

**St John Vianney Catholic School
Morisset**



**Anti- Bullying Policy
2012**

Preamble

The dignity of the human person is the foundation of all Catholic social teaching and is inbuilt in our ministry of education. Central to our mission as Catholic educators is the principle that the person is made in the image and likeness of God. It is therefore essential that the community of St. John Vianney's Morisset, strive for the creation and maintenance of a safe, supportive and respectful learning/ work environment.

The prevention of and responses to incidents of bullying, disrespectful behaviour and inappropriate use of technology is more successfully achieved in a caring and supportive school culture that reflects Gospel values and promotes positive relationships. Bullying, cyber-Bullying, harassment, aggression and violence disregard our school core value of respect for others. Additionally, these actions can have a negative impact upon the well being of those in our school community and are therefore unacceptable. All members of our school communities are expected to prevent and challenge such actions in order to build respectful relationships that respond effectively and sensitively to the needs of each person.

This policy builds on the Pastoral Care and Behaviour Management Policies to provide clear procedures and strategies to prevent, reduce and respond to bullying.

Definition of Bullying

The National Safe Schools Framework (2011) defines bullying as a pattern of repeated physical, verbal, psychological or social aggression that is directed by someone with more power and is intended to cause harm, distress and/or create fear.

Identification of Bullying

Physical Bullying- this is when someone (or a group of people) uses physical actions to bully. Actions include hitting, poking, tripping, pushing, slapping and kicking. Repeatedly and intentionally damaging someone's property is also a type of physical bullying.

Verbal Bullying- this is when someone repeatedly and systematically name calls, verbally abuses, insults, makes homophobic or racist remarks towards another person. These are also threats to take one's possessions, food or money.

Covert Bullying- these behaviours include lying about someone, spreading rumours, playing a nasty joke that make the person feel humiliated or powerless, mimicking or deliberately excluding someone.

Cyber- Bullying- shown when one bullies through the use of information or communication technologies such Instant Messaging, text messages, email, gaming consoles and social networking sites. It has many similarities with offline bullying but it differs in that the student(s) who is/are bullying can be anonymous, it can reach a wide audience and the sent or uploaded material can be difficult to remove.

The main forms of cyber bullying are:

- *Flaming:* online fights using electronic messages with angry or vulgar messages
- *Harassment:* repeatedly sending nasty, mean or insulting messages. This can also be seen in repeated requests for one to participate in sexting (sending sexually explicit photographs of oneself or others using mobile phone technology or webcam.)
- *Denigration:* Posting or sending gossip or rumours about a person to damage his/her reputation or friendships
- *Outing:* sharing someone's secrets or embarrassing information or images online
- *Exclusion:* Intentionally and cruelly excluding someone from an online group

- *Cyber stalking*: repeated, intense harassment and denigration that includes threats or creates significant fear.

The different roles of bullying

- *Ring Leader*: students who through their social power can direct bullying activity.
- *Associates*: students who actively join in the bullying (sometimes because they are afraid of the ring-leader).
- *Reinforcers*: students who give positive feedback to the student doing the bullying, for example through comments, by smiling or laughing.
- *Bystanders*: students remain silent or watch and therefore appear to condone the bullying behaviour or who want to keep themselves safe by not drawing attention to themselves out of fear of the bully.
- *Defenders*: students who try to intervene to stop the bullying or comfort students who experience bullying.

Behaviours that do not constitute bullying

The St. John Vianney Morisset school community acknowledges that, whilst upsetting to those involved, the following behaviours are not examples of bullying:

- One off acts of meanness and spite
- Not liking someone or single acts of social rejection
- Isolated incidents of aggression, intimidation or violence
- Mutual arguments and disagreements (where there is no power imbalance)

Implementation-

The implementation of this policy will be organised in four sections.

1. Preventative Programs
2. Investigations, Reporting and Record Keeping
3. Disciplinary Measures and Responses (including police intervention and community support services)
4. Post investigation support services and ongoing policy management.

a. Preventative Programs

At St. John Vianney's Morisset, we adopt the following strategies to **prevent** bullying:

- Explicit teaching of positive behaviours embedded within the curriculum addressing positive relationships, conflict resolution, resilience, bystander action etc
 - *Positive Behaviour Scheme (P.B.S.)*
 - *Enactment of positive behaviours by School Councillors*
 - *Embedded bullying related learning activities within PD/H/PE scope and sequence*
 - *Brainstorm workshops*

- Regularly recognising and acknowledging students who demonstrate appropriate behaviours that promote and restore right relationships
 - *Weekly merit awards*
 - *Citizenship awards*
 - *Student of the week*
 - *Gotcha reward/ reward menu chart*
 - *SJV awards*
 - *Buddies program*
 - *Incidental acknowledgements of positive behaviours at assembly*

