

St. George's R.C. High School

POLICY ON BULLYING

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is a conscious and deliberate verbal, physical or psychological action, which causes distress and diminishes another student's self esteem by exerting power over that student.

In our Mission Statement it is stated that at St. George's we recognise the distinctiveness of each person and ensure that each person's worth is recognised. We aim to give every pupil an equal share of resources and a commitment to individual excellence. This policy aims to support and promote those ideals.

Rationale

Incidents of bullying amongst pupils lead to their unhappiness, causes a discontentment with school and ultimately results in their underachievement. Students may be afraid and feel intimidated by verbal, physical or psychological abuse.

The aim of this policy is to promote a positive response by Christians in a Catholic School to ensure that all students are safe and secure and in line with the school's Mission Statement to encourage the growth of the whole person so that each child develops to their full potential. Incidents of bullying threaten the happy, caring and hard working atmosphere of St. George's and this document aims to ensure that all individuals are able to recognise and respond to such incidents and to prevent bullying within the school by developing self discipline and promoting respect for all members of the school community.

Guidelines for Pupils

Pupils should be made aware of their responsibilities and what to do when:

1. They are being bullied
2. When they see or know about incidents of bullying.

Pupils should, in the first instance, report the incident to an appropriate adult e.g:- teacher, other member of staff or parent.

Once an incident has been reported, it must be documented in a central location (bookshelf in the staffroom).

The Mission Statement clearly stresses the values of the individual based upon the teachings of Christ, therefore the emphasis should be placed upon reconciliation. The bully or bullies should be made aware of the feelings of those being bullied and realise that there are very serious consequences involved if such behaviour continues.

School must be a safe, supportive environment for all the pupils. This can only be achieved when there is cooperation and respect for all the people in school.

Guidelines for Staff

What to do when:

1. You witness an incident
2. An incident is reported to you

Speak and listen to the victim in order to ascertain the people involved and to understand the situation, reassure them that the matter will be dealt with. Be aware that some children are unwilling to admit that they are being bullied, whilst others may use that term freely to excuse their own behaviour. An account of the incident should be logged in the central record and the respective form teachers notified. In more serious or persistent cases parents/guardians will be informed.

Victims of bullying require great sensitivity. Confidentiality may have to be given when a third party reports to you an incident of bullying. Bullying in any form should not be ignored. All staff, especially form teachers must be aware of the possible symptoms of bullying e.g. truancy, lateness or sudden changes in patterns of behaviour.

Guidelines for Progress Managers

It is important that Progress Managers investigate all aspects of reported incidents of bullying. In serious or repeated incidents of bullying, parents should be informed. Each incident of bullying has to be assessed and sanctions carried out according to the degree of seriousness. Some possible sanctions are given below.

SANCTIONS

STAGED RESPONSE

Incident 1

Verbal warning by teacher to pupil accused of bullying and a note made of the incident in the Bullying book.

Incident 2

Interview with Progress Managers and standard letter to parents.

Incident 3

Parents called in and interviewed by senior staff with pupil present. Pupil's name placed on the Bully Register' and sanctions agreed.

Incident 4

Exclusion from school in rare instances of serious bullying (e.g. violent or persistent).

Incident 5

Referral to Governors.

ROLE OF SENIOR STAFF

Senior staff should reinforce the bullying policy at Assemblies and other appropriate occasions

