

St. Joseph School *of* All Saints Parish



Bullying Policy

BULLYING POLICY

Bullying is an act of serious disrespect and is contrary to the values of a Catholic Christian school. Bullying and harassment will not be tolerated at St. Joseph School. Every incident of bullying must be reported to a teacher and to the principal. Bullies, victims, and witnesses will be interviewed, parents will be called, and appropriate disciplinary action will be forthcoming as determined by the school policy. This policy is to be applied to grade K-8.

DEFINITIONS:

Aggressor is a student who engages in bullying, cyber bullying, or retaliation.

Bullying is the REPEATED use by one or more students of a written, verbal or electronic expression or a physical act or gesture or any combination thereof, directed at a target that: (i) causes physical or emotional harm to the target or damage to the target's property; (ii) places the target in reasonable fear of harm to him/herself or of damage to his/her property; (iii) creates a hostile environment at school for the target; (iv) infringes on the rights of the target at school; (v) materially and substantially disrupts the education process or the orderly operation of the school.

Bullying in violation of the school policy must be "repeated against the same student over time". An isolated incident, however egregious, is not "bullying" under state law and school policy. Also, numerous acts of misconduct against different students do not constitute "bullying" under state law and school policy. While serious in nature, these acts will be appropriately addressed under the school's discipline policy and will be entered into a log to ensure a pattern of bullying behavior does not develop.

Cyber bullying is bullying through the use of technology or any electronic devices such as telephones, cell phones, computers, and the internet. It includes, but is not limited to, e-mail, instant messages, text messages, and internet postings.

Hostile environment is a situation in which bullying causes the school environment to be permeated with intimidation, ridicule, or insult that is sufficiently severe or pervasive to alter the conditions of the student's education.

Target is a student against whom bullying, cyber bullying, or retaliation is directed.

Retaliation is any form of intimidation, reprisal, or harassment directed against a student who reports bullying, provides information during an investigation of bullying, or witnesses or has reliable information about bullying.

COMPLAINT PROCESS

Informal complaints

Students may make informal complaints of conduct that they consider to be bullying by verbal report to a teacher or administrator. These complaints shall be reasonably specific as to the actions giving rise to the suspicion of bullying, including time and place of the conduct, the number of such incidents, the target of the suspected bullying, and the names of any potential student or staff witnesses. Students who make an informal complaint as set forth may request that their name be maintained in confidence by the teacher, or administrator who receives the complaint. Should this be requested, the principal or his/her designee will meet with the student to review the request and the impact that maintaining anonymity of the complaint may have on the investigation and/or possible action taken. The individual who receives the informal complaint shall promptly forward a written complaint, including the information provided to the principal for review and action.

Formal complaints

Students and/or parents or guardians may file written reports of conduct they consider to be bullying. These written reports shall be reasonably specific as to the actions giving rise to the suspicions of bullying including time and place of the conduct, the number of such incidents, the target of such suspected bullying, and the names of any potential student or staff witnesses. These reports are available at the school and can be filed with any teacher, who will forward them to the principal, or given directly to the principal, for review and action.

INVESTIGATIONS OF COMPLAINTS

Once a complaint has been reported, the principal or his/her designee shall promptly investigate to determine if bullying has occurred. If an act is severe, with the intent to humiliate, harass, ridicule or intimidate a child, it may be reported in a log that may be used over time to prevent and/or identify a pattern of bullying behavior. Information in the log is confidential and will not be a part of a student's school record. Investigation of alleged bullying may also include interviews and conversations with students (witnesses, target, and the student accused of bullying), parents, faculty, staff and reviewing school records. Parents of students filing a complaint and named in complaint will be made aware of the investigation.

A written report of the above shall be prepared when the investigation is complete. Such report will include conversation notes, incident report, investigation report, and an action plan review.

CONSEQUENCES OF ACTIONS

Once the investigation is complete, the principal shall determine the consequences for the individual(s) on a case-by-case age appropriate basis. It is important to note that bullying can take many forms and can vary vastly in seriousness. Therefore, there is no one response to verified acts of bullying. When conduct rises to the level of "bullying" as explained, discipline action will be warranted against the aggressor. Whether and to what extent this action will be is

a matter for the professional discretion of the principal. It is the goals of the administration and faculty to have the child achieve learning, and refrain from the act of bullying. When verified acts of bullying are identified early and/or when acts do not reasonably require a disciplinary response, students may be counseled as to the definition of bullying and its consequences, and their duty to avoid conduct that will lead to it.

DISCIPLINARY INTERVENTIONS/ACTIONS

When acts of bullying have been investigated and verified and a disciplinary response is warranted, students are subject to the full range of disciplinary consequences. These may include one or a combination of the following as determined on a case-by-case basis:

1. Community service to be performed at the school
2. Make amends with the target (possible restitution if required)
3. Be assigned composing a written apology – to be signed by parent
4. Loss of recess
5. Detention –lunch or after school hours
6. Loss of participation on field trips
7. in-school suspension
8. Suspension from school
9. Face expulsion



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Bullying Incident Reporting Form

Person Reporting: _____ Date: _____

I am a:
_____ Student _____ Parent _____ Staff Member _____ Other

Name of person being bullied: _____

Location of incident: _____

Date of incident: _____

Name of alleged bully: _____

Type of Event:

_____ **Physical Bullying** – hitting, kicking, shoving, spitting, other physical aggression

_____ **Verbal Bullying** – teasing, name calling, put downs, or other behavior (in person or online) that would hurt others feelings or make them feel bad.

_____ **Emotional Bullying** – starting rumors, telling others to not be friends with someone, demeaning comments intimidation, extorting, or other actions that would cause someone to be without friends.

_____ **Cyber Bullying** – using an electronic medium to engage in any previously mentioned bullying.

Description of incident (please be specific – location, date, time)

Did you witness the event? _____

List other school community members who witnessed the event: _____

Signature of Student: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Staff Member: _____ Date: _____