



BULLYING AND HARASSMENT PREVENTION POLICY

POLICY SUMMARY

Bullying and harassment are forms of abuse that occur when an individual or group is subjected to behaviour that is hurtful and/or threatening, either physically or psychologically. It is generally accepted that bullying is suspected if the activity/engagement is repeated over time. It may be planned, spontaneous or even unintentional. This policy aims to notify all members of the school community that the School takes bullying seriously and that staff will intervene in a way to deal with incidents of bullying in the School in a timely and consistent manner. The Bullying and Harassment Prevention Policy supports the School's Behaviour Management, Good Standing Policy and Promoting Positive Behaviours Policy. This policy provides both preventative and responsive strategies.

St James' Anglican School believes that:

- Students have the right to learn in safety.
- Parents have the right to know that their child is participating and learning in a safe environment.
- Adults, in the setting of the School, have a right to teach and work in safety.
- All members of the school community have a right to respectful, fair and decent conduct.
- Inclusivity and tolerance are valued.
- Individuals who have been harmed by bullying or harassment need to be believed and protected from further harm.
- In the event of bullying, firm and decisive action needs to be taken.

PROCEDURE

Definition

Emotional bullying includes:

- Being excluded from group conversations and activities.
- Making up or spreading rumours to facilitate dislike for someone.
- Being ignored repeatedly.
- Purposeful misleading or being lied to.
- Making stories up to get others into trouble.
- Sharing information or images that will harm the other person.

Physical bullying:

- Hitting, kicking, punching, pushing, bumping, shoving, scratching, slapping, biting, punching or tripping someone repeatedly.
- Unwanted physical or sexual touching.
- Throwing objects with the intent to injure or annoy.

Threatening/Psychological bullying:

- Stalking, threats or implied threats.
- Dirty looks.
- Manipulation – pressuring others to do things they don't want to do.
- Intimidation – forcing students to do demeaning or embarrassing acts.
- Extortion – forcing someone to give you money or material items.



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Verbal bullying:

- Constant teasing sarcastically and offensively.
- Name-calling and offensive nicknames.
- Swearing to unsettle or upset others.
- Homophobic comments cause distress.
- Racist or sexist comments.

Property Abuse:

- Stealing money.
- Interfering with someone's belongings.
- Damaging other personal items.
- Repeatedly hiding someone's possessions.

Cyberbullying:

- Spreading gossip and rumours through email, phone, the internet and social media.
- Sending offensive text/phone and email messages.
- Abusive phone calls.
- Posting personal information, including images and videos, on internet sites without permission to cause distress and humiliation.

Bystanders:

- Those who are aware of, or witnesses to, a bullying situation.

Or any other behaviour that the School feels could ridicule or embarrass another student/staff member.

Other forms of conflict, including teasing and fighting amongst peers are not necessarily bullying. These may represent the normal dynamics of a particular friendship and children need to have the skills to deal with these situations.

SIGNS TO LOOK FOR WHEN SOMEONE IS BEING BULLIED

Parents may be the first to notice the signs that their child may be being bullied. The signs for parents often include the child not wanting to go to school, saying they are sick to avoid attending school and generally not enjoying going to school anymore. The child can often withdraw, have emotional outbursts, get upset easily, have difficulty concentrating or complain of headaches or stomach aches. While these are signs of possible bullying, they may also be signs that something else is happening with the child. Referral to the appropriate school personnel to determine the cause of the issue/issues is recommended.

STRATEGIES

If bullying occurs, students are advised to:

- Try to control their reactions and tell the person to stop.
- Leave the area.
- Seek safe areas that are supervised.
- Seek help.
- Report incidents to a teacher immediately.



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Witnesses/spectators must intervene, report or act.

Be vigilant - If you see someone being bullied:

- Intervene quickly and decisively.
- Don't believe, "We were only mucking around".
- Report incidents to a teacher immediately.

Bullying is a complex issue that requires a range of strategies to be used, including:

- Encouraging the bystander to be proactive.
- Protecting and supporting the students by actively working to help them avoid being bullied.
- Assisting the students to change their behaviour.
- Working with parents to establish common strategies for behaviour modification.
- Applying appropriate sanctions and following up with restorative practices.
- Referring cases to appropriate external agencies for ongoing support and counselling where necessary.
- Monitoring bullying through the use of SEQTA and Bullying alerts to the Principal.

PREVENTATIVE STRATEGIES

The school community must address the underlying causes of bullying relating to organisational issues, learning and teaching issues and relationship issues. This is achieved through:

- Education and promotion of the School's Bullying and Harassment Policy through class programs, assemblies, guest speakers and posters.
- Productive and respectful working relationships were established between all members of the school community.
- Establishing class rules, routines and processes negotiated and applied consistently.
- Adequate supervision of students during breaks, on playground ovals, in classrooms and on excursions.
- Active intervention when bullying occurs.
- Modelling of appropriate problem-solving, non-aggressive behaviour by adults in the School.
- Skilling of students and staff in conflict resolution strategies including peer mediation.
- Parent information events, such as guest speakers.

If a pattern of bullying emerges, parents are interviewed, and a plan of action will be implemented.

E-BULLYING OR CYBERBULLYING

Methods of cyberbullying include:

- Texting derogatory messages on mobile phones.
- Posting hurtful messages, images or videos.
- Sending threatening emails.
- Forwarding a confidential email to several other people.
- Ganging up on one student and bombarding him/her with emails.
- Setting up a derogatory website dedicated to a targeted student and inviting others to comment.
- Participants in a chat room say derogatory comments about or exclude someone.



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While the majority of mobile phone and computer usage is done outside of school hours, it can still have a huge impact on school life. Dealing with cyberbullying needs to be looked at in conjunction with other school policies – *Internet and Computer Usage Policy* and *Mobile Phone Usage Policy*.

Common signs that a child is being cyberbullied include:

- Changes in their general behaviour.
- A decline in physical health.
- Changes in friendship groups.
- Change in sleep patterns.
- Avoiding school or clubs.

What can you do to prevent cyberbullying? Advise students to:

- Never give out personal information or passwords, PINs etc.
- Use technology responsibly and observe netiquette.
- Don't send a message to someone else when they are angry.
- Don't open a message from someone they don't know.
- They don't have to be "Always On". Turn off, disconnect and unplug.

If students are being cyberbullied advise them to:

- Tell somebody. Tell a friend, teacher or parent.
- No reply.
- Do not delete messages from cyberbullies. Keep it as your evidence.
- Inform your Internet Service Provider (ISP) or mobile phone or pager service.

INTERVENTION

All cases of bullying, which are reported, will be followed up.

Members of the school community, which includes Teaching, Administration, Grounds and Maintenance Staff, students and parents are encouraged to report bullying and can do so through a number of people:

- Parents
- Staff
- Principal

Reported cases can be dealt with in several ways. It is recognised that each case is different and may require a special approach. In all cases, it is important to ensure that:

- Victims are believed and made safe
- The principles of natural justice and due process are followed regarding students reported for bullying
- All reports are kept confidential and a written account of the reports is kept on file

Incidents of bullying that are deemed to be threatening, including physical abuse, violence or of a sexual nature, will result in the Principal notifying the police.



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POLICY VERSION CONTROL

Version	Date	Summary of Changes
1	June 2017	Policy reviewed and updated
2	June 2020	Policy reviewed to ensure it supported the School's Behaviour Management and Good Standing Policy
3	Jan - 2023	Policy reviewed to ensure it supported the School's Behaviour Management, Good Standing Policy and Promoting Positive Behaviours Policy. Policy reviewed and approved by the Principal and Executive Team New format to include 'policy version control' table Review date amended