



# Anti-Bullying Policy

St Carlo Borromeo Primary School

St. Carlo Borromeo School is a no-bullying tolerance school. At St. Carlo's 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 children a safe and secure environment in which the children 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.

## WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is an action that causes pain to another individual. 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.

As Valerie Besag says (1989) "Bullying is behaviour which can be defined as the repeated attack, physical, psychological, social or verb in nature, by those in a position of power which is formally or situationally defined, with the intention of causing distress for their own gain or satisfaction".

## FORMS OF BULLYING

### **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.

### **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.

## **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

At St. Carlo Borromeo we realise that the bully/victim problem is the responsibility of the whole community, staff, students and parents.

This approach requires that each section of our community have their particular part to play in eliminating bullying from our school.

### **Staff will:**

1. Be a role model for assertive rather than aggressive approaches to interpersonal interactions.
2. Be observant to signs of distress or suspected incidents of bullying.
3. Be punctual to their yard duty and supervise the playground vigilantly.
4. Be punctual to class and to collect their classes from their lines.
5. Take steps to help victims, listen to concerns and offer support and assistance.
6. Follow designated intervention procedures.
7. Take heed of parental concerns.
8. Follow up any reports of bullying.

### **Students will: -**

1. Refuse to be involved in any bullying incidents.
2. Not to stand and watch any bullying incidents but rather fetch help.
3. Tell a staff member if they know of any bullying incidents.
4. Show bullies that you disapprove of the bullying behaviour.
5. Tell Parents and their class teacher if they believe that they are being bullied.

### **Parents are advised to: -**

1. Watch for signs of distress in their children, for example, unwillingness to attend school, bedwetting, "clingy" behaviour, equipment or money disappearing, requests for money.
2. Advise your child to report any bullying incidents to you, the parents and the teachers or Principal.
3. If possible allow your child to report and deal with the problem him/herself.
4. Inform the school if bullying is suspected.

5. Do not encourage your child to retaliate.
6. Attend interviews at school to help with the problem.
7. Reassure your child that they will have the full support of parents and the school.
8. The school will deal with the issues. Parents should not approach children on the playground.

## **PROCEDURES TO COUNTERACT BULLYING BETWEEN STUDENTS**

The following procedures will be incorporated into St. Carlo Borromeo School to prevent bullying from occurring:

1. St. Carlo's School will develop an anti-bullying component into its curriculum. This will be part of the Physical Education and Health Key Learning Area.
2. A Buddy system whereby a younger child is teamed up with an older student will continue at St. Carlo's School.
3. The Peer Support System will be implemented.
4. Provide advice to parents how to ascertain if their child is a bully or a victim and how to assist their child.

### **In the event the bullying does occur the following procedures will be carried out by the class teachers of the children involved:**

#### **1. No Blame Approach to Bullying**

##### **Step 1 Interview the victim**

When the teacher finds out about bullying he/she interviews the victim to find out about the victim's feelings. The teacher does not need to know all about the incidents but he/she does need to know who was involved. The teacher asks for permission to act. If the child refuses, teacher records the incident.

##### **Step 2 Convene a meeting with the persons involved.**

Include the main perpetrators, colluders or bystanders or witnesses. Include at least two students, who have a social conscience, potential leaders are a good choice

##### **Step 3 Explain the problem**

Tell them about how the victim is feeling. Use pictures, poems or stories to emphasise his/her distress. (Some guided visualisations can be useful at this point). The only effective treatment for bullies is empathy training. At no time should you apportion blame,

discuss specific incidents or discuss the victim's personality. Some firm guidance from the teacher(s) may be required.

#### **Step 4 Share Responsibilities**

Don't attribute blame but state that you know that the group is responsible and can do something about it whereas you can't.

#### **Step 5 Ask the group for their ideas**

Ask each member of the group to contribute a way in which the victim could be made to feel happier. Give brief positive comments but do not go on to extract a promise of improved behaviour.

#### **Step 6 Leave it up to them**

The teacher ends the meeting by passing over the responsibility to the group to solve the problem. She/he expresses confidence in the group and arranges 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. Some disguised rewards like drinks and snacks may help. 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

## **2. No Tolerance Approach to Bullying**

This procedure will be carried out if the bullying is persistent and/or serious

"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.

### **Procedure as defined in the Catholic Education Commission of Victoria "Pastoral Care in Catholic Schools" policy**

1. The Student Wellbeing Group is notified of serious and persistent bullying.
2. It is the responsibility of the Student Welfare Group to:
  - a. Convene a meeting as soon as possible following the decision that students 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 Office Pastoral Care Offices will be requested to advise St. Carlo's School.

In the event of the bullying still persisting Negotiated Transfer or Finally Suspension and Expulsion will be considered in line with the Pastoral Care in Catholic Schools Policy.

### **Possible Outcomes of the Student Wellbeing Group**

In considering the student and the case at hand, the group has a number of options available to it including contractual arrangements, suspension and negotiated transfer. These options are outlined in the CECV Pastoral Care Policy.

In final decisions the group should aim for consensus. Where this is not achievable, the Principal takes responsibility for the final decision.

The above procedures for serious offences should occur only after a school has determined that all measures taken to have a student comply with agreed codes of conduct have failed to produce a satisfactory outcome.

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