



SAFE SCHOOL POLICY Anti-Bullying & Anti-Harassment

RATIONALE:

At St. Patrick's School, the community is committed to ensuring a caring environment which promotes personal growth and positive self worth for all. It will not condone any form of bullying or harassment behaviour. The *Safe School Policy* is to ensure the safety of all members of the school community, as outlined in our *Pastoral Care Policy*.

SCRIPTURAL CONTEXT:

'All members may be concerned for one another. If one member suffers, all members suffer: if one member is honoured, all members share this joy. You then are the body of Christ.'

Corinthians 12:25-27

DEFINITIONS:

"Bullying is repeated oppression, psychological or physical, of a less powerful person by a more powerful person or group of persons" (1996, Ken Rigby).

"Bullying involves a pattern of behaviour that incorporates five key elements. There is an intention to hurt, harm or make feel powerless and the recipient is distressed by what is happening. It involves an imbalance of power and can take many forms – physical verbal, gesture, extortion and exclusion. Pleasure is derived from the act and it is a repeated pattern of behaviour over time" (2005, Therese Sheedy).

Types of Bullying include:

- Verbal Includes use of abusive language, name –calling, spreading rumours, put downs.
- Written includes writing about, graffiti or sending notes (including email and electronic forums) that are derogatory.
- Physical Includes kicking, biting, hitting and other forms of violence, destruction of property, and damaging or hiding of others' belongings.

- Social Includes exclusion and isolation.
- Psychological Includes extortion, threats, blackmail, phone bullying and cyber bullying,
- Cyberbullying is bullying that employs the use of technology such as the Internet, a mobile phone or a camera to hurt or embarrass someone.

Harassment is any type of deliberate, uninvited behaviour that is considered unacceptable to the community. It may offend, embarrass and/or scare. It could be sexual or target people because of their race, religion, gender, disability, culture. Such behaviour could be verbal, non-verbal, or physical and may include physical aggression, offensive jokes, comments or notes, or unwanted touching

POLICY STATEMENT:

St Patrick’s School will not tolerate any action that undermines a person’s right to feel safe. At the school, every person has this right and any person who bullies or harasses another is denying them the right to feel safe. The Staff and school community will implement appropriate strategies and processes to build and maintain a safe school environment.

POLICY GUIDELINES:

GUIDELINE INDICATORS:

<p>St Patrick’s School will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote the right of all school community members to feel safe at school ▪ Promote care, respect and co-operation, and value diversity. ▪ Provide opportunities for students to learn through the formal curriculum the knowledge, skills and dispositions needed for positive relationships. 	<p>To ensure implementation of the <i>Safe School Policy</i>, St Patrick’s school will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Raise community awareness to the fact that bullying and harassment occurs and is not acceptable. ▪ Provide parent education. ▪ Provide information about bullying. ▪ Teaching and Learning practices will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and build friendly environments within classrooms and school. • Develop an understanding of diversity. • Introduce and develop inclusive practices. • Develop and encourage respect of self and others. • Support students in repairing any harm that has occurred. • Introduce and develop co-operative learning strategies. • Encourage students to reflect upon and take responsibility for their actions.
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Through a whole school process, develop and implement pro-active policies, processes and program that nurture a safe and supportive school environment and which recognise and state explicitly the roles and responsibilities of all members of the school community. ▪ Recognize that quality leadership is an essential element that underpins the creation of a safe and supportive school environment and recognise the critical importance of pre-service and ongoing professional development in creating a safe and supportive school environment. ▪ Regularly monitor and evaluate policies and program so that evidence based practice supports decisions and improvements. ▪ Take action to protect children from and manage, incidents of bullying, violence, abuse and neglect. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model respect, positive relationships and positive conflict resolution strategies. • Develop a whole school approach to discipline and well being, focusing on behaviour management, conflict management. • Implementation of programs to develop within students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assertiveness, • bystander response, • being a ‘telling’ school, • positive leadership styles (e.g. Bounce Back program) • Ensure all Staff attend professional development as part of an ongoing understanding of current research and practices in managing incidents of bullying and violence. • Implementation of student leadership program in Yr 5/6 and the roles and responsibilities undertaken by Yr 6 students. • Evaluate and monitor policies, programs and curriculum according to the School Improvement Plan and Annual Action Plan. • Teachers will be trained in and implement the <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Safe from Harm</i> – Mandatory Reporting protocol • Restorative Practices ▪ Teachers will implement the <i>Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority</i> in the domains of Interpersonal Development, Personal Learning and Health and Physical Education.
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REFLECTIVE MATERIAL:

- ◆ Pastoral Care of Students in Catholic Schools. (2008) Melbourne CECV
- ◆ Bullying in schools and what to do about it. Rigby, K. (1996)
- ◆ The Hidden Hurt: How to beat bullying in schools. Murphy, E. & Lewers, R. (2000)
- ◆ Facing Facts: An approach to dealing with bullying through the health plan
- ◆ National Safe School's Framework
- ◆ Real Justice Australia
- ◆ Serious Offences Policy
- ◆ Safe from Harm
- ◆ Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority 2017

