# St Joseph's School
# Policy against Bullying

**Purpose**

At St Joseph's School, we believe that all members of the community have the right to a learning and work environment free from intimidation, humiliation and hurt. We all share a responsibility to foster, promote and restore right relationships. We believe that bullying is unacceptable and we [students, staff and parents] all share a responsibility for preventing it.

This policy comes from the school's Pastoral Care and Behaviour Management Policies to provide clear procedures and strategies to prevent, reduce and respond to bullying.

**Policy Framework**

Flowing from the Christian vision expressed in the Diocesan Pastoral Care Policy, schools are called to establish relationships which are grounded in love, compassion, reconciliation and justice. In witnessing Christian values we reject ideas, beliefs and behaviours which marginalise or victimise people.

**Pastoral Care at St Joseph's Catholic School**

   **…has as its focus the life of Jesus Christ.**

*I have come that you may have life and have it to the full.* (John 10:10)

*The Catholic worldview perceives Jesus as God's Son, who saved us through his life, death and resurrection, and through whom we enter into the life of God.*

   **… is concerned with the dignity and integral growth of the person.**

*God created humankind in God's image.* (Genesis 1:27)

*The Catholic worldview perceives each human being as a unique person created in the image of God, having an inalienable dignity that is always to be respected.*

**… is a responsibility entrusted to all members of the faith community.**

*All members may be concerned for one another. If one member suffers, all members suffer: if one member is honoured, all members share this joy. You then are the body of Christ.* (1 Corinthians 12:25-27)

*The Catholic worldview perceives an imperative to proclaim to others the love we receive from Jesus, by loving them as Jesus loves us.*


**… is a force for healing, reconciliation and liberation.**

*I shall look for the lost one, bring back the stray, bandage the wounded and make the weak strong. I shall be a true shepherd to them.* (Ezekiel 34:16

*The Catholic worldview perceives the action of the Spirit in the world, inviting and empowering all people to respond to the divine love.*


**… is an expression of and commitment to justice.**

*He has sent me to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives and to the blind new sight, and set the downtrodden free.* (Luke 4: 18)


*The Catholic worldview perceives an obligation to work to create social conditions in which the unique dignity of each person is respected and all human rights protected.*

**Definition of Bullying**
Whilst there is no universally accepted definition of bullying, there is general consensus that bullying behaviour:
- is deliberate and often repeated
- intends to cause fear, distress, hurt or harm to another
- is action by a more powerful individual or group over a less powerful individual or group

**Forms of Bullying**
Bullying takes many forms, all of which will cause distress. Examples of bullying include:
- *Physical* - hitting, pushing, tripping, kicking, spitting on others etc
- *Verbal* - teasing, using offensive names, ridiculing, spreading rumours etc
- *Non-Verbal* - writing offensive notes or graffiti about others, using e-mail, social media or text messaging to hurt others, rude gestures etc
- *Exclusion* - deliberately excluding others from group, refusing to sit next to someone etc

- *Extortion* - threatening to take someone's possessions, food or money etc
- *Property* - stealing, hiding, damaging or destroying property etc
- *Cyber* - any form of bullying which is carried out through electronic means such as mobile phones, email, chat room, social networking, 'sms', web page etc

**How do we prevent bullying at St Joseph's School?**

We believe based on research that prevention strategies through education that involve the whole school community [students, staff and parents] are more likely to reduce bullying. Therefore, at St Joseph's Catholic Primary School we recognise that we all share the responsibility to prevent bullying. The Catholic Worldview which represents the antithesis of bullying will be taught explicitly, continually modelled, clearly demonstrated and generously affirmed across all facets of school life.

