BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY

VISION
Catherine McAuley School is a Catholic Faith community which promotes and celebrates excellence in education.

A spirit of reconciliation is encouraged through our experience of faith, growth and unity.

We endeavour to prepare children for a life that is lived in justice, dignity and mutual respect.

“Safety, a basic human right, is a pre-requisite for the Catholic School to be able to carry out its mission to educate.”
(SACCS Child Protection Policy 1994)

Therefore, we do not accept Bullying and Harassment at Catherine McAuley School.
RATIONALE

Catherine McAuley School is a place where each person:

- is acknowledged as being created equal and in the image of God.
- has the right to be treated with dignity.
- has the right to learn and play in a safe environment.
- must show respect for themselves, others and for their property.
- must be treated fairly and equally.

This means we all have a right to feel safe and to express our choices, decisions and feelings, without being pressured by others.

AIM

It is everyone’s responsibility to treat others in a friendly and respectful manner, no matter how different they may seem. The way Jesus teaches us is the way we should treat others.

DEFINITION

Bullying is deliberate, hurtful gestures, words or actions which are repeated over time. Bullying is unwelcome and unacceptable. The behaviour makes a person feel uncomfortable, fearful or unsafe. In some cases such behaviour may also be illegal. **In all cases it must be challenged and stopped.**
IMPLEMENTATION

If you are being harassed, you can influence what happens by using the SAFE approach to deal with harassment or bullying.

S  Solve it yourself
   Ignore it the first time
   Tell the person to stop

A  Ask someone you trust for some help.
   This could be a -
   •  Friend
   •  Teacher
   •  Staff Member
   •  Member of the Leadership Team
   •  Parent
   •  Relative
   •  Carer
   •  Harassment Officer
   Tell them what is happening.

F  Find a Teacher or Staff Member and report what is happening.
   (You can bring another person with you.)

E  Explore your options.
   What else can you do?

IF HARASSMENT CONTINUES KEEP REPORTING – NEVER GIVE UP!!!!!!
ACTION STEPS FOR STUDENTS

We encourage individuals being bullied to follow this action plan:

**Step 1:** Ignore it. Show that it does not affect you. The harassing behaviour may cease.

*if it does not stop*

**Step 2:** Speak to the person harassing you. Tell them that their actions are unwanted. Let them know you will take further action if the harassment does not cease. Speak with a teacher or staff member.

*if it does not stop*

**Step 3:** Discuss it with your friends, a teacher, staff member or parents/caregivers. They may be able to help you.

*if it does not stop*

**Step 4:** Report the matter to a teacher, staff member or member of the Leadership Team and discuss with them any further action.

*if it does not stop*

**Step 5:** Go with a teacher to the Principal or member of the Leadership Team and a decision will be made about further action to stop the bullying using the school’s system of consequences for inappropriate behaviour.
REPORTING BULLYING

If you are bullied or you know someone who is being bullied please report it.

WHO TO REPORT TO: Tell a Teacher, the Principal, a member of the Leadership Team and tell your Parents/Caregivers too.

HOW TO REPORT: Tell the trusted adult where the bullying happened, how often it has happened and what you have done to try to stop it happening.

WHEN TO REPORT: Remember to report the bullying to a trusted adult as soon as it happens, when bullying is ignored it may get worse.

ACTION STEPS FOR TEACHERS

All Teachers at Catherine McAuley School take Bullying and Harassment seriously. We will:

- listen and talk to the person who has been bullied and the person who has bullied others.
- put negotiated consequences in place for the person who has been bullying others depending on the severity and seriousness of the bullying. These may include, counselling practices, interviews with parents, Time Out, suspension, or exclusion.
- use a process such as “method of shared concern” to help everyone to improve their relationship with each other.

*For severe and repeated cases of bullying* the Leadership Team needs to be informed.
STATEMENT ON BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

Bullying is deliberate, hurtful gestures, words or actions which are repeated over time. Bullying is unwelcome and unacceptable. The behaviour makes a person feel uncomfortable, fearful or unsafe. In some cases such behaviour may also be illegal. In all cases it must be challenged and stopped.

DEFINITION

Behaviours include, but are not limited to:

1. **verbal bullying** - name calling, teasing, put downs, abusive or threatening language
2. **physical bullying** - hitting, pushing, pinching, tripping or threatening actions, damaging or stealing a person’s work or property
3. **exclusion** - isolating, not letting someone join in, not accepting someone because they are different or new
4. **sexual harassment** - touching or brushing against someone after being asked to stop, whistling, gesturing or commenting about someone’ body, telling offensive jokes or showing offensive reading or matter or drawings, commenting about someone’s sexuality
5. **racial harassment** - commenting or gesturing about someone’s culture, colour, race or background, name calling using racial terms, exclusion or teasing because of race
6. **libel/slander** - spreading rumours about someone or their family, writing unpleasant things about someone, writing graffiti about someone
7. **cyber bullying** – using electronic devices, the Internet (social network sites, MSN), email, to harass, bully, demean or to spread libelous information or images. To use the image of another person for publication in a demeaning or sexual context

The school has a commitment to stopping all forms of Bullying and Harassment.
“Bullying and Harassment are often thought of separately; however both involve a more powerful person or group oppressing a less powerful person or group, often on the grounds of ‘difference’. These differences can be related to culture, ethnicity, gender, sexuality sexual orientation, ability or disability, religion, body size and physical appearance, personality, age, marital status, parenting status or economic status.”


REVIEWED: 5 August 2009

NEXT REVIEW: 2014