Anti-Bullying Policy

Brisbane Catholic Education believes everybody in our schools has the right to feel safe. Therefore bullying behaviour is unacceptable in BCE schools. (Brisbane Catholic Education, Acting Against Student Bullying- Regulations and Guidelines 2005)

At St Mary’s …..

We want our children to enjoy school through positive interactions with adults and other students in a happy and safe environment whereby they develop a sense of achievement, pride in their school and a healthy self-esteem. (School Mission Statement)

To support this end—we

Do not tolerate bullying

Definition of Bullying
A person is bullied or victimized when he or she is exposed repeatedly, and over time, to negative action on the part of one or more persons. Bullying involves:

• a desire to hurt
• a hurtful action
• a power imbalance
• [typically] rejection
• an unjust use of power
• evident enjoyment of the aggressor
• sense of being oppressed on the part of the victim

1. What is Bullying?

Physical

• Hitting, kicking, punching
• Pushing, shoving, spitting
• Making rude or threatening gestures
• Taking or damaging something which belongs to someone else
• Forcing others to hand over food, money or something that belongs to them
• Making someone do something they don’t want to
- Name calling
- Teasing
- Threatening
- Making fun of someone because of their appearance, physical characteristics, cultural or economic background
- Making fun of someone’s actions

**Indirect**
- Excluding others from the game or group
- Spreading untrue stories about others
- Placing untrue information or modified images on the internet
- Placing information on the internet about somebody without permission
- Using mobile phones to harass others.

**Prevention Programmes**
At St Mary’s we have programmes in place that engender resilience in students and assist with creating a supportive school environment.
- Programme Achieve
- School Assembly Awards
- Classroom awards
- Cool Schools-Peer mediation programme
- Break Through Bullying-anti bullying programme
- Buddy classes
- School Religious Education Programme
- School Personal Development Programme

**Early Intervention Strategies**
- Explicit classroom teaching of bullying practices and bullying prevention strategies
- Modelling of strategies at School Assemblies
- Whole school bullying surveys

**Intervention Strategies**
- Well publicised reporting and response procedures.
- Pastoral care for victims and perpetrators.
• Evaluation and review of the school policy.

2. Reporting of Bullying
In reference to the Feeling Unsafe Strategy (Brisbane Catholic Education) students are encouraged to report incidents of bullying to any one of five adults that he or she trusts, such as the school principal, a teacher, parent, school counsellor or family friend.

Incidents of bullying are dealt with in a manner consistent with the school policy as soon as possible after it is reported or observed.

3. Responding to reported incidents of bullying.

When a bullying incident is reported or observed the following steps will be taken. This process may be accelerated according to student age or the seriousness of the incident.

Step 1- An incident is reported or observed by duty teacher and then reported to the classroom teacher
Step 2- Staff member investigates the incident with the children involved referring to the What is Bullying component of the school policy
Step 3- The child displaying bullying behaviours receives an RTC (Responsible Thinking Classroom) form and is to complete a reflection sheet in the room at lunchtime. This is to be taken to the classroom teacher and, if necessary, followed up by Admin.
Step 4- Anti-bullying strategies are reviewed in the classrooms of the victim and the bully.
Step 5- Any subsequent incidents of bullying behaviour, parents are contacted via mail, requesting an interview with Admin personnel.
Step 6- Repeated incidents will necessitate the child and parents working with the school counsellor.
Step 7- Further incidents will incur suspension with re-entry interview.

Strategies for dealing with bullying
At St Mary’s we will:
• Talk openly and regularly about bullying—what it is, how it affects people and what we can do to prevent it.
• Teach the children skills that build self esteem and resilience to empower them to take responsibility for themselves.
• Clearly state our procedure for dealing with bullying

**Responsibilities of staff**
• To model appropriate behaviour at all times
• To deal with incidents of bullying as stated in our procedures
• To ensure that children are adequately supervised.
• To teach the children strategies and definitions

**Responsibilities of children**
• To have an understanding of bullying and bullying behaviours
• To report incidents of bullying that may affect them or that they observe
• To help someone who is being bullied
• To not be involved in bullying

**Responsibilities of parents**
• To support the school’s anti bullying policy by signing an agreement on admission.
• To report any incidents involving their child or other children
• To encourage their children to report incidents of bullying

5. **Evaluation of Programme**
The programme will be regularly evaluated by:
• Conducting whole school surveys twice a year.
• Discussions at Staff Meetings
• Communicating with parents whose children have been bullied.
• Class surveys as necessary

6. **Review**
The programme will be reviewed by:
• Regularly talking about our school policy at school assemblies
• Ensuring strategies and definitions are taught in the classroom
• Including our policy in the Parent Handbook and the school website.
• Reminding parents of our policy via the newsletter.