BACKGROUND
St Stephen’s School’s Bullying Prevention Policy operates under the umbrella of the school’s Behaviour Management Policy.

A DEFINITION OF BULLYING
A person is bullied or victimised when he or she is exposed repeatedly, and over time, to negative action on the part of one or more other persons. (D. Olweus 1994)

Bullying involves:
- a desire to hurt
- a hurtful action (physical, psychological or social)
- a power imbalance
- (typically) repetition
- an unjust use of power
- evident enjoyment by the aggressor and
- sense of being oppressed on the part of the victim (Rigby 1996)

Bullying can be physical, verbal, emotional and digital harassment. Some examples of these types of behaviour follow:

**Physical Harassment**
- punching
- pushing
- slapping
- kicking
- poking
- hair pulling
- scratching
- tripping
- pinching
- standing over someone
- breaking or damaging someone’s possessions

**Verbal Harassment**
- using words that suggest stupidity, e.g. der, dummy, moron, halfwit, etc.
- using words that suggest ugliness or personal problems, e.g. boofhead, four eyes, stinky, fatty, etc.
- using words that suggest weakness, e.g. cry baby, wimp, sook, etc.
- using words that attack ethnic or religious characteristics, e.g. wog, chink, Mick, darky, etc.
- echoing whatever someone says in a mocking voice
- using rude words with a sexual meaning
- making threats, e.g. “I’ll get you!” or “I’ll come around to your house and ...”
Emotional Harassment
- making rude gestures, e.g. monkey movements or extending the middle finger
- repeated teasing
- whispering about someone behind his/her back
- imitating someone’s speech or behaviour in a way designed to offend
- laughing at someone’s mistakes
- excluding someone from group activities (with or without comment)
- refusing to talk to or notice someone
- passing around nasty gossip with a view to make someone feel bad
- demanding money or services “or else!”

Digital Harassment
Mobile phone use (texting, videoing, calling) involving:
- abusive language
- swearing
- threats
- name calling
- derogatory comments
- videoing/photographing members of the school community without permission
- forwarding original or modified videos/photos of an inappropriate nature

Email use involving:
- abusive language
- swearing
- threats
- name calling
- derogatory comments
- videoing/photographing members of the school community without permission
- forwarding videos/photos of an inappropriate nature

Written messages involving:
- abusive language
- swearing
- threats
- name calling
- derogatory comments
- passing notes about someone

ST STEPHEN’S SCHOOL’S POSITION ON BULLYING
At St Stephen’s School, we believe that everybody has the right to feel safe. Therefore, bullying behaviour at St Stephen’s School is unacceptable.

Policy Implementation
- Parents, teachers, students and the community will be notified and regularly updated on the school’s position on bullying.
- The school will adopt a four-phase approach to bullying, as follows:

PHASE 1: PRIMARY PREVENTION:
- Staff members and the principal will participate in professional development activities relating to bullying, harassment and proven counter measures.
- Community awareness and input relating to bullying, its characteristics and the school’s programs and response will be a priority.
The school will provide programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving, e.g. “You Can Do It” Education Program.

The school will use an action research approach and regularly seek information from parents, staff and students regarding bullying at school. The results to this approach will inform further action.

The school will engage our adopt-a-cop to educate and raise the awareness of the children about online safety.

Classroom teachers will discuss and clarify the school’s policy on bullying with the children in his/her class at the start of each year and at regular intervals throughout the year.

The curriculum will include anti-bullying messages and strategies e.g.: performances at assembly, opportunities for students to practise “I” messages, etc.

Activity options/structured activities may be available to children at lunch breaks, e.g. library, chess, choir and computer games.

PHASE 2: EARLY INTERVENTION:

The principal and members of staff will remind children about the need to report bullying incidents as part of our student protection procedures.

Parents will be encouraged to contact the school if they become aware of a problem.

Public recognition and rewards for positive behaviours and resolutions of problems will be made.

Investigate use of behaviour tracking and monitoring software.

PHASE 3: INTERVENTION:

Bullying is an inappropriate behaviour which will be managed within the context of the school’s Behaviour Management Policy.

Once identified, incidents or allegations of bullying will be fully investigated and documented.

Both bullies and victims will be offered counselling and support.

If student bullying persists parents will be contacted and consequences will be discussed and implemented.

PHASE 4: POST VIOLATION:

Consequences for students who are identified as bullies within the school context will be the same as for other serious behaviours, i.e. consequences will be individually based and may involve:-

- exclusion from class.
- exclusion from the playground.
- school suspension.
- withdrawal of privileges.
- ongoing counselling from appropriate agency for both victim and bully.

Early intervention strategies suggested as part of the school’s Behaviour Management Policy will also be implemented, e.g. the reinforcement of positive behaviours classroom meetings, the use of relevant support structures, ongoing monitoring of identified offenders, rewards for positive behaviour.

EVALUATION OF POLICY

This policy will be reviewed with whole staff, student, parent and community input as part of the school’s three-year policy review cycle.