- Vigilant classroom, playground and transition supervision
 - *Teachers are to record data involving playground incidents using white slips from P.B.S.*
 - *Assistant principal to review white slip data and discuss high risk areas at staff meetings when needed.*

- *Teachers are to actively supervise children at all times*
 - *Teachers should note supervisory duties for the day and turn up promptly to duty*
 - *Teachers are to be aware of 'hotspot' areas such as toilets, out of bound areas, canteen area and concrete amphitheatre and visit these areas regularly throughout their supervision duty.*
- Provision of safe and structured playground spaces and activities at break times
 - *Large field open at lunch time for sport activities*
 - *Playground equipment (soccer balls, footballs, skipping ropes, basketballs) provided.*
 - *Lunch club open Mondays- Thursdays during lunch time*
 - *Library open during lunch on Wednesdays and Thursdays*

Currently the school discipline response to an incident (injustice) is based on the premises inherent in the Restorative Justice model that include:

- *Awareness of the impact of incident (crime) on multiple people and interpersonal relationships*
- *The central obligation to an injustice is to acknowledge it and 'right the wrongs'*
- *Acknowledgement that equity needs to be restored*
- *Future intentions are planned for, clarified and enacted.*

A copy of restorative justice model student response sheets for various stages is included in Appendix 1.

2. Investigations, Reporting and Record Keeping

At St. John Vianney's Morisset, we will **respond** to an incident/s of bullying by:

Investigating

- a. When investigating a **reported incident**, teachers will need to make notes on the process including all relevant parties, various accounts recorded and any decisions made by the teacher together with any action. Staff

members need to utilise the **Bullying Assessment and Action Flow Chart** (Appendix 2). These incident notes will be electronically saved by date in [staff drive, bullying and investigations of bullying allegations](#). A copy of the documented notes (together with a completed flow chart that led to the end result) will be printed, signed by Executive and filed in Record of Incident Folder in the Principals Office. Communication of the findings to parent body will be formalised in the reporting section below

- b. **If** the alleged incident is one specific to bullying, teachers will utilise and record the **bullying analysis tool (APPENDIX 3)** to support investigation. This completed form will be electronically saved by the alleged bully's name in [staff drive, bullying and investigations of bullying allegations](#). A copy of the document will also be printed and filed in Investigations of bullying allegations in the Principals Office. Communication of the findings to parent body will be formalised in the reporting section below

Record Keeping

- c. In addition to the above records kept regarding the investigation of incidences, notes specific to each child's involvement or experience of bullying will be kept and are set out below.
- d. St. John Vianney staff emphasises the need to log both the perpetrator and the victim in any incident (bullying or otherwise) in order to record patterns and persons involved in both ends of the bullying issue.
- e. St. John Vianney staff utilises a database (White Slips- PBS) that **logs a record of incidents, contact between school and home and decisions** made as a result of any incident arising at school, of which bullying is one.
- f. Database files are kept open across the full 7 years of primary schooling and then archived after graduation or departure from school.
- g. The database is located in [staff share, PBS, JV Incident Log](#)
- h. St. John Vianney staff recognises that an isolated incident may not constitute bullying but repeated patterns of the same mode can. Therefore, as part of any investigation, the teacher will need to consult classroom teacher of those involved, the home-school contact database and PBS database **to identify any pattern or repeat of the behaviour** occurring that involves the child in question.

Reporting

- i. If action is undertaken or a decision made **confirming an incident of bullying**, parents must be informed of their child's role via a formal notification sent through standard mail (check with Simon). Parents of both the victim (informing of steps taken by the school) and the

perpetrator (informing of consequences governed by the school anti bullying policy) will be informed of the final decision. (See appendix 4 and 5). A copy of the letter is to be attached to both students' files.

- j. If an investigation is undertaken regarding an alleged bullying that **cannot be confirmed**, parents making the allegation must be informed of the investigation undertaken and reasons why the particular incident is not confirmed as bullying. While not bullying, if the incident demands a response under normal discipline policy, the parent will be informed accordingly.

3. Disciplinary Measures and Responses (including police intervention and community support services)

The school discipline policy refers extensively to levels of consequences across the broad spectrum of negative behaviours. Below is an outline of disciplinary measures to be undertaken specific to confirmed incidences of bullying.

- a. Police Intervention will be sought in any situation deemed necessary by the principal that has a confirmed incidence of possession of a weapon, extreme assault, sexually explicit Cyberbullying. Parents will be informed immediately when such action is necessary in order to ensure their presence in the process from that point on.

In situations deemed to be dealt with by the school the following steps will be undertaken.

