



GOOD SHEPHERD PARISH PRIMARY SCHOOL WHEELERS HILL

ADDRESSING BULLYING BEHAVIOUR POLICY

Rationale:

"In Catholic schools we seek to protect personal and community safety, heal destructive behaviours, restore relationships, encourage reconciliation, enhance wellbeing, foster responsibility, enable personal growth and promote the common good." CEM Policy 2.26 (Pastoral Care of students in Catholic Schools)

Our community has a mission to create an environment of respect, caring, acceptance, justice, tolerance and compassion. We believe all members of the community have the responsibility to work together in creating this environment. Our policy endeavours to outline clear procedures and strategies to address bullying behaviours.

Definition:

"Bullying is when an individual (or group of people) with more power than another or you, repeatedly and intentionally uses negative words and/or actions against you, which cause distress and risks your wellbeing. Bullying can be physical, verbal, emotional or social and can be carried out in person or electronically."

National Centre Against Bullying

Types of Bullying

Physical bullying: hitting, tripping and pushing or damaging property

Verbal bullying: name calling, insults, threats, verbal abuse, gender or racist remarks

Emotional and Social bullying: lying and spreading rumours, harming someone's social reputation and exclusion

Electronic bullying: email, social networking sites (Facebook, Twitter, MSN, MySpace, mobiles)

What Bullying is Not

Many distressing behaviours are not examples of bullying, even though they are unpleasant and often require intervention and management. There are three socially unpleasant situations that are often confused with bullying:

- **Mutual conflict:** an argument or disagreement between students but not an imbalance of power. Both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution to the problem. However, unresolved mutual conflict may develop into a bullying situation with one person becoming targeted repeatedly for 'retaliation' in a one-sided way.
- **Social rejection or dislike:** Unless the social rejection is directed towards someone specific and involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others, it is not bullying.
- **Single-episode acts:** Single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. If a student is verbally abused or pushed on one occasion they are not being bullied. Nastiness or physical aggression that is directed towards many different students is not the same as bullying.

Safe schools are Effective schools Department of Education and Early childhood Development of Victoria May 2006

Aims: Good Shepherd School aims to:

- Cultivate a community of respect, caring, acceptance, justice, tolerance and compassion.
- Provide students with Social emotional learning and resilience strategies.
- Build community understanding of what constitutes bullying.
- Build a culture of positive relationships where bullying is unacceptable.
- Build Resilience and develop strategies to self monitor behaviour.

Implementation:

Prevention:

- Promote positive relationships and a respectful community culture.
- Students, teachers, parents and community have shared beliefs and understandings about bullying.
- Students, teachers, parents and community understand the school's management of student behaviour and bullying.
- Learning and Teaching is inclusive and includes strategies that develop resilience, self esteem and social skills.
- Values Education permeates the curriculum.
- Student feedback is encouraged through surveys, forums and class meetings.

Early Intervention:

- Children are encouraged to report incidents of bullying. (as a victim or observer).
- Classroom teachers remind and encourage students to report incidents.
- Parents/carers are encouraged to contact the school if they become aware of an issue.
- Recognition for positive behaviour and resolution of issues.
- Ensure everyone in the community is alert to signs and evidence of bullying and acts responsibly.

Intervention:

- All reported incidents or allegations of bullying are fully investigated.
- Incidents of bullying are placed on a school bullying register and monitored by Principal, Deputy Principal and Student Wellbeing Coordinator.
- When bullying is identified parents are contacted in order to develop a team approach to address the issue.

Post Violation:

- Consequences will be consistent with the Behaviour Management Policy and in line with CEM Policy 2.26
- Link with counselling/support services as appropriate

Evaluation: This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's four-year review cycle.