will be put in place.
- Pop-up play activities available to students at recess and lunch breaks.

B. **Early Intervention:**
- Promote children and staff reporting bullying incidents involving themselves or others.
- Staff on a regular basis reminding students and staff to report incidents of bullying.
- Regular monitoring of student traffic on school's computer networks to identify potential problems.
- Parents encouraged to contact school if they become aware of a problem.
- Students are provided with a designated safe and quiet place for children to access at recess and lunch times.
- Public recognition and reward for positive behaviour and resolution of problems.
- Parents to be contacted.

C. **Intervention:**
- Once identified each bully, victim and witnesses will be spoken with, and all incidents or allegations of bullying will be fully investigated and documented on our 'situation sheets'.
- Students and staff identified by others as bullies will be informed of allegations.
- Parents to be contacted. Both bullies and victims will be offered support.
- Removal of cyber-bullies from access to the school's network and computers for a period of time. Loss of privilege to bring a mobile phone to school for students who bully via SMS or similar telephone functions.
- If student bullying persists parents will be contacted and consequences implemented.

D.   Post Violation:
- Consequences for students will be individually based and may involve:-
  - moved to another area in the classroom
  - exclusion from class and sent to another classroom
  - time out on the yard.
  - withdrawal of privileges.
  - sent to principal/duty principal
  - ongoing counselling from appropriate agency for both victim and bully.
- Reinforcement of positive behaviours.
- Classroom Meetings.
- Support Structures.
- Ongoing monitoring of identified bullies.
- Rewards for positive behaviour.