



Bullying Policy

Background

St Stephen's School's Bullying Prevention Policy operates under the umbrella of the school's behaviour Management Policy and the Australian Curriculum (Health and Physical Education).

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm (Alannah and Madeline Foundation, 2021). It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening (Alannah and Madeline Foundation, 2021). Bullying can be in person, online direct or indirect and overt or covert (Australian Education Authorities, 2020).

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have immediate, medium, and long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders (Alannah and Madeline Foundation, 2021). Single incidents and conflict or a fight between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying (Australian Education Authorities, 2020).

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, 2020)

Bullying can be physical, verbal, or emotional harassment. These categories can also apply to an online environment.

Some examples of these types of behaviour include:

<div>Physical Harassment</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hair pulling • scratching • tripping • pinching • standing over someone • breaking or damaging someone's possessions • punching • pushing • slapping • kicking • poking • stealing <p>(Alannah and Madeline Foundation, 2021)</p>
<div>Verbal Harassment</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • using words that suggest stupidity, e.g. der, dummy, stupid, idiot, etc. • using words that target appearance or personal problems, e.g. hairy, four eyes, you stink, you're fat, etc. • using words that suggest weakness, e.g. cry baby, wimp, sook, that's gay, retard, don't be a girl etc. • using words that attack ethnic or religious characteristics, e.g. wog, black/brown kid, etc. • echoing whatever someone says in a mocking voice • using rude words with a sexual meaning e.g gay, homo • making threats, e.g. "I'll get you!" or "I'll come around to your house and ..." • making abusive phone calls or sending abusive e-mails <p>(Alannah and Madeline Foundation, 2021)</p>
<div>Social/Emotional Harassment</div>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • making rude gestures, e.g. poking tongues or extending the middle finger • repeated teasing • whispering about someone behind his/her back • passing notes about someone • 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!" <p>(Alannah and Madeline Foundation, 2021)</p>

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

- The school will ensure all staff are aware of the School Wide Positive Behaviour Program. They will be aware of the Tier 1 Universal supports available within St Stephen's School e.g. redirection to following the school rules.
- 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 social, emotional learning programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving, e.g "Bounce Back"
- 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.
- 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 Health Curriculum (Australian Curriculum) taught will align with Daniel Morcombe Foundation Program.
- Play/Activity choices including the St Stephen's Chat room will be discussed. These have been set up to provide students with supports in learning new social skills.

Phase 2: Early Intervention

- The school will ensure all staff are aware of the School Wide Positive Behaviour Program. They will be aware of the Tier 1 Universal supports available within St Stephen's School, e.g. the reinforcement of positive behaviours- classroom meetings, the use of relevant support structures, ongoing monitoring of identified offenders, rewards for positive behaviour.
- 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

- The school will ensure all staff are aware of the School Wide Positive Behaviour Program. They will be aware of the Tier 2 Targeted supports available within St Stephen's School e.g. reflective conversations, check in and check out, check and connects.
- 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 referred to counselling and support.
- If student bullying persists parents will be contacted and consequences will be discussed and implemented.

Phase 4: Post Violation

- The school will ensure all staff are aware of the School Wide Positive Behaviour Program. They will be aware of the Tier 3 Individualised supports available within St Stephen's School. E.g. Functional Behaviour Assessments, Individualised Check in/out system, Behaviour Support Plans and Collaborative Problem Solving.
- 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.
 - Referral for ongoing counselling from an appropriate agency for both victim and bully.

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.

Reference List

- Alannah and Madeline Foundation. (2021). *Definition of Bullying*. Retrieved from National Centre Against Bullying: <https://www.ncab.org.au/bullying-advice/bullying-for-parents/definition-of-bullying/>
- Alannah and Madeline Foundation. (2021). *Types of Bullying*. Retrieved from National Centre Against Bullying: <https://www.ncab.org.au/bullying-advice/bullying-for-parents/types-of-bullying/>
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- Rigby, K. (2020). *Defining Bullying: A new look at an old concept*. Retrieved from Ken Rigby.Net: <http://www.kenrigby.net/02a-Defining-bullying-a-new-look>

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