- b. It is essential the child understand why the behaviour is undesirable and every effort should be made to help the child overcome the problem.
- c. Restorative practices will be implemented for negative behaviours and those that amount to bullying. Currently the school discipline response to an incident (injustice) is based on the premises inherent in the Restorative Justice model that include:
 - Awareness of the impact of incident (crime) on multiple people and interpersonal relationships
 - Acknowledgement of own feelings and motivations at the time of the incident
 - The central obligation to an injustice is to acknowledge it and 'right the wrongs'
 - Acknowledgement that equity needs to be restored
 - Future intentions are planned for, clarified and enacted.

- d. A copy of restorative justice student response sheets for various stages is included in Appendix 1 a) and b). Completed Restorative Justice Sheets are filed in Student files. Children completing restorative Justice Program will do so as part of time spent off the playground in response to a bullying incidence.
- e. Children involved in any incidence of bullying as either the perpetrator or victim will be offered to and/ or referred to the school counsellor for follow up and support. They may also be provided with contacts for external agencies for ongoing support. The Learning Support Teacher may also work with a child or a group of children in programs that target social skills and resilience.
- f. Repeated or extreme incidences of bullying will involve the following steps.
 - CSO Notification, consultation and accessing relevant services
 - School visit by Police Liaison Officer- Contact Rachel Garland Tuggerah Lakes 43566235
 - In school suspension
 - Out of school suspension
 - Partial enrolment
 - Alternative/ review of enrolment

4. Post investigation support services and ongoing policy management.

- a. Students who have been identified as being involved in a bullying incident may be referred to School Psychologist (Stacey Mortimer) for ongoing support and management.
- b. Students who have been the victim of bullying at St. John Vianney's will be told to report further repeated incidents of bullying to either their classroom teacher and/ or the principal. The investigative teacher and principal will meet with the victim and perpetrator weekly, as necessary, to monitor their progress. These meetings will become less frequent when it is agreed upon by all parties (victim, perpetrator, investigative teacher and principal that the pattern of bullying has ceased.
- c. St. John Vianney provides easy access to information regarding complaints and appeals processes for bullying matters. These are in a brochure format placed outside the front office.
- d. Teachers will be given opportunities to attend professional development which involves bullying.

- e. The Anti- Bullying policy is to be reviewed yearly, when significant number in staff changes and when changes in government and/or diocesan policy occur.

Responsibilities

School Leaders will:

- a. Develop a shared understanding with staff and community members of bullying behaviour that involves all forms of bullying including cyberbullying
- b. Ensure the development, implementation and evaluation of preventative strategies and programs to promote student safety and wellbeing
- c. Provide support to any student who has been affected by, engaged in or witnessed bullying behaviour
- d. Be responsible for the implementation of the school's anti bullying policy and procedures
- e. Initiate police support (Police liaison officers) and or intervention when required
- f. Provide regular updates to parents or caregivers regarding the management of specific incidents
- g. Ensure that an annual communication of the contents of the policy be made to the school community
- h. Maintain an ongoing and annual evaluation process of the policy with students, staff and caregivers
- i. Monitor student understanding and satisfaction of school processes
- j. Identify patterns of bullying behaviour and initiate school action to address them
- k. Engage students in the evaluation of anti bullying processes within the school

School staff will:

- a. Respond in a timely manner to a student's call for assistance, after his/her reporting of inappropriate behaviours in relation to all forms of bullying. This includes the use of technology (e.g. text messaging or social networking site usage). Failure to take action may indicate a breach in the duty of care owed to the student (see Support Document 3)
- b. Seek advice from their supervisor(s) if they require confirmation or clarification regarding an incident of alleged bullying behaviour
- c. Maintain an up to date knowledge of school policies relating to bullying behaviour
- d. Model and promote appropriate behaviour

In addition, teachers have a responsibility to:

- Provide curriculum and pedagogy that supports students to develop an understanding of bullying and its impact on individuals and the broader community.

Students will:

- a. Promote positive relationships that respect and accept individual difference and diversity
- b. Follow the school procedures in reporting and responding to bullying behaviour
- c. Work collaboratively with staff and peers to resolve incidents of bullying
- d. Have an awareness and understanding of what constitutes bullying while being charged with the responsibility of being respectful of one another
- e. Participate in the annual evaluation of school anti bullying processes and procedures

Parents and caregivers have a responsibility to:

- a. Support their children to become responsible citizens and to develop responsible on-line behaviour
- b. Be aware of the school Anti-bullying Plan and assist their children in understanding bullying behaviour
- c. Support their children in developing positive responses to incidents of bullying consistent with the school Anti-bullying Plan
- d. Report incidents of school related bullying behaviour to the school
- e. Work collaboratively with the school to resolve incidents of bullying when they occur.

Appendix

1. a) Restorative Justice Sheet- I Make Choices (Primary)
b) Restorative Justice Sheet- I Make Choices (Infants)
2. Bully Assessment and Action Flow Chart
3. Bullying Analysis Tool

