Bullying Policy

St Kevin's

Definition:

Bullying is a pattern of behaviour when someone, or a group of people, upset or create a risk to another person's health and safety. This is either psychologically or physically, to their property, reputation or social acceptance on more than one occasion. Bullying is a clear form of harassment that includes deliberate intimidation, exclusion, threatening and/or hurting others repeatedly. Bullying includes face-to-face bullying, covert bullying and cyber bullying.

Rationale:

- Bullying in any form is unacceptable. All students, staff and parents have the right to feel safe and respected at St Kevin's School. Bullying will not be tolerated at any level, and consequences exist for all members of the school community who choose to bully others.

Aims:

- To reinforce within the school community what bullying is and the fact that it is unacceptable.
- To enable all members of the school community to be alert to signs and evidence of bullying and to have a responsibility to report it to staff whether as observer or victim.
- To facilitate the reporting of incidents by members of the school community via multiples means, including the use of the school Intranet.
- To ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are investigated and recorded appropriately.
- To ensure that support is given to both victims, bystanders and perpetrators.
- To seek a restorative solution to issues of bullying via the Pathway to Resolution process.
- To seek parental and peer-group support and co-operation at all times.

Implementation:

- Parents, teachers, students and the community will be aware of the school's position on bullying.
- Ongoing education for staff and students regarding what constitutes bullying, how to maintain positive relationships, and how to restore relationships that have been harmed.
- The school will adopt the four-phase approach to bullying outlined below.

Four-phase Approach to Bullying
     Primary Prevention:

- Professional learning for staff relating to all forms of bullying including cyber bullying, harassment and proven counter measures.
- Education of the school community about what constitutes bullying, how this behaviour is unacceptable, its impact on those being bullied and how it will be managed at our school using the Pathway to Resolution process.
- Provide programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving.
- Students will be surveyed annually about bullying issues and the findings from this will be analysed, acted upon and monitored by the Wellbeing committee.
- Each classroom teacher to clarify with students at the start of each year the school policy on bullying (including cyber-bullying).
- Ongoing parent education sessions, including Cyber safety information and Restorative Practices.
- All students to be provided with individual and confidential computer and network log ins and passwords (3-6). Processes, such as the Hapara program, are used to ensure tracking of student activity on the school's computer equipment and network. Firewalls to be installed to eliminate outside traffic into the school's network and intranet.
- The use of mobile phones by students will not be allowed during school time. Consequences will be implemented for any students who use mobile phones inappropriately (refer to ICT Responsible Use Policy).
- The curriculum will include Social Emotional Learning Program (SEL), Circle Time sessions, anti-bullying messages such as 'No Put Downs', strategies such as WITS (Walk away, Ignore, Talk about it, and Seek help), and implementation of programs such as: 'The Friendly Schools' and 'No Blame Approach to Bullying'.
- Electives and structured activities are available to students at recess breaks to meet diverse student social needs.

Early Intervention:
- Encourage children and staff to report bullying incidents.
- Regular monitoring of student traffic on school's computer networks to identify potential problems.
- Ongoing supervision and monitoring of student social behaviour.
- Parents encouraged to contact school if they become aware of a problem.
- Reinforcement of positive behaviour and acting restoratively.

Intervention:
- Members of the school community identified by others as bullies will be informed of allegations.
- Once identified, each bully, victim and witnesses will be interviewed by staff according to the Restorative Practice process. All incidents or allegations of bullying will be fully investigated and documented.
- Parents (as vital partners in the education process) will be contacted and involved in the Restorative Practice process.
- Bullies, bystanders and victims will be offered ongoing support, which may include counselling.
- The consequences of cyber-bullying will be dealt with according to our Responsible Use Policy.

Post Violation:

- Consequences will be individually based and agreed upon through a restorative process.
- Reinforcement of positive behaviours.
- Support structures will be put in place for the victim.
- Ongoing monitoring of identified bullies.
- If student bullying persists, parents will be involved in developing further strategies, including behaviour management processes, according to Catholic Education Melbourne guidelines.
- Continuation of bullying may result in:
    - exclusion from class
    - exclusion from yard
    - school suspension
    - withdrawal of privileges (including use of ICT)
    - counselling provided for both victim and bully

Evaluation:

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

Glossary of terms:

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; the internet, email, intranets, phones or similar technologies.

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