



Bully-Free Policy

Rationale

As St Peter Chanel Catholic School is a Catholic school, we base the way we treat each other on the Gospel values, tolerance, peace, humility, gentleness, dignity and compassion.

All students and staff have the right to live and learn in an environment where they feel valued and safe. Students are able to learn most effectively in an atmosphere free from verbal, physical or emotional harassment.

Purposes

1. Bullying behaviours are an unfortunate part of life. It is important that the St Peter Chanel Catholic School learning community recognise the extent and impact of this form of behaviour and that we take steps to stop it happening. Our continuous goal is to strive for a school environment that is free of bullying behaviours. Given that bullying will almost always take place out of the view of staff, the school relies upon students and parents informing staff when bullying behaviour is experienced or witnessed.
2. Disagreement between students is healthy if students have learned how to deal with disagreements and teachers can assist in this learning. As they are immature, students may use inappropriate means to resolve disagreements-sometimes through actions which are physically or emotionally inappropriate. This is conflict, rather than bullying, but it does require remedial action by teachers.
3. The school aims to foster 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. We will work to understand why bullying behaviours have occurred and to promote more pro-social ways of behaving.

Guidelines

Definitions

1. Bullying usually has four common features:
 - It is deliberate, hurtful behaviour
 - It is repeated, often over a period of time (possibly to several different victims)
 - It is difficult for those being bullied to defend themselves
 - It is targeted at an individual or a small group
2. There are three main types of bullying:
 - Physical, eg hitting, kicking, taking of, or interference with, belongings
 - Verbal, eg name-calling, insulting, sexist, racist remarks, texts, emails
 - Emotional, eg spreading nasty stories, exclusion from groups, ostracism

Guidelines to a bully-free environment

As most bullying occurs away from adults, it is necessary to create a 'safe telling' school environment where

- Students are encouraged to report bullying incidents to a staff member
- The reporting is handled in a confidential manner so there are no repercussions for the 'teller'
- It is the school's view the 'teller' is assisting the bully by reporting their inappropriate behaviour-they need help
- Students know if they speak up they will be listened to
- Staff will take all incidents of bullying seriously
- Teachers will focus on developing healthy social behaviours in their classroom
- Reported incidents from parents, staff and students will be taken seriously and documented
 - All reported instances will be fully investigated by the teacher responsible for handling the issue



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- The school will collect and analyse bullying data, looking for trends, patterns and needs
- The school will provide a culture which promotes positive behaviour
- Investigations will address the needs of victims first and secondly the alleged bully
- To be objective and fair, the following will be considered on a case-by-case basis and as in the best interests of both parties and a positive resolution
 - i) Both parties will be informed of the problem
 - ii) Both parties will be given the opportunity to be heard and respond
 - iii) The teacher investigating will act fairly and honestly, respecting the needs of the children involved.

Parents will be involved, as is appropriate, in the problem-solving of serious or repetitive instances, which may follow the restorative justice principles. Referral to outside agencies may be considered.