



Bethel Christian School

Anti-Bullying Policy

School Vision Statement

To see young men and women and their families brought into a full relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.

School Mission Statement

To educate young men and women, within a Christian environment, so that they can realise their God-given academic, social, physical and spiritual potential.

Biblical Principles

The school's vision and mission will be achieved through corporate acceptance of the following biblical principles relating to the bullying of students:

- Scripture charges us with a duty of care toward all others. (Matthew 19:19b; Romans 12:17)
- Protecting children is a God-given charge. (Matthew 18:6 KJV; Deuteronomy 6:4-9, 20-25; 10:17-19; Proverbs 13:24, 22:6; 23:13; Isaiah 1:17, 23, 49:15; Hosea 11:1-4; Matthew 7:11; Luke 15: 11:32; Ephesians 6:4; Colossians 3:21; 1 Timothy 5:8)
- The Bible declares that we are made in the image of God. (Genesis 1:27) Therefore, all human beings are of great value. Bullying others belies the precept of man being made in the image of God.
- Children are a supreme gift from God and the Lord places great value on them. (Psalm 127:3-5; 1 Kings 17:17-23; Matthew 19:14-15).
- We must love our brother and not be led by hate to justify the bullying or harassment of another. (1 John 2:9; 1 John 3:15; Proverbs 10:12; Luke 26:27-35)
- Repentance, forgiveness and restitution are necessary steps in the process of personal change and healing. Perpetrators of bullying must be encouraged to come to repentance and seek forgiveness of God, and the one whom they've harmed. This restores the wrongdoer in the sight of God, and the hurt party, and any others involved. (1 John 1:9-10; Matthew 5:24; Matthew 18:21-35)

Policy Statement

Bethel Christian School is committed to cultivating an inclusive learning community which is safe, supportive, nurturing and free from bullying and harassment. The school will not tolerate bullying in any form. It is an offensive, injurious and anti-social practice which is condemned in all its varied and subtle nuances. Such uninvited harassment or attention involves the wilful hurting of others – verbally, physically, emotionally or socially – for personal gratification. To combat this pervasive and complex social issue, the school undertakes to educate and empower students – whether subjects of bullying or silent onlookers – to speak forthrightly against bullying, and to face offenders with grace, courage and power through the mind of Christ. Training in the formation of Christian character forms an integral part of the entire process.

Procedure

The principles and procedures outlined in the *Anti-Bullying Policy* are to be read in conjunction with the school's *Child Protection Policy*.

Definition

Bullying is the repeated practice of hurting or threatening someone with deliberate intent through the use of words, images, expressions, gestures or actions. This anti-social practice includes the following types of unacceptable behaviour:

- Threatening, teasing, name calling.
- Belittling through innuendo, double entendre and deprecation.
- Interfering with another's property.
- Writing offensive notes.
- Displaying or creating offensive images.
- Hitting, punching, shoving, and other physical abuse.
- Excluding another from the group.
- Manipulating another to conform/obey.

- Ridiculing another person's appearance, effort, viewpoint, and so on.
- Glaring or staring.
- Threatening or intimidating by expressions or gestures.
- Offering suggestive sexual comments.
- Exercising any physical violence.

Responsibilities of the School Community towards bullying:

Staff will:

- Instil in students the school's value of inclusivity of all students irrespective of differences due to race, socio-economic background, appearance, worldview, sex or ability.
- Teach students that bullying in any form is wrong, and to tolerate it without taking steps for remedial action is wrong.
- Be role models in thought, word and action, at all times.
- Be vigilant and observant for signs of distress and conflict, and possible incidents of bullying.
- Actively supervise on playground duty.
- Arrive at classrooms and designated duties, on time.
- Help students who are subjected to bullying in a supportive and sensitive manner.
- Report incidents of bullying to the appropriate staff members e.g. Class Teacher, Year Patron, Coordinator and Principal.
- Seek the Chaplain's support and spiritual counsel.
- Instil in students the knowledge of our Saviour's love for mankind and His redemptive work.
- Equip students who are subjected to bullying with the strategies needed to deal directly with the perpetrator/s.
- Empower all students to speak out forthrightly against any form of bullying.
- Collaborate with other members of the school community to promote a bully free environment.
- Ensure that perpetrators of bullying take steps, according to biblical principle, to seek forgiveness and make restitution to those whom they've harmed.
- Inform the staff of any students who are being bullied.
- Recommend external support, as necessary, including multiple agencies and the Police Liaison Officer.

