



# Bullying Prevention & Response Policy

## Rationale

The St Bernadette's School Board seeks to develop high standards of behaviour and maintain a safe, physical, emotional, caring and inclusive environment so that effective teaching and learning can take place.

## Policy

All bullying behaviour, including verbal, physical, emotional and cyber bullying is completely unacceptable in our School. All instances of bullying will be taken seriously and followed up in line with this policy.

The school is committed to ensuring that all are able to work and learn and become all that God created them to be in a safe environment.

## Definition

Bullying covers a range of behaviour which is unwelcome, unsolicited and nonreciprocal.

*It may take many forms. Some examples are:*

- *intimidation verbally and/or*
- *physically, including threats or discrimination on the basis of their race, colour, culture or religious/spiritual beliefs. Indirect harassment such as spreading rumours, harmful gossip, exclusion or deliberate rudeness that is intended to harm, ridicule, diminish or marginalise*
- *Inappropriate use of emails, mobile phones or social media*
- *The creation of pages or websites that encourage or facilitate any form of harassment*
- *Sharing images of people without their explicit consent*
- *Disparaging and belittling comments*

## Education, Publicity and Prevention

Our school and class culture is deliberately and intensively the focus at the beginning of each year. We consistently work to build resilience in all staff and students by supporting people to feel connected, valued and secure at St Bernadette's.

We teach about how we will live our Mission by the way we 'SHINE'. 'SHINE' is explicitly taught and students and staff are supported to live up to that.

All members of the school community have a responsibility to recognise bullying and to take action when they are aware it is happening. Bullying could involve and affect anyone.

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The school's philosophy is made explicit to students, staff and parents in the following ways:

**Students, through:**

- the Health programme
- clear and explicit standards set by teachers in their individual classrooms
- awareness of digital citizenship and acceptable use of the Digital Technology Policy that they are required to sign prior to use
- Through these programs students will be encouraged to report harassment/bullying that occurs inside or outside the school (when it impacts on safety and learning in the school)
- They will be given clear options as to who they can approach including staff, senior students and parents
- Observers of harassment will be encouraged to report incidents

**Staff, through:**

- professional learning development
- staff exploration of SHINE
- monitoring the adherence to the 'Use of Digital Technology Policy and this Policy

**Parents/Caregivers, through:**

- Enrolment Pack, Parent Information Booklet
- school communication eg, Newsletter, Website, Facebook page
- parenting courses

**Board of Trustees, through:**

- results of student and parent/caregivers surveys
- Health and Safety reviews

Response

- All staff should treat any report of bullying, including cyberbullying, seriously and take appropriate action as outlined in this policy. She/he must first listen and make such enquiries as may be necessary to clarify exactly what has been happening.
  - All complaints, including those involving digital technology, will be dealt with speedily, fairly and in confidence, as much as is appropriate.
  - It is imperative that every effort is made to ensure that confidentiality be maintained for all parties during and after the investigation.
  - The complaint is investigated, the person reportedly doing the bullying will be spoken to.
  - It is important to "label" what the person has done, rather than labelling the person.
  - Restorative Practice may be an option at this time.
  - If the complaint is more serious, a meeting of key people may be required. The goal at the meeting will be to negotiate a pathway forward through restorative processes.
  - The help and support of outside Agencies may be sought.
  - People should be assured that they have acted correctly in reporting the bullying. They are to be given appropriate support.
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Outside School

Anyone breaching this policy while not under the jurisdiction of the school but whose action impacts on safety and learning within the school may also be dealt with according to this policy.

The Principal may:

- in cases where the facts are clear and acknowledged, support resolution by discussion between the parties
- Notify the parents/caregivers of person involved
- Arrange appropriate support if needed
- Decide on suitable consequences for learning on going forward. Check in a week or so later with both parties

Other courses of action

If "in school" remedies fail to address the reported concerns, the following courses of action are available to the complainant:

- a complaint to the Police
- A referral to NetSafe
- seek to make a complaint through the Human Rights Commission

Ratified by Board

  
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31/10/17  
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Chairperson

Date

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