St Mary of the Cross Catholic Primary School

Cyber Bullying Policy 2019

Definition

Bullying is when someone, or a group of people, upset or create a risk to another person's health and safety – either psychologically or physically – or their property, reputation or social acceptance on more than one occasion.

Bullies deliberately set out to intimidate, exclude, threaten and/or hurt others repeatedly.

Bullying is a clear form of harassment.

People who use the internet, email, intranets, phones or similar technologies to bully others are cyber bullies.

Rationale

- Bullying in any form is unacceptable. Bullying that is carried out through an internet service, such as email, internet, chat room, discussion group or instant messaging or through mobile phone technologies such as short messaging service (SMS) is cyber bullying. Cyber bullying will not be tolerated at any level, and consequences exist for students who choose to bully others.

Aims

- To reinforce within the school community that bullying in any form, including cyber bullying, is unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

- Everyone within the St Mary of the Cross community is to be alert to signs and evidence of cyber bullying and has a responsibility to report it to staff whether as observer or victim.

- To ensure that all reported incidents of cyber bullying are investigated appropriately and that support is given to both victims and perpetrators.

Implementation

- Parents, teachers, students will be made aware of the school's position on cyber bullying. Teachers will be regularly reminded of their duty of care regarding protection of students from all forms of bullying.

- The school will adopt a four-phase approach to bullying.

A.   Primary Prevention

i.   Professional development for staff relating to all forms of bullying including cyber bullying. Harassment and proven counter measures.

ii.   Educate the school community about the seriousness of cyber bullying, its impact on those being bullied and how this behaviour is unacceptable.

iii.   Community awareness and input relating to bullying (including cyber-bullying), its characteristics and the schools' programs and response.

iv.   Provide programs that promote resilience, life and social skill, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving.

v.   A student bullying survey will be administered twice annually to ensure up to date data.

vi.   Each homeroom teacher to clarify with students at the start of each year the school policy on bullying, including cyber-bullying.

vii.   All students to be provided with individual and confidential computer and network log ins and passwords.

viii.   Processes to be put in place to ensure tracking of student activity on the school's computer equipment and network.

ix.   Firewalls to be installed to eliminate outside traffic into the school's network and intranet.

x.   The use of mobile phones by students will be limited with consequences for any students who use mobile phones inappropriately.

xi.   The curriculum to include anti-bullying messages and strategies eg: 'The Friendly Schools' and 'No Blame Approach to Bullying' programs.

xii.   St Mary of the Cross will become a 'No Put Downs' school.

B.   Early Intervention

i.   Encourage children and staff to report bullying incidents involving themselves or others.

ii.   Classroom teachers and principal on a regular basis reminding students and staff to report incidents of bullying.

iii.   Regular monitoring of student traffic on school's computer networks to identify potential problems.

iv.   Parents encouraged to contact school if they become aware of a problem.

v.   Public recognition and reward for positive behaviour and resolution of problems

C.   Intervention

i.   Once identified each bully, victim and witnesses will be spoken with, and all incidents or allegations of bullying will be fully investigated and documented.

ii.   Parents of both parties will be contacted by the Principal/Deputy Principal.

iii.   Students and staff identified by others as bullied will be informed of allegations.

iv.   Both bullies and victims will be offered counselling and support.

v.   Removal of cyber bullies from access to the school's network and computers for a period of time. Loss of privilege to bring a mobile phone to school for students who bully via SMS or similar telephone functions.

vi.   If student bullying persists parents will be contacted and consequences implemented

D.   Post Violation

i.   Consequences for students will be individually based and may involve:-
        exclusion from class.
        exclusion from yard.
        school suspension.
        withdrawal of privileges.
        ongoing counselling from appropriate agency for both victim and bully.

ii.   Reinforcement of positive behaviours.

iii.   Support Structures put into place.

iv.   Ongoing monitoring of identified bullies.

v.   Rewards of positive behaviour

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed as part of the School Improvement Plan, Wellbeing sphere.