St Bernard’s Primary School Berowra Heights

Anti – Bullying Policy

RATIONALE:
At St Bernard’s we seek to provide a place of learning where the values taught and practised by Jesus Christ are clearly evident in the way we relate to each other.

BELIEFS
At St Bernard’s we believe:
- everyone has the right to learn in a safe and happy environment that is free from intimidation, humiliation and hurt.
- each person is responsible for his and her own behaviour.
- We all share a responsibility to create a culture of caring which will not tolerate bullying.
- Procedural Fairness is a basic right of every person when dealing with authorities.

POLICY FRAMEWORK
Flowing from the Christian vision expressed by The Diocesan Pastoral Care Policy, schools are called to establish relationships which are grounded in love, compassion, reconciliation and justice. In witnessing values we reject ideas, beliefs and behaviours which marginalize or victimize people.

DEFINITION OF BULLYING:
Bullying can be described as having the following elements:
- is deliberate and often repeated
- intends to cause fear, distress, hurt or harm to another
- is action by a more powerful individual or group over a less powerful individual or group age

Bullying is ongoing by nature and the bully is encouraged by another’s pain, distress, fear and humiliation.
We each need to be very aware that bullying can happen at any place, at any time, and anyone can be a victim or a perpetrator.
**Bullying May Take Many Forms:**
Bullying may take many forms, all of which will cause distress. The following are examples of bullying:

**Physical:**
- Hitting, pushing, tripping, kicking, spitting on others.

**Verbal:**
- Teasing, using offensive names, ridiculing, spreading rumours

**Non – Verbal:**
- Writing offensive notes or graffiti about others, using email or text messages to hurt others, rude gestures

**Exclusion:**
- Deliberately excluding others from group, refusing to sit next to someone

**Extortion:**
- Threatening to take someone’s possessions, food or money

**Property:**
- Stealing, hiding, damaging or destroying property

**Cyber:**
- Any form of bullying which is carried out through electronic means such as email, chat rooms (eg facebook), ‘sms’, web page etc

**IMPLEMENTATION:**

**Preventative Strategies:**
- Teachers will discuss the definition of bullying and the different types of bullying with the students.
- Teaching of specifically bullying related aspects of the PDHPE Curriculum
- Explicitly teaching positive ways of resolving conflict; what positive play looks like; how to work cooperatively within the classroom and playground.
- Staff and students role model, particularly those students in leadership roles – school captains and house captains
- Providing many opportunities for students to develop and perform role plays which depict types of bullying and a variety of solutions
- Using “teachable moments” to look at instances of bullying and discussing these with the students
- Participating in activities which develop a culture of caring for one another and the acknowledging the worth and contribution of others
- Providing counselling and other support services
- At the beginning of each year and then each term, the teacher discusses the School Behaviour Management Policy with the students emphasising the expectations, the rewards and the consequences
- Throughout the year the teacher continually revisits the Behaviour Management Policy
- Teachers personally model pro-social, respectful behaviour towards adults and towards the students
- twice per year an audit of bullying behaviour will be conducted form K – 6
- Additional bullying audits will take place if deemed necessary
Addressing Specific Incidents of Bullying:
Bullying is viewed as a breach of the school’s behaviour code.

- All alleged incidents of bullying behaviour will be thoroughly investigated by teacher, co-ordinators, Assistant Principal and/or Principal, depending on who has been informed of the allegation.
- The Assistant Principal and/or the Principal will implement the consequences of bullying behaviour when they are satisfied that:
  1. there is substance to the allegation of bullying behaviour
  2. all sides have been listened to
  3. that the person or persons accused are indeed those responsible
- The Assistant Principal or the Principal will inform the parents of the victim and the parents of the perpetrator of the outcome.
- The Behaviour Management Policy has clearly stated consequences for perpetrators of bullying behaviour.
- When and if necessary the Principal will confer with the parents to discuss the possible need for counselling.
- It is important that any instances of anti-social behaviour which occur on the playground are reported to the class teacher. The class teacher will be able to monitor the frequency of instances to judge whether they are systematic or infrequent, “one off” instances.
- The “duty teacher” will deal with any instances of anti-social behaviour when they occur on the playground, according to the Behaviour Management Policy.
- Teacher will investigate all alleged instances using procedural fairness and speaking to all those alleged to have been involved in any instances of bullying.
- Teachers will involve a Co-ordinator and the Assistant Principal or Principal.
- Depending on the severity of the instance the perpetrator/s may be placed on “Shadow”, “Off Playground”, Community Service or Suspension (in accordance with the CSO Policy).
- Depending on the severity of the instance the victim, and the perpetrator/s, may spend time with the Class teacher, the Co-ordinator, the Assistant Principal or Principal to work on developing some strategies to empower them.

Professional Development for staff:
- Staff meetings at least once per term which focus on aspects of student wellbeing and possible strategies to address these.
- New staff members are made aware of the Behaviour Management Policy and the Anti Bullying Policy during their Induction.

Communication with parents:
- Copies of the Behaviour Management Policy are available to all parents on the school website.
- Copies of the Anti Bullying Policy are available to all parents on school website.
- Report the outcomes of any bullying investigation to the parents, of the perpetrator/s and of the victim.
- Principal or Assistant Principal will discuss with parents of the perpetrator/s, the consequences to be implemented as a result of the bullying incident.
- Principal or Assistant Principal will discuss with parents of the victim, ways to assist the student to develop his or her resilience.

Follow – up Action by the School:
- All teachers remain vigilant when on playground duty to ensure there are no further instances.
- The class teacher makes opportunities to touch base with the victim and the bully separately.
• If the instance was a serious instance of bullying the victim and the perpetrator/s may require counselling. The services of the School Counsellor would be offered to the parents and the student; however, this would be the decision of the parents.

Procedural fairness:
• Listen to all sides individually and calmly without pre-judging any students
• Don’t ask leading questions.
• Only ask clarifying questions.
• Allow students the time to tell their version of events
• Before making a decision be sure that all students have had their say and feel that they have been listened to

What Parents can do:
• Talk to their child and build a trusting relationship
• Assist their child to develop resilience
• Assist their child to understand that everyone is teased sometimes
• Assist their child to know that it is not okay for others to try to force them to do things that make them feel uncomfortable or to act against their will
• Know their child and their responses to problems
• Speak to the teacher if there are any concerns
• Parents need to watch for signs of change in their child. These may include those listed below:
  I. finding excuses not to go to school,
  II. a change in their demeanour … from being happy to being withdrawn, sullen, non-communicative,
  III. acting out of character e.g. being angry when they were not normally
  IV. becoming easily upset and emotional
  V. Schoolwork suffering where before the student was performing enthusiastically and achieving sound results

To be reviewed 2017