

# Sacred Heart Catholic School

## ANTI-BULLYING POLICY SUMMARY FOR PARENTS

**Created in the image of God** (Genesis 1:27)

As a Catholic school, we consider each child to be a unique person created in the image of God. We provide a strong sense of wellbeing, belonging and security. Students are given every opportunity to be affirmed in their dignity and worth and assisted to grow to their full potential.

### Our School Community

The Sacred Heart Mission framework 'Living, Loving, Learning' has the child at the centre created in the image of God. Relationships and pastoral care practices at the school are informed by the School's Mission statement, 'United as a faith community, Celebrating each person, Journeying with compassion, Acting with justice, Striving for excellence, Seeking balance'.

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 a setting in which everyone feels valued and respected and where individual differences are appreciated, understood and accepted.

### Bullying is:

- A repeated and unjustifiable behaviour;
- Intended to cause fear, distress and/or harm to another;
- May be physical, verbal or indirect/relational;
- Conducted by a more powerful individual or group;
- Against a less powerful individual who is unable to effectively resist.

### Types of Bullying

	Direct	Indirect
<b>Physical</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Hitting, slapping, punching</li><li>▪ Kicking</li><li>▪ Pushing, strangling</li><li>▪ Spitting, biting</li><li>▪ Pinching, scratching</li><li>▪ Throwing things eg. Stones</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Getting another person to harm someone</li></ul>
<b>Non-Physical</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Mean and hurtful name-calling</li><li>▪ Hurtful teasing</li><li>▪ Demanding money or possessions</li><li>▪ Forcing another to do homework or commit offences such as stealing</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Spreading nasty rumours</li><li>▪ Trying to get other students to not like someone</li></ul>
<b>Non-Verbal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Threatening and/or obscene gestures</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Deliberate exclusion from a group or activity</li><li>▪ Removing and hiding and/or damaging others' belongings</li></ul>

### What Can Students Do?

#### If it happens to me:

- Tell the student who is bullying to stop. State quite clearly that the behaviour is unwelcome and offensive
- Ignore them and walk away
- Seek help. Talk about it to someone you trust
- Report it to a member of staff, a trustworthy friend or buddy. Feel confident that an incident can be solved
- Talk it over openly with your parents – they can help you make a decision
- Do NOT retaliate with physical or verbal abuse
- If you are experiencing bullying on the way to or from school, tell your parents and walk home with a friend
- Write a description of the event and place it in the class meeting box or give it to the teacher

*The strong have something to strive for, the weak have nothing to run from*



### If it happens to someone else:

- Tell the person to stop bullying
- Be a friend to the person being bullied
- Encourage the person being bullied to inform someone
- Seek help. You can decide to do something about it and help to protect others
- Write a description of the event and give it to the teacher
- Talk it over with the teacher.

## The Important Role of Parents

### As parents you can:

- Be aware of the signs of distress in your child, eg. Unwillingness to attend school, a pattern of illness, missing equipment, requests for extra money, damaged equipment or clothing
- Take an active interest in your child's social life and acquaintances
- Assist your child to discuss any incidence of bullying with a teacher. If possible, allow your child to report and deal with the situation. Your child can gain respect and confidence through taking the initiative and dealing with the problem without direct parental involvement.
- If your child is being bullied, discourage any planned retaliation, either physical or verbal, by discussing positive strategies they can use.
- Be positive about your child's qualities and encourage your child to be tolerant and caring
- Be willing to attend interviews if your child is involved in an incident of bullying, and work cooperatively with the school
- Be willing to inform the school of any cases of suspected bullying even if your child is not directly involved or affected
- Do not deal directly with the other children or their parents but work through and with the school
- Discuss the school's expectations about behaviour and how best to deal with bullying

## Anti-Bullying Approaches at Sacred Heart Mona Vale

There are two aspects to our whole school strategy: prevention and management.

### Positive Behaviour For Learning

Sacred Heart Catholic School employs the Positive Behaviour for Learning framework, which works to build a safe, caring and positive school climate that deters bullying.

### The Shared Concern Approach

**One method we use at Sacred Heart is the 'Shared Concern Approach' to deal with incidents of bullying. Briefly this approach consists of the following:**

- 1 // Individual meetings are held, with each of the students involved in the bullying situation, eg. The student or students bullying, the person being bullied and any bystanders who may have seen what was happening.
- 2 // Each student is asked about the problem and to suggest ways in which he or she personally could help to improve the situation.
- 3 // The person being bullied is also given the opportunity to discuss what happened and encouraged to think of ways to improve the situation.
- 4 // Follow-up meetings, discussions and planning give students the opportunity to change and improve their attitudes and behaviour and to put these into practice in a supportive environment.

### Further Action

Although the first approaches used at Sacred Heart Mona Vale are not based on sanctions or punishments, the school has a range of such measures available, up to and including suspension or exclusion which are in accord with the Diocesan Anti-Bullying Policy and our Behaviour Management Plan, and which may be used in response to bullying. Severe or repeated cases of bullying will be referred to the Principal who will case manage the situation in consultation with the student's parents.

*Bullying can be a complicated problem, which takes time and patience to resolve properly. Using this approach, we are committed to the safety and well-being of all students.*



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