



## 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:

<b>Physical:</b>	Pushing, kicking, hitting, pinching, threats.
<b>Verbal:</b>	Name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing.
<b>Emotional:</b>	Excluding, tormenting, ridicule, humiliation.
<b>Racist:</b>	Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures.
<b>Sexual:</b>	Unwanted physical contact or abusive comments.
<b>Cyber/SMS:</b>	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- become withdrawn, lack confidence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**

Berne, S. (1999). Bullying: An Effective Anti-Bullying Program for Primary Schools. Hawker Brownlow: Australia.

Suckling, A. & Temple, C. (2001). Bullying: A Whole School Approach. ACER Press: Australia.

# 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