**At St Joseph's School we adopt the following strategies to prevent bullying:**

☺Explicit teaching of positive behaviours embedded within the curriculum addressing positive relationships, conflict resolution, resilience, bystander action etc
- *Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL- see lesson schedule attached)*
- *Peer Support*
- *Bounce Back including the 5 fingers response (see outline attached)*

☺Regularly recognising and acknowledging students who demonstrate appropriate behaviours that promote and restore right relationships
- *PBL awards (white cards)*
- *Golden tickets for playground acknowledgement*
- *"Reasons to Smile" for whole class acknowledgement*

☺Vigilant classroom, playground and transition supervision
- *Data is collected via the PBL time out slip that completed by teachers after a long time out is given. This data is analysed monthly and tabled at the PBL meeting. It is used to identify "trouble spots" and patterns of behaviour.*
- *Teachers are to actively supervise children at all times. Teacher supervision timetables are distributed at the beginning of each term. Teachers should note supervisory duties for the day and turn up promptly to duty. Teachers are asked to be aware of playground 'hotspots' – toilets, stairs and canteen area and visit these areas regularly throughout their supervision duty.*

☺Provision of safe and structured activities at break times
- *Library is open at Monday lunch time*

- *Song Club rehearse each Tuesday*
- *Construction Club meets Wednesday*
- *Computer Club meets each Thursday*
- *Activity Club meets Friday*

At St Joseph's School **students** are expected to:
- *take some positive action to stop the bullying if they observe an incident [eg Walk Talk Squawk, Five Finger approach]*
- *report the bullying incident to a teacher as soon as possible*
- *make it clear to their peers that bullying is not accepted*

At St Joseph's School, **staff** are expected to:
- *Teach explicit expectations as per our PBL Policy*
- *take some positive action to stop the bullying when they observe an incident*
- *complete Long Time Out slips for both the classroom and playground whenever a long time out is given. As part of this process, parents are telephoned.*
- *pass on information about any reported or observed bullying behaviours to the Principal / Assistant Principal for further action*

At St Joseph's School, **parents** are expected to:
- *listen to their child and encourage their child to speak promptly to their teacher at school if there is a problem*
- *contact the school if they have a concern (e.g. Principal, Assistant Principal)*

**How do we respond to bullying at St Joseph's School?**
Bullying is viewed as a major breach of the school rules and behavioural expectations. Therefore, follow up action will align with our School's Behaviour Management and Student Discipline Policy.

Any reports of bullying will be investigated and appropriate action will be taken promptly. The response to bullying will include:

1. guidance and other support for the recipient of the bullying (e.g. re-skilling and re-teaching of strategies, resilience and social skills, counselling, conflict management skills, social networking etc)

2. guidance and support for 'bystanders', 'supporters' and witnesses of the bullying (e.g. intervention strategies etc)

3. age appropriate and consistent sanctions for the student who bullied (e.g. consistent with School Behaviour Management Policy)

4. interventions and support for the student who bullied included in a Behaviour Support Plan (e.g. specific interventions developed to reduce the bullying behaviour, teaching of replacement behaviours, reflection on behaviour ie 4W's, reinforcers etc)

5. where appropriate informing parents as stated in the policy and involving them in any action and follow up

**Procedures for investigating bullying and follow up**
In discerning appropriate responses to bullying, school leaders need to balance the collective welfare of the school community with the individual needs of the student.

- Preliminary interview(s) will be conducted to ascertain the specific nature of the bullying. These interviews should be with individuals initially (ie student being bullied, students witnessing bullying, student engaging in bullying behaviour, staff etc)

- The initial interviews should focus on the safety of individuals. This should include:
  - a clear statement on the consequences if the bullying continues or if there are any reprisals as a result of the reporting of the incident
  - immediate preventative actions that will be implemented to avoid further incidents.

- Decisions will be made as to the level of severity of the incident. Parents of those involved need to be informed.

- Follow up interviews should focus on appropriate strategies to assist and support all involved within a Behaviour Support Plan. This Plan will specifically identify the inappropriate behaviours, name the replacement behaviours, outline strategies to support the replacement behaviours and reinforcers (both negative and positive) when behaviours occur.

- A record of the separate interviews should be kept. (see attached proforma)

- Regular monitoring and follow up with the students involved is necessary. (for example daily, prior to and after break times etc)

• Review of the Behaviour Support Plan will take place to modify strategies and supports.

• Any further recurrence of bullying may result in an issue of warning re suspension and could lead to the implementation of suspension procedures and, if necessary, removal of the student from the school through:
- Suspension pending negotiated transfer,
- Negotiated transfer or
- Expulsion

**Policy Development: July 2010**

**Date of Policy Review: Feb 2016**

**Scheduled Policy Review: Feb 2018**

**Michael Gallagher**
*Principal*