APPENDIX 1

GUIDELINES for a SAFE SCHOOL

TEACHERS ARE ENCOURAGED AND EXPECTED TO:

- ◆ act as role models of caring and tolerant behaviour in word and action and not use their position of power to bully other members of the community
- ◆ make efforts to reduce opportunities for bullying to occur by *active* supervision
- ◆ arrive at classes on time
- ◆ implement a preventative bullying program in the classroom
- ◆ listen to reports of bullying
- ◆ implement strategies appropriate to the bullying situation
- ◆ be open to talk with students who seek help on any problems that may arise through peer bullying
- ◆ protect and support both the victim and the bully through the implementation of St Patrick's *Safe School Policy*.
- ◆ work with the parents of the victim to assist their child in developing assertive strategies
- ◆ work with the parents of the bully to establish joint strategies to encourage positive relationships
- ◆ keep adequate records of bullying incidents.

STUDENTS WHO ARE BULLIED ARE ENCOURAGED AND EXPECTED TO:

- ◆ use 'I' statements to build confidence, self worth and social skills
 - I don't like it when... because I feel...and I want...
(I statements should be *assertive* not accusational, or aggressive)
 - tell the person that their behaviour is offensive - they may not realise this
- ◆ speak to their teacher and give him/her full details of the event.

STUDENT WITNESSES TO BULLYING AND VIOLENCE ARE ENCOURAGED AND EXPECTED TO:

- ◆ refuse to be involved in a bullying situation
- ◆ 'not smile' to show that they agree with the bullying behaviour
- ◆ intervene if they are able
- ◆ immediately seek teacher assistance if they cannot intervene
- ◆ support the person being bullied and encourage them to report the incident
- ◆ speak to a member of staff about it
- ◆ speak to the bully about the problems they are causing, where possible.

STUDENTS WHO ARE BULLYING:

- ◆ think about others first!
- ◆ think about treating others with respect and dignity at all times
- ◆ listen to what other people are saying to you about your behaviour and make attempts to change that behaviour
- ◆ talk to a member of staff about your behaviour if you are having difficulty controlling your aggression
- ◆ be prepared for a member of staff to talk to you and take appropriate action, about your behaviour
- ◆ continued behaviour will lead to the implementation of the school's *Behaviour Management Policy and Serious Offences Procedure*.

PARENTS ARE ENCOURAGED AND EXPECTED TO:

- ◆ report incidents of bullying to the school when they become aware of it and not approach another child or parent to address the situation themselves
- ◆ be familiar with the process for dealing with bullying reports
- ◆ be familiar with the consequences outlined in the *Behaviour Management Policy*
- ◆ act as role models of caring and tolerant behaviour in word and action when participating as a member of the school community
- ◆ take an active interest in their child's school life and note any unusual behaviour
- ◆ listen sympathetically to reports of bullying
- ◆ encourage students to seek peaceful ways of resolving conflict rather than retaliation
- ◆ work with the school in seeking a permanent solution
- ◆ not use their position of power to bully other members of the school community.

APPENDIX 2 (Brochure for Home)
General Tips for Parents

- ◆ Involve your child in setting rules for appropriate behaviour at home.
- ◆ Talk with your child about the violence he or she sees on television and in video games. Help your child understand the consequences of violence.
- ◆ Help your child find ways to show anger that do not involve verbally or physically hurting others. When you do get angry, use it as an opportunity to model appropriate ways to express strong feelings.
- ◆ Keep lines of communication open with your child, even when it is tough. Encourage your child to always let you know where and with whom, he or she will be. Get to know your child's friends.
- ◆ Listen to your child if he or she shares concerns about friends who may be exhibiting troubling behaviours.
- ◆ Be involved in your child's school life by supporting and reviewing homework, talking with his or her teacher/s, and attending school functions and meetings.
- ◆ Talk with parents of your child's friends. Discuss how you can form a team to ensure your child's safety.
- ◆ Work with your child's school to make it more responsive to all students and to all families. Share your ideas about how the school can encourage family involvement.
- ◆ The child being bullied needs parent support to deal with the problem in an appropriate manner.
- ◆ Remind your child that using violence against bullies is not an appropriate action to take.
- ◆ Foster a climate where it is *'OK to tell'*.

APPENDIX 3

Examples of bullying may include:

- ◆ Any form of physical violence such as hitting, pushing or spitting on others.
- ◆ Interfering with another's property such as stealing, hiding, damaging or destroying it.
- ◆ Using offensive names, teasing or spreading rumours about others or their families.
- ◆ Using put downs, belittling others' abilities and achievements.
- ◆ Writing offensive notes or graffiti, about others.
- ◆ Making degrading comments about another's culture, religious or social background.
- ◆ Hurtfully excluding others from a group.
- ◆ Making suggestive comments or other forms of sexual harassment.
- ◆ Ridiculing another's appearance.
- ◆ Forcing others to act against their will.
- ◆ Making unwanted phone calls, sending inappropriate text messages or emails.
- ◆ Using mobile phones or any other form of technology to send offensive messages.
- ◆ Making rude gestures.
- ◆ Using Social Media such as Facebook, Instagram in a negative way that promotes unsocial comments & behaviour.