Students will:

- Accept, value and include all students irrespective of differences due to race, socio-economic background, appearance, worldview, gender, ability
- Refrain from involvement in any form of bullying.
- Recognise that to keep quiet about matters of bullying supports and protects the bully, and perpetuates the practice.
- Help, support, encourage and instil confidence in the student who is being subjected to bullying.
- Refuse to be manipulated into remaining silent through fear of consequences.
- Do not participate or be a silent onlooker for fear of the bully.
- Speak out forthrightly against any form of bullying.
- Report the bullying incident to a member of staff.

Parents will:

- Teach children to accept, value and include others, irrespective of difference due to race, socio-economic background, appearance, worldview, gender or ability.
- Teach children that bullying in any form is reprehensible behaviour.
- Teach children in conflict to communicate using words, rather than resorting to violence to solve problems.
- Establish effective ways of promoting self-control in the student.
- Build confidence in children through a good parent-child relationship founded on the Word of God.
- Equip children with the strategies needed to deal directly with perpetrators of bullying.
- Empower children to speak out forthrightly against any form of bullying.
- Report incidents to the school, promptly.
- Be positive role models in thought, word and action.
- Work cooperatively with the school to find a solution.

Staff Addressing Bullying

- Low-level Bullying
 - Teachers:

- Bullying should be dealt with at the time that the incident occurs, by the class teacher, the teacher on playground duty, the teacher on the playing field, and so on. The principles outlined above should form the basis of the discussion. At this stage, students will have the opportunity to seek help from a staff member of their own choice.
 - Staff should inform colleagues at Staff Meetings of instances of low level bullying in order to raise awareness and promote vigilance with the objective of preventing such bullying from continuing.
 - Serious Bullying
 - Coordinators, Deputy and Principal:
 - Bullying of a more serious nature should be referred directly to the Coordinator.
 - The Coordinator will deal with the matter according to the steps outlined below, and also recommend that the perpetrator seeks to speak to the Chaplain for personal support and spiritual counsel. At all times, meetings with the Chaplain are to be voluntary and not mandatory.
 - In all cases, the Coordinator will inform the Deputy Principal and Principal of the details of the matter at hand.
 - If the case is particularly serious, the matter will be referred by the Coordinator directly to the Deputy Principal or Principal to be addressed in accordance with the steps outlined below.
1. Procedure for Addressing Bullying
- 1.1. Mediation Method:
- 1.1.1. The process of addressing bullying begins with the gathering of information in order to gain perspective on the situation. Written statements as well as verbal may be obtained from first hand observers
- 1.1.2. Records should be kept of all information collected and these records should be maintained in all relevant student files
- 1.1.3. Six Steps for Mediation:
- Step 1: Interview or Meet with alleged offenders
The Mediator will meet with the offending student/s and explain the purpose of the meeting. If there is more than one student involved, each will be interviewed alone. The Mediator will explain to the offending student how the bullied student has felt as a result of the offender's actions. No interrogation, accusation, blame, anger or indignant response is permitted. The aim of the Mediator should be to elicit concern, remorse and acceptance of responsibility on the part of the perpetrator/s.
- Step 2: Interview or Meet with alleged victims
The Mediator will meet with the student who has been subjected to bullying and encourage him/her to recount and reflect on the offensive incident/s. The Mediator will aim to ascertain whether the student is a passive or provocative subject. The Mediator will explore with the student how matters could be improved e.g. by learning how to relate more effectively, or, by eliciting support from others. Whilst highly supportive, at all times, the Mediator must clearly establish in the understanding of the student that he/she bears some responsibility in helping to solve the problem. The Mediator will prepare the student for a joint meeting with the bully.
- Step 3: Preparation for a Joint Meeting
The Mediator will follow-up the offender/s to monitor progress and gauge the level of motivation. This may involve a series of meetings to achieve readiness for the meeting with the student who is the subject of harassment. Readiness will result in willingness on the part of the perpetrator/s to welcome the offended student and make positive and restorative statements. The Mediator must ensure that the subject of the bullying is ready to meet with his/her perpetrator/s.
- Step 4: Joint Meeting
In a joint meeting, the student will be granted the opportunity to explain to the perpetrator/s what was done and the damaging result. The Mediator may need to articulate to the perpetrator/s the series of committed acts which constitute bullying behaviour. The student will be granted the opportunity to state what he/she would like to see happen. This is likely to involve the following:
- The offender's confession to perpetrating the harassment.
 - The offender seeking forgiveness.
 - The offender making restitution of damage to property, reputation, and so on.
 - The offender's assurance that the bullying will stop permanently.
 - Agreement regarding fitting consequences for such conduct, past or future.

