Saint Vincent’s Primary School

Bullying Policy

Vision Statement

Our vision as members of Saint Vincent de Paul School is to nurture and challenge one another within our Catholic community to reach our potential as lifelong learners.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is the misuse of power, position and privilege. It is usually targeted and sustained. It is done to intimidate, coerce, to engender fear, and to control. Bullying can take a number of forms:

- **Physical**: Pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching, threats.
- **Verbal**: Name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing.
- **Emotional**: Excluding, tormenting, ridicule, humiliation.
- **Racist**: Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.
- **Sexual**: Unwanted physical contact or abusive comments.
- **Cyber/SMS**: Sending inappropriate messages by internet or mobile phone.

POSSIBLE SIGNS OF BULLYING

A student may indicate by their behaviour that they are being bullied. Students may have all or some of these persistent issues:

- be unwilling to attend school
- feel ill in the mornings
- begin doing poorly at school
- come home hungry
- become withdrawn, lack confidence
- become distressed and anxious, stop eating
- have nightmares
• have their possessions go missing
• ask for money
• refuse to say what's wrong
• become more aggressive and unreasonable

GOALS

The goals of the Bullying Statement at St Vincent’s Primary School are to:

• reinforce the view that bullying is not acceptable and will not be tolerated at school;
• provide a safe, happy and positive learning environment for our students and staff.
• create a supportive climate for victims and break down the code of secrecy;
• support and help the bully as well as the victim;
• provide suitable counselling services for the bully, as well as the victim;
• provide a physical environment which encourages good behavioural patterns and
• move beyond a crisis-management approach to an environment free from abuse.

PROCEDURES

STAFF

The staff of St Vincent’s Primary School agree to follow these protocols:

• Watch for possible signs of bullying;
• Take the problem seriously and investigate the incident;
• Keep accurate records of all bullying incidents;
• Interview bullies, victims and witnesses;
• Decide on appropriate action;
• Contact parents of students involved and consult in regard to strategies to assist all parties;
• Use all students as a positive resource in countering bullying and take time to discuss the problem in class and at assemblies;
• Promote an awareness of anti bullying and offer lessons, discussions, role play programs, etc about Bullying;
• Ensure that all accessible areas of the school have a staff presence at breaks and before and after school;
• Hold follow up meetings with parents to report progress;
• Inform all members of staff about the incident and action taken;
• Be consistently on the move whilst on playground duty.
STUDENTS

Students of St Vincent’s School should be informed and explicitly taught:

The 5 Steps to stop Bullying

1. Ignore the person
2. Talk nicely to the person
3. Ask them to stop it – Stop it I don’t like it!
4. Walk away from them
5. Tell a teacher

• To report all incidents of bullying to a trusted teacher or their classroom teacher, even if they are not directly involved;
• That bullies, victims and witnesses will be required to discuss the incidents with the teacher and/or with a member of the leadership team;
• Ways to avoid bullying and how they can create a safe and happy environment at school.

PARENTS

Parents/caregivers should be regularly advised to:

• Watch for possible signs of bullying;
• Inform the school of any bullying incidents;
• Talk to their child about bullying;
• Encourage their child to report any incident of bullying;
• Listen sensibly and systematically to reports on bullying;
• Use appropriate channels of communication and
• Work with the school to seek a suitable solution.

SUPPORTING THE VICTIM OF BULLYING

Victims often feel vulnerable and powerless. Their self-esteem is low and the aim is to build their self-confidence and teach them strategies to deal with bullying. Possible strategies to use when supporting the victim:

• Reassure them that the bullying is not their fault;
• Try and minimise opportunities for bullying (stay with friends, etc);
• Practise assertiveness techniques with students (saying NO!, walking away);
• Provide opportunities for students to talk and express their feelings about issues (Classroom Meetings);
• Give them responsibility and praise them for their efforts;
• Provide access to a trained counsellor;
• Encourage participation in self-esteem building activities and programs and
• Use restorative practice.

SUPPORTING THE BULLYING STUDENT

The following are possible strategies to use when supporting the bully:

• Reassure the student that it is the behaviour that is unacceptable not them personally;
• Discuss ideas about why they bully and what will assist them to stop;
• Find out what is particularly troubling the bully;
• Work out ways for the bully to make amends;
• Teach students the difference between assertive behaviour and aggressive behaviour;
• Praise the student when they are seen to be doing the right thing;
• Set realistic goals;
• Establish a management plan and
• Restorative Practice.

RESOURCES


5 Steps to stop BULLYING

1. Ignore
2. Talk Friendly
3. Stop it  (I don’t like it)
4. Walk Away
5. Tell a Teacher