



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Rationale:

At Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School we do not tolerate bullying in any form and to any degree. All members of our school community are committed to providing for our students a safe and secure environment in which the students in our care can reach their potential. All members of the school community have a right to feel safe, the right not to be intimidated, abused, threatened or physically hurt. With the Gospel values underpinning the ethos of our school, we strive to live out those values and treat all members of our school community with dignity and respect.

This policy is consistent with: the Child Safety Policy and Code of Conduct; Pastoral Care Policy; Parents, Visitors and Volunteers Policy; ICT Policy; Staff Meeting and Staff Code of Conduct (Staff Procedures Handbook).

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is an action that causes pain to another individual. It is a **repeated** action. It is usually deliberate. Bullying can occur over a short or long time frame. Bullying can take a number of forms: verbal, physical, extortion and exclusion.

FORMS OF BULLYING

Bullying is **repeated** behaviour in the following ways:

Physical: Includes fighting, pushing, invasion of personal space or any unwelcome contact.

Verbal: Includes name-calling, teasing, offensive language, spreading rumours or intimidating behaviour. Verbal bullying can also include harassing the victim on the telephone and/or online (social media).

Gesturing: Includes offensive notes or material, graffiti or damaging others' property by vandalising, hiding or destroying it.

Extortion: Includes standover tactics, threats to "get" people, forcing others to act against their will.

Exclusion: Includes deliberately leaving the victim out of activities or convincing the victim's friends not to play with him/her.

EXPECTATIONS

At Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School we realise that the bully/victim problem is the responsibility of the whole community, staff, students and parents. This approach requires that all members of our community has its particular part to play in eliminating bullying from our school.

Staff will:

1. Be a role model for restorative rather than aggressive approaches to interpersonal interactions.
2. Be punctual to their yard duties and supervise the playground.
3. Take steps to help victims, listen to concerns and offer support and assistance.
4. Follow designated intervention procedures as documented in the Pastoral Care Policy.
5. Follow up any reports of bullying.

Students will:

1. Refuse to be involved in any bullying incidents.
2. Seek help if observing any bullying incidents.
3. Tell a staff member if they know of any bullying incidents.
4. Show bullies that they disapprove of the bullying behaviour.
5. Tell parents and their class teacher if they believe that they are being bullied.
6. Comply with the Playground and Classroom Rules.

Parents are advised to:

1. Watch for signs of distress in their child/ren, for example, unwillingness to attend school, bedwetting, "clingy" behaviour.
2. Advise their child/ren to report any bullying incidents to the parent, and the teachers or Deputy/Principal.
3. Encourage their child/ren to report the problem.
4. Inform the school if bullying is suspected.
5. Discourage their child/ren from retaliating.
6. Attend interviews at school to help with the problem.
7. Reassure their child/ren that they will have the full support of parents and the school.
8. Not approach other students or parents on the playground, the school are to deal with the problem. Comply with other school policies.
9. Empower their child/ren to use strategies suggested in the Pastoral Care Policy.

PROCEDURES TO COUNTERACT BULLYING BETWEEN STUDENTS

The following procedures will be incorporated into Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School to prevent bullying from occurring:

1. Develop an anti-bullying component into its curriculum. This will be part of the Personal, Social and Emotional Curriculum.
2. The Buddy System and Friendship Groups are established whereby younger students are teamed up with older students to support each other.
3. Provide advice to parents on how to determine if their child is a bully or a victim and how to assist their child.

In the event that bullying does occur, the following procedures will be carried out:

1. Approach to Bullying

Step 1: Interview the victim

When a staff member is alerted about bullying he/she will speak to the victim to find out what happened and who were involved.

Step 2: Explain the problem

The staff member will speak to all the students involved to determine an accurate picture of the incident and identify the behaviour of the participants. These inquiries will be made to see if the situation constitutes bullying.

Step 3: Convene a meeting with the persons involved

The staff member will convene a meeting with all students involved.

Step 4: Share Responsibilities

Once a consensus of the incident has been established, the students can be asked for suggestions to amend the situation and the students advised of strategies for appropriate future behaviour and notify the parents/guardians.

Step 5: Resolution

The staff member will end the meeting by sharing the responsibility to solve the problem with the group. The staff member will express confidence in the group and arrange to meet them again in one week to see how things are going.

Step 7: Meet them again

Reconvene the group a week later to discuss the progress of the process. This meeting helps keep the students involved in the process and allows students who are good role models to set the tone in the peer group.

Parents of those involved should be notified and support given to them.

Consequences will be applied in accordance with the Pastoral Care Policy.

2. A Serious Offence

“A serious offence” is defined in the “Pastoral Care in Catholic Schools” document as:

- a. An activity or behaviour, which seriously undermines the ethos of the Catholic school.
- b. Affects the rights of teachers and/or students to participate in the teaching and/or learning process.
- c. Endangers the physical and/or welfare of the student and/or teachers.
- d. Interferes with the day-to-day running of the school.

This procedure will be carried out if the serious offence is persistent:

1. The Student Wellbeing Team is notified of serious and persistent bullying.
2. It is the responsibility of the Principal/Deputy, Student Wellbeing Leader and Class Teacher to:
 - a. Convene a meeting as soon as possible following the decision that a student/s has committed a serious offence.
 - b. Consider all issues relevant to the behaviour of the student and the implications for others in the community.
 - c. Identify strategies, which will enable the student to re-establish his/her place in the life of the school.
 - d. Determine the appropriate steps required to meet these objectives.
 - e. Consider the support and resources available from both within and outside the school to assist in implementing the action.
 - f. Ensure that accurate records of decisions are kept and that decisions are implemented.
3. Maintain confidentiality at all times.

Should this ‘serious’ behaviour continue, the Catholic Education Melbourne Student Wellbeing Officer will be requested to provide advice to the staff of Galilee Regional Catholic Primary School.

In the event of the serious bullying still persisting, Negotiated Transfer or finally Suspension and Expulsion may be considered in line with the Pastoral Care in Catholic Schools Policy (Catholic Education Melbourne).

EVALUATION:

This policy will be reviewed yearly as part of the school’s four year review cycle.

Dated: December 2017 **To be reviewed:** December 2019