- The offending student is given the chance to share his/her thoughts/feelings. If the offender avoids responsibility, the Mediator must refocus the offender's attention to the offensive behaviour.
- The Mediator will confront the bully with his/her unacceptable conduct and ask him/her to take responsibility, and, henceforth, to refrain from any form of bullying.
- A summing up of the meeting will take place where the biblical principles of both the student and the offender/s are reiterated. The objective to meet again soon to review progress will be emphasised.
- The Mediator will give the offending student/offended student an opportunity to pray.

Step 5:

Disciplinary Consequence

The Coordinator, Deputy Principal or Principal will administer appropriate disciplinary consequences for the offender's unacceptable conduct in keeping with the Behaviour Management Policy.

Step 6:

Future Review

A progress review will take place approximately two weeks later. It is important that offending students be made aware that a failure on their part to change their behaviour will result in the administration of more serious corrective disciplinary consequences.

2. Practical Considerations

2.1. Potential signs of bullying

- 2.1.1. Unexplained withdrawal and unresponsiveness
- 2.1.2. Reluctance/refusal to go to school
- 2.1.3. Stomach ache, headache, vomiting
- 2.1.4. Loss of confidence
- 2.1.5. Change of sleep pattern at home
- 2.1.6. Change in appetite
- 2.1.7. Regression of behaviour to that of a much younger person e.g. bed wetting
- 2.1.8. Unusual aggression
- 2.1.9. Unusual anger
- 2.1.10. Feigning sickness

2.2. Vulnerable Students:

- 2.2.1. Students who are new to class
- 2.2.2. Different – height and weight, intelligence, hair colour, shape of their school bag, and so on
- 2.2.3. Children with low self-esteem, including student with learning problems or family breakdowns
- 2.2.4. Children who are vulnerable due to being sufferers of abuse
- 2.2.5. Children who fail to conform
- 2.2.6. Highly sensitive children
- 2.2.7. Children who have been overprotected
- 2.2.8. Some children are bullied for no reason at all

3. Support Agencies:

- | | |
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| 3.1. Mount Druitt Police Station | 02 9675 0699 |
| 3.2. Kids Helpline | 1800 55 1800 |
| 3.3. National Centre Against Bullying | www.ncab.org.au |
| 3.4. Cybersmart | www.esafety.gov.au |
| 3.5. Anti-bullying | www.bullyingnoway.gov.au |
| 3.6. Department of Communities and Justice | www.dcj.nsw.gov.au/ |
| 3.7. Private Overseas Ombudsman | https://www.ombudsman.gov.au |

BETHEL CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

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BETHEL CHRISTIAN SCHOOL

Bullying Incident Report

PART A: OVERVIEW

Date: ___/___/___

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|--|
| Names of Students Involved: | | | |
| | | | |
| Student Reports Attached: | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | Number of attachments: | |
| Description of Situation: | | | |
| | | | |

PART B: FOLLOW UP

Date: ___/___/___

| | | | |
|---------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|-------------|
| Agreement Reached: | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | | |
| Outline of Agreement: | | | |
| | | | |
| Consequence: | | | |
| | | | |
| Staff Involved: | | | |
| Notification to Parents: | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No | Date: | ___/___/___ |
| Further Action Required: | | Further Follow-Up Date: | |
| Signature | | Date | ___/___/___ |