STRENGTH AND GENTLENESS

St John the Apostle Catholic Primary School Narraweena

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

December 2014
PURPOSE

The purpose of the policy is to develop a framework to support all students, their families and employees within St John the Apostle Catholic School to have the right to learning and work in a safe and positive school environment free from intimidation, humiliation and hurt. We have a responsibility to create a culture of caring which supports our motto of Strength and Gentleness. We believe that bullying is an unacceptable behaviour. It is in direct conflict with our ethos and values and will not be tolerated. This policy supports the St John’s community, to prevent, reduce and respond to bullying.

At St John’s we 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.

This policy builds on the pastoral care policy to provide clear and agreed procedures and strategies for combating bullying in the school, responding to bullying behaviours and protecting and supporting all parties involved.

POLICY FRAMEWORK

St John’s acknowledges the Christian vision expressed in the Diocesan Pastoral Care Policy. St John’s also recognizes that schools are called to establish relationships which are grounded in love, compassion, reconciliation and justice. In witnessing Christian values the Diocesan Schools System rejects ideas, beliefs and behaviours which marginalise or victimise people.

Definition

Bullying is hurtful and manipulative behaviour which is deliberate and premeditated. Bullying behaviours can be **verbal, cyber, social, psychological or physical**. Bullying is intended to make someone feel unsafe. It's an imbalance of power for which incidents can be isolated or repeated.

Bullying takes many forms, all of which will cause distress. Examples of bullying include:

- **Physical**: hitting, pushing, tripping, kicking, spitting on others.
- **Verbal**: teasing, using offensive names, ridiculing, spreading rumours.
- **Non Verbal**: writing offensive notes or graffiti about others, using e-mail or text messaging to hurt others, rude gestures.
- **Exclusion**: deliberately excluding others from group, refusing to sit next to someone.
- **Extortion**: threatening to take someone’s possessions, food or money.
- **Property**: stealing, hiding, damaging or destroying property.
- **Cyber**: is the label used for bullying that uses electronic means such as the internet and mobile phones to aggressively and intentionally harm someone.

How do we prevent bullying at St John’s School?

Ultimately, strategies to prevent bullying will only be effective when placed within the context of a culture in which respect for others is consistently taught and demonstrated across all facets of school life. Christian values, which represent the antithesis of bullying, must be continually affirmed in words and actions.
**Strategies to prevent bullying will fall within the following broad categories:**

- 'Positive Behaviours for Learning' (PBL) is a school wide framework which encourages positive behaviour based on school rules and expectations.
- 'moral education' in the context of religious education liturgies and assemblies where the values of the individual are affirmed and the importance of qualities such as compassion, kindness, reconciliation, tolerance, respect and justice are encouraged;
- 'across the curriculum' values teaching (eg looking at the problem of discrimination in literature);
- a clear statement from staff about the nature and unacceptability of bullying;
- teaching specifically related to bullying in the PDH curriculum;
- teaching more positive ways of resolving conflict, such as working co-operatively within the classroom and playground;
- staff and students as role models, particularly those in leadership roles such as peer support (buddies, school captains, house captains and councillors);
- provision of activities which develop a culture of caring for one another and acknowledging the worth and contribution of others and which help to develop compassion (Peer Support Program);
- appropriate provision of counselling or other support services;
- provision of support for parents through parent education opportunities.

**Procedures to deal with bullying at St John's**

If teachers notice or are notified of a child being bullied, they will:

1. talk to the child being bullied to ascertain the specific nature of the bullying and its effect on them. The teacher works with the child in developing strategies to help them cope and build resilience, such as ignoring, confronting the bully in an assertive manner, discussing the problem with friends and family to elicit help and encouraging them to tell an adult if the bullying continues.

2. speak to the child doing the bullying and make a clear statement on the consequences if the bullying behaviour continues, following the PBL framework and procedures.

3. inform a member of the School Leadership team that the incident has occurred.

4. follow up the incident with the particular student and parents to ensure there have been no further incidents.

5. inform the Principal should the bullying behaviour continue. The Principal will then speak to the students involved, record the incident and contact parents. Severe and repeated incidences 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 (pending negotiated transfer), negotiated transfer or expulsion.

**Evaluation**

Incidents of bullying will be recorded and strategies for change monitored following an incident.
Contact
For further information and support contact the Police School Liaison Officer for St John’s Constable Ormsby (phone: 9976 8003).

Mark Bateman
Principal

Date of implementation: December 2014. This policy will be reviewed December 2015.