



## **Positive Climate Policy (Anti-Bullying)**

### **RATIONALE**

At St Catherine's we recognise that certain types of bullying can take place from time to time and may take many forms. However, bullying is not tolerated at St. Catherine's. We have developed this policy to promote the development of a positive climate within our school and to have a proactive approach to zero tolerance to bullying. Guidelines are in place to ensure the safety and resilience of each child, that bystanders respond appropriately and the child who bullies is supported to change his/her behaviour.

### **BELIEFS AND VALUES**

We, at St Catherine's believe that bullying is the repeated, uninvited oppression, psychological or physical, of a less powerful person/s by a more powerful person or group of persons. Types of bullying include; physical, verbal, gesture, extortion, exclusion, telephone or cyber.

#### **At St. Catherine's we believe and value that:**

- Everyone has the right to feel safe and secure in our school community, in both physical and online environments. Therefore, we promote the rights of members of our community to feel safe and the responsibility we all have to ensure the safety of others.
- The children should be taught social competency skills to deal with bullying at school. The children need to be aware that telling an adult is the only way that theirs and others rights and welfare will be protected.
- The bullying behaviour needs to be dealt with so that harm to the victim is minimised and the bully is aware that teachers are aware of what is going on, so that bullying behaviour in secret is impossible.
- The 'bully' needs to be supported to change their behaviour.

### **AIMS**

#### **At St. Catherine's we aim to:**

- Encourage a proactive approach to zero tolerance of bullying.
- Promote a safe and secure school community.
- Promote shared responsibility in keeping the members of our school community safe and secure.
- Encourage a culture in the school where bullying is not tolerated.
- Teach and encourage social competency in the members of our school community.
- Meet the individual child's social, emotional, academic and physical needs.

## IMPLEMENTATION

1. A proactive approach to zero tolerance of bullying is promoted at St Catherine's. Primary prevention is the main focus in teaching appropriate social skills to students. The development of social skills promotes resilience and coping skills.
2. The collaborative development of classroom and playground rules promotes ownership and responsibility amongst the members of St Catherine's School.
3. Staff are proactive in building positive relationships within their classrooms and the playground. They are aware that bullying may occur and have zero tolerance to bullying behaviour. Protocols (attached) have been developed to assist when dealing with a bullying situation.
4. If children are bullied they are encouraged to seek assistance from staff. Staff will then encourage and support the student/s involved to develop and use social competency skills (eg. assertiveness.)
5. If children see others being bullied (bystanders) they are encouraged and expected to take appropriate action (eg. speaking up and/or seeking staff assistance)
6. When a bullying incident has been report to staff, intervention takes place as soon as possible. It is recommended that the 'Method of Shared Concern' or the 'No Blame Method' (attached) be followed.
7. After a report of cyberbullying has been made, the Cyber Issues Flow Chart is to be followed (attached)
8. Bullying is a serious offence and therefore consequences must be put in place. (Attached) Consequences maybe non-punitive or punitive in nature. The aim of non-punitive consequences is to help to change the behaviour of the bully and increase their social skills. (They may include an individual behaviour management plan and/or regular meetings with a staff member.) Punitive consequences may be necessary to reinforce the serious nature of bullying and St Catherine's zero tolerance towards it. (They may include restrictions to play ground time and/or closer supervision by staff.) The bully needs to be aware that there are consequences for their actions.
9. Any bullying incident that occurs must be recorded in the serious offence book. (Located in the office) Any behaviour management plans devised need to be documented and if necessary communicated to all staff.
10. Parents of the victim and bully will be contacted and informed of any incidents that have occurred. They are to be notified of any action that has taken place. It may be necessary to have meetings with the parents; their input into behaviour management plans is to be encouraged. The school and parents need to work in partnership to support the students involved and assist in changing behaviour.
11. St Catherine's is an eSmart school and commit to regularly providing cybersafety education programs to students, staff and parents.

## **EVALUATION**

The Staff, School Development Team and Consultative Committee will evaluate the Positive Climate (Anti-bullying) Policy regularly to ensure that it reflects the vision of the school.

**Following is a guideline to some questions staff will need to ask when evaluating the policy in the school.**

- Are the procedures appropriate for dealing with bullying incidents and are they being followed?
- Has adequate time been given so that the children have had the opportunity to develop the appropriate skills necessary to deal with possible bullying situations?
- Are the resources adequate and appropriate to assist both students and teachers in improving their skills?
- Has the Staff been provided with adequate Professional Development to deal with bullying situations?

It is important that we regularly review structures and practices so that we can accommodate the changing needs of the children and the school community in general.

# Types of Bullying

**Bullying can take place in various forms:**

## **Physical Bullying**

- Fighting, pushing/shoving, spitting, gestures or invasions of personal space.
- Standover tactics, threats, picking on other people, operating a 'gang'
- Damaging or hiding other people's property
- Extortion (forcing other people to hand over goods, money or valuables)

## **Verbal Bullying**

- Name calling, nasty comments, offensive language, backstabbing, spreading rumours.
- Writing offensive notes or graffiti about others
- Hurtful comments about someone's appearance, ability, family or gender

## **Racial or Cultural**

- Victimising someone because of his or her race, religion or cultural beliefs and practices.

## **Sexual Harassment**

- Sexually orientated jokes, drawings or writing
- Commenting on the size or shape of someone's body.
- Calling people rude names.

## **Telephone**

- Using the phone for harassment (calls or SMS messages)

## **Cyberbullying**

- **Flaming** - Sending angry, rude, nasty messages about a person to an online group or to that person via e-mail or text messaging.
- **Online Harassment** - Repeatedly sending offensive messages via e-mail or text messaging to a person.
- **Cyberstalking** - Online harassment that include threats of harm or is excessively intimidating.
- **Denigration (put-downs)** - Sending harmful, untrue, or cruel statements about a person to other people or posting such material online.
- **Masquerade** - Pretending to be someone else and sending or posting material that makes that person look bad.
- **Outing** - Sending or posting material about a person that contains sensitive, private, or embarrassing information, including forwarding private messages or images.
- **Exclusion** - Cruelly excluding someone from an online group.