



St Brigid's School Procedures to Keep Students Safe from Bullying

Nag	5
Reviewed	08/16

St Brigid's School is committed to developing a positive class and school environment for all its students that:

- reflects Gospel values
- establishes consistent systems for effective management of pupils within the school environment.
- promotes learning programmes, classroom environments and positive management practices that focus on building respectful relationships as key elements in realising appropriate behaviour.

St Brigid's School is committed to ensuring a physically and emotionally safe learning environment for all students. This school defines bullying as something that is harmful and unacceptable to the ethos of the school. It occurs when one or more persons exercise power over another to threaten or harm them because of their size, difference, strength, invisibility or status.

With young people in particular, it can be because they have a physical disability, speak differently, dress differently, have a different skin colour, behave differently, or their family has more or less money.

Some typical examples of bullying include:

- Calling someone names
- Writing horrible comments about a person
- Sending nasty texts, emails or making unkind phone calls
- Threatening someone
- Physically hurting someone eg: punching or kicking them
- Excluding someone from activities
- Stealing or damaging a person's property
- Playing tricks on someone
- Making a person feel uncomfortable or scared

Students who are victims of bullying face physical harm and emotional stress that may result in reduced learning opportunities, long term damage, or withdrawal or worse.

Bullies themselves also may suffer long term harm.

The school seeks to foster the Gospel values and a climate of trust where students feel able to inform others of bullying in the knowledge that it will be dealt with promptly and effectively.

It is this school's aim that:

- all members of the school community – board, teachers, non-teaching staff, students and parents should have an understanding of what bullying is.
- all members of the school community should know what the school procedures are on bullying and follow them when bullying is reported.

- all students and parents should be assured that when bullying is reported, it will be addressed and dealt with in an appropriate manner.
- bullying will not be tolerated.

Why do some children bully?

There are lots of reasons why children bully others. Some common reasons include:

- Lack of confidence
- Showing off to others
- Getting attention
- Jealousy
- They see bullying at home
- Overly aggressive nature
- They can't cope with others who are different
- Joining or copying others who are bullying to be part of a group
- They have been bullied themselves
- They don't know that it is wrong and/or haven't learnt how to socialise with others
- They are unhappy

Procedures to be followed relating to incidents of bullying:

- A victim of bullying may report the incident to any member of staff, a fellow pupil or a friend.
- A child who has been bullied needs to be reassured by staff that it is "OK to tell" and will be protected and supported during an investigation.
- Parents raising concerns about bullying will do this to the classroom teacher or Principal.
- All cases of alleged bullying will be investigated by staff responsible for handling the issue. Serious concerns need to be documented to establish if patterns of behaviour are developing. All attempts will be made to stop the bullying immediately.
- When investigating issues staff will be mindful of the rights of the child or children accused of bullying. It is important to determine if the behaviour has arisen from a relationship breakdown that may need an adult's assistance to mend.
- In serious cases parents will be informed and asked to attend a meeting to discuss the problem.
- Parents will be advised that the school does not condone them approaching the parents of the accused child and under no circumstances are they to approach the accused child.
- If necessary, at the discretion of senior staff, external agencies may be involved as appropriate.
- Reasonable attempts will be made to assist identified bullies to change their behaviour.
- The school will investigate alleged bullying that occurs both within and out of school and will include cases of alleged cyber-bullying.
- In cases of serious violence or extreme emotional harm the school has authority, and may exercise this authority, to stand-down, suspend or exclude in accordance with its behaviour management policy and Ministry regulations.

In implementing these procedures school management will:

- ensure that it is widely and regularly communicated to the school community
- always act in a consistent, professional and fair manner in dealing promptly with complaints of bullying
- act in a manner that reflects our Gospel values; focuses on maintaining the dignity of all involved and seeks to restore any damaged relationships
- take all necessary and reasonable steps to prove cases of bullying and to ensure that they cease
- provide appropriate training for staff in identifying and reporting on bullying
- use a range of proven techniques in enhancing the physical and emotional safety of the school
- provide support for students and awareness material for parents to assist them in recognising cases of suspected bullying
- survey students and parents periodically to evaluate the effectiveness of the anti-bullying programme
- monitor and review the procedures regularly
- provide regular reports to the board on progress

Signs of Bullying

Students may indicate by a series of signs that they are being bullied. Teachers will be watchful and investigate when a student:

- is afraid when walking to or from school
- is reluctant to go to school
- doesn't want to go on the school bus, begs to be taken to school
- appears to change from usual routine
- starts to truant
- seems to be withdrawn, anxious or lacking confidence
- starts to stammer
- runs away, threatens or attempts suicide
- has nightmares or cries in bed
- begins to underachieve at school
- complains of illness before school
- comes home with clothes torn or possessions damaged, graffiti on books etc
- asks for or starts stealing money
- frequently 'loses' money
- has unexplained injuries
- comes home hungry
- shows signs of aggression or disruption out of character
- is bullying sibling
- is afraid or reluctant to admit what is wrong
- gives unlikely excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use internet or mobile phone
- appears nervous or anxious when a cyber message is received

Anti-bullying programmes

- A strong values based programme
- Kia Kaha
- Reaching Out
- Gemstones (Year 8)

Useful resources that will be used and/or recommended to parents:

- Resource teachers of Learning and Behaviour
- Life Ed Trust
- Information on cyberbullying
- Step Up, Be Safe resource cards for Year 3 upwards
- The Ministry of Education TeamUp website www.teamup.govt.nz where parents can access information on how to deal with bullying (more specifically – www.teamup.co.nz/primary-int/helpful/Bullying/default.htm)
- www.tki.org.nz/r/governance/positive_behaviours/index_e.php An information website that is a resource for boards of trustees, principals, and senior staff, which will enable them to access information about behaviour.