

OUR LADY OF THE NATIVITY SCHOOL

Within a nurturing environment, inclusive of all its members, we uphold the dignity of the human person.

Our Lady of the Nativity Vision Statement

Anti Bullying Policy

Our Lady of the Nativity School does not tolerate bullying.

All members of our school community are committed to providing for our children a safe and secure environment in which the children in our care can reach their potential.

All members of the school community have a right to feel safe, the right not to be intimidated, abused, threatened or physically hurt.

With the Gospel values underpinning the ethos of our school we strive to live out those values and treat all members of our school community with dignity and respect.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is an action that causes pain to another individual. It is usually deliberate.

Bullying can occur over a short or long time frame and is recurring.

Bullying can take a number of forms: verbal, physical, gesturing, extortion and exclusion.

FORMS OF BULLYING

Physical:

Includes fighting, pushing, invasion of personal space or any unwelcome contact.

Verbal:

Includes name-calling, teasing, offensive language, spreading rumours or intimidating behaviour. Verbal bullying can also include harassing the victim on the telephone or via email, msn or sms

Gesturing:

Includes offensive notes or material, graffiti or damaging others' property by vandalising, hiding or destroying it.

Extortion:

Includes standover tactics, threats to "get" people, forcing others to act against their will.

Exclusion:

Includes deliberately leaving the victim out of activities or convincing the victim's friends not to play with him/her.

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

At Our Lady of the Nativity School we realise that the bully/victim problem is the responsibility of the whole community, staff, students and parents.

This approach requires that each section of our community have their particular part to play in eliminating bullying from our school.

Staff will be expected to:

1. Be a role model for assertive rather than aggressive approaches to interpersonal interactions.
2. Be observant to signs of distress or suspected incidents of bullying.
3. Be punctual to their yard duty and supervise the playground vigilantly.
4. Be punctual to class and when collecting their classes from their lines.
5. Take steps to help victims, listen to concerns and offer support and assistance.
6. Follow designated intervention procedures.
7. Take in to consideration parental concerns.
8. Follow up any reports of bullying.

Students will be encouraged and supported to:

1. Refuse to be involved in any bullying incidents.
2. Take affirmative action if they are aware of any bullying incidents
3. Tell a staff member if they know of any bullying incidents.
4. Show bullies that they disapprove of the bullying behaviour.
5. Tell Parents and their class teacher if they believe they are being bullied.

Parents are advised to:

1. Watch for signs of distress in their children, for example, unwillingness to attend school, bedwetting, “clingy” behaviour, equipment or money disappearing, requests for money.
2. Advise your child to report any bullying incidents to you, the parents and the teachers or Principal.
3. If possible allow your child to report and deal with the problem him/herself.
4. Inform the school if bullying is suspected.
5. Do not encourage your child to retaliate.
6. Attend interviews at school to help with the resolution of the problem.
7. Reassure your child that they will have the full support of parents and the school.
8. Parents should not approach children on the playground.

PROCEDURES TO COUNTERACT BULLYING BETWEEN STUDENTS

The following procedures will be incorporated into Our Lady of the Nativity School to prevent bullying from occurring:

1. Our Lady of the Nativity School will develop an anti-bullying component into its curriculum.
2. A Buddy system whereby a younger child is teamed up with an older student will continue at OLN.
3. The Peer Support System will be investigated with the view to possible implementation.
4. Provide advice to parents how to ascertain if their child is a bully or a victim and how to assist their child.

In the event that bullying does occur the following procedures will be carried out by the class teachers of the children involved: At all times the focus of the questioning will be restorative, exploring the harm done to the relationships and how it can be repaired.

1. No Blame Approach to Bullying

Step 1 Interview the victim

Find out what happened. Focus on the feelings of the student.

Step 2 Convene a meeting

Include all those involved.

Step 3 Share Responsibilities

Communicate with the group how the victim feels and do not attribute Blame

Step 4 Attribute Responsibility

Communicate expectations that the group can solve the problem

Step 5 Identify Solutions

Encourage each member to contribute ideas and select practical Solutions

Step 6 Meet them again

Discuss progress

Parents of those involved should be notified and support given to them.

2. No Tolerance Approach to Bullying

This procedure will be carried out if the bullying is persistent and/or serious

“A serious offence” is defined the “Pastoral Care in Catholic Schools” document as:

- a. An activity or behaviour, which seriously undermines the ethos of the Catholic school.
- b. Affects the rights of teachers and/or students to participate in the teaching and/or learning process.
- c. Endangers the physical and/or welfare of the student and/or teachers.
- d. Interferes with the day-to-day running of the school.

The following procedure will take place:

1. The Student Welfare Group is notified of serious and persistent bullying.
2. The Student Welfare Group will:
 - a. Convene a meeting as soon as possible following the decision that a student has committed a serious offence.
 - b. Consider all issues relevant to the behaviour of the student and the implications for others in the community.
 - c. Identify strategies, which will enable the student to re-establish his/her place in the life of the school.
 - d. Determine the appropriate steps required to meet these objectives.
 - e. Consider the support and resources available from both within and outside the school to assist in implementing the action.
 - f. Ensure that accurate records of decisions are kept and that decisions are implemented.

Should this ‘serious’ behaviour continue the Catholic Education Office Pastoral Care Offices will be requested to advise Our Lady of the Nativity School.