



BULLYING POLICY

DEFINITION OF BULLYING

A person is bullied when they are **intentionally exposed regularly and over time**, to negative or harmful actions by one or more other people. Bullies are people who **deliberately set out** to intimidate, exclude, threaten and/or hurt others **repeatedly**. Bullying is a clear form of harassment.

FORMS OF BULLYING

Physical Bullying

Physical bullying includes hitting, kicking, pinching and pushing or damaging property.

Verbal Bullying

Verbal Bullying includes name calling, insults, teasing, intimidation, homophobic or racist remarks, or verbal abuse.

Covert Bullying

Covert Bullying is often harder to recognise and can be carried out behind the bullied person back. It is designed to harm someone's social reputation and or cause humiliation. Covert bullying includes:

- Lying and spreading rumours
- Negative facial or physical gestures, menacing or contemptuous looks.
- Playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate
- Mimicking unkindly
- Encouraging other to social exclude someone
- Damaging someone's social reputation or social acceptance

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is overt or covert bullying behaviours using digital technologies. Examples include harassment via mobile phone, setting up a defamatory personal website or deliberately excluding someone from social networking spaces. Cyberbullying can happen at any time. It can be in public or in private, and sometime is only known to the target and to the person bullying.

Sexual Bullying

Sexual harassment is any unwanted, unwelcome or uninvited behaviour of a sexual nature that makes a person feel humiliated, intimidated or offended. Sexual harassment can take many different forms and may include physical contact, verbal comments, jokes, propositions, the display of offensive material or other behaviour that creates a hostile environment.

Rationale

As part of an 'eSmart' school we believe that every child should feel safe, physically and emotionally. Bullying undermines this feeling of safety.

Here at St Stephen's we endeavour to provide a sense of respect and consideration of others, which will foster the required types of behaviour and enable the children to feel confident enough to approach an adult if an incident should occur.

Aims

- To reinforce within the school community what bullying is, and the fact that it is unacceptable.
- To ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are followed up appropriately and that support is given to both victims and perpetrators.
- To educate the school community to be alert to the signs of bullying and to know the procedures to follow to report this behaviour whether as an observer or victim.

Implementation

The school will

- Ensure each teacher clarifies, at the start of each year, the school policy on bullying.
- Regularly remind students to report incidents, and that reporting is not dobbing.
- Encourage parents to contact the school if they become aware of a problem.

In the case that bullying has been alleged the following steps will be implemented:

1. Fully investigate and document all incidents or allegations of bullying by speaking with the victim, the bully and the witnesses. (Individual meetings with each student involved to find out the details of the situation.)
2. Provide information to the leadership team.
3. Notify the parents.
4. In conjunction with the Leadership team decide on a course of action to deal with the problem.
5. Follow-up individual meetings to monitor the progress.
6. Follow-up with parents and inform them of the outcome of the investigation.
7. Offer counselling and support to both the bully and the victim.
8. (If the bullying continues) parents will be contacted again and consequences will be implemented. (Including referral to outside agencies.)

Consequences

Consequences will vary according to the type, severity and frequency of the incidents. Each situation will be reviewed on an individual bases.

Evaluation

This process will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that the school is dealing with the problem of bullying.