BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY

St. Joseph's School Alstonville

School commitment

St Joseph’s is committed to the provision of a safe environment for all who participate in any school activity by developing a non-threatening, supportive and cooperative workplace with an emphasis on dispute resolution and conflict management as the principal means of dealing with instances of bullying. Bullying in any form, whether by staff, parents or students, will not be tolerated.

It is St Joseph’s school practice to implement Restorative Practices once our St Joseph’s Community Behaviour Code has been broken and to follow our Four Step Behaviour Management Levels. See the Pastoral Care & Discipline Policy for details of this code and Behaviour Management process.

The National Safe Schools Framework (NSSF) definition of Bullying

Bullying is a pattern of repeated physical, verbal, psychological or social aggression that is directed towards a specific student by someone with more power and is intended to cause harm, distress and/or create fear. Bullying may be carried out overtly (eg face-to-face) or covertly (eg through repeated social exclusion or via technology). It is a sub-category of aggression and is different to, but also related to, harassment and violence. It is not the same as conflict or social dislike even though, in some cases, the outcome of both can be bullying.

The different types of bullying identified by the NSSF include:

Face-to-face bullying (sometimes referred to as direct bullying) involves physical actions such as punching or kicking or overt verbal actions such as name-calling and insulting.

Covert bullying (sometimes referred to as indirect bullying) is a subtle type of non-physical bullying which isn’t easily seen by others and is conducted out of sight, and often unacknowledged by adults.

Cyberbullying occurs through the use of information or communication technologies such as Instant Messaging, text messages, email and social networking sites. It has has many similarities with offline bullying but 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.
Most students who cyberbully also bully off-line. It is now recognised that many forms of covert bullying appear to have significant potential for serious harm.

Some warning signs that may indicate someone is being bullied:
- He/she may start acting differently or seem anxious
- Have changes in his/her eating or sleeping patterns
- He/she may start avoiding certain situations eg not wanting to go on the bus
- He/she may become withdrawn

Management priorities
This school will ensure that:
- legal requirements to protect the safety of staff and students are complied with
- all school personnel are informed about the nature and effect of bullying in schools
- all new students and staff are informed about the bullying policy of the school
- ongoing training in dispute resolution and conflict management is available to appropriate staff
- appropriate support programs will be available to victims and perpetrators of bullying incidents
- appropriate reporting and recording procedures for instances of bullying will be in place in the school
- reporting to parents will be a mandatory component of the management of serious incidents of bullying involving students
- training, information, recording and reporting systems will be monitored and evaluated regularly, with follow up action (if required)
- procedures for handling bullying are consistent and compatible with other school management procedures.

Procedure
- Staff and students are encouraged to report bullying behaviour. Reports can be made to Class Teachers, Mission & Values Facilitator, School Counsellor, Assistant Principal or Principal
- Staff to whom bullying is reported will make a record of the complaint and bring it to the attention of the principal.
- The principal and/or their delegate will investigate the allegations fairly and impartially. Both sides will be heard.
- The school will attempt to resolve the matter amicably and impartially.
- The school has a Bullying Policy brochure available to students, parents and staff. This brochure clearly outlines our St Joseph’s Community Behaviour Code and our Behaviour Management process.
- The school has a bullying dvd which can be accessed through the library by all members of the school community.
- Students enter an agreement for computer use at school which encourages safe practices. The following excerpt is from the Computer User Agreement which outlines that inappropriate behaviour is not part of the terms of use for computers at school. If a
child does not abide by the terms of the agreement then their usage can be suspended. Please see the Computer User Agreement for more details.

"6. I understand that I must not, at any time use the internet, email, mobile phones or any ICT equipment to be mean, rude, and offensive or to bully, harass, or in any way harm anyone else connected to our school, or the school itself, even if it is meant as a ‘joke’.” (Computer User Agreement p1)

**Staff available for Support:**

- All Staff
- Principal
- Assistant Principal
- School Counsellor
- Missions and Values Facilitator
- Priest

**Outside Services available:**

- Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800

Each individual issue identified by the school will be addressed according to the Pastoral Care and Discipline Policy. Staff and the wellbeing committee will help to devise a plan to support the victim to move on and a plan to help the bully address his or her behaviours to prevent further incidents occurring.

- Staff √
- Parents √
- Reviewed: 2014 √ Therese Seymour, Principal
- To be reviewed: 2018