



# St. Felix Primary School

## Anti-Bullying Policy

At St Felix Catholic Primary School we believe that Jesus Christ is the central force and light, guiding us as we strive to educate the children as unique members of our school community. With our school motto '**Lux Mundi-Light of the World (SHINE)**' the community of St. Felix is challenged each day to bring the fullness of life, as promised by Jesus, in all that we do and to all those whom we encounter.

"Bullying is deliberate psychological, emotional and/or physical harassment. It is cruel, wilful, aggressive and repetitive behaviour that thrives on an imbalance of power. For the bully, it can become a nasty, ingrained habit that affords a short-term high, hence the need for repetition. For the bullied child, the outcomes can be devastating."<sup>1</sup>

### **Bullying behaviour is not tolerated at St Felix Catholic Primary School.**

St Felix Catholic Primary School is committed to developing an educational and organisational culture based on mutual trust and respect that assists people to recognise and develop their personal capabilities. **Any type of bullying is contrary to Gospel values and the system's Vision Statement.** These values and principles are outlined in the following statement.

As partners in Catholic Education, we commit ourselves to developing authentic Catholic schools which:

- are founded on the person of Jesus Christ and enlivened by the Gospel
- highlight the relevance of our faith to life and contemporary culture
- are embedded within the community of believers and share in the evangelising mission of the church
- are committed to the development of the whole person

### **Flowing from our Vision**

The key to good teaching and learning in our schools is the learning environment and the quality of this environment is significantly determined by the human relationships within the school.

Pastoral Care cannot be thought of in separate terms from the teaching and learning within the school; it is a key determinant of successful learning.

Good Pastoral Care is exemplified by:

- quality teaching and learning
- good discipline
- high expectations of student performance
- teachers caring for students at the human level

### **Quality of Relationships**

In the school's daily and routine life, the ways in which people interact with each other significantly affect each person's sense of self-worth, belonging and well-being.

*The fostering of high-quality interpersonal relationships among teachers, students, parents and staff is a responsibility shared by everyone at St Felix Catholic Primary School Bankstown.*

### **Effective networks of care**

Pastoral Care involves every member of the St Felix Catholic Primary School Community. A commitment to partnership and shared responsibility among staff, students, parents and other family members is an integral feature of pastoral care.

The **Restorative Justice Program** is a whole school commitment to developing and maintaining quality relationships. It established a philosophy and a set of practices that reflect a commitment to inclusiveness and collaborative problem solving.

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<sup>1</sup> Catholic Education Office Sydney, 2010

### **Affective *Restorative Justice* Questions for parents and teachers include:**

- What happened? **Incident**
- How did it happen?
- How did you act in this situation?
  
- Who do you think was affected? **Affect**
- How were they affected?
- How where you affected?
  
- What needs to happen to make things right? **Solution**
  
- If the same situation happens again, how could you act differently? **Learning**

### **The impact of bullying**

- Bullying behaviour stops an individual from feeling comfortable in a school's shared environment.
- Bullying behaviour can also adversely affect the long-term emotional and social development of the bully. Bullying impacts on the school community as a whole.

At St Felix Catholic Primary School we strive to ensure all students are able to learn and work in an environment where they feel safe and are free from bullying and/or violence.

We seek every opportunity to encourage school staff, parents and students to work together to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills that support learning, positive behaviour and constructive social relationships. We implement policies and strategies guided by current research on effective approaches to the prevention of bullying and violence.

### **What is bullying? (A child's *definition*)**

'Bullying is when someone (or a group of people) with **more power** than you **repeatedly** and **intentionally** uses negative words and/or actions against you, which causes you distress and **risks your wellbeing**'.<sup>2</sup>

Bullying is repeated psychological or physical oppression of a less powerful person or group of persons by a more powerful person or group of persons that creates a risk to mental and physical health and safety. (Rigby, 1996)

### **Bullying is:**

- ongoing in nature
- is encouraged by another's pain, distress, fear and humiliation.

Bullying may manifest itself in the form of emotional, social, verbal and/or physical incidents, all of which will cause distress.

Examples of bullying include:

- **Physical:** hitting; pushing; tripping; kicking; spitting on others.
- **Verbal:** teasing; using offensive names; yelling or screaming abuse; constant criticism of a person; inappropriate comments about a person's appearance.
- **Non-verbal:** writing offensive notes, in any medium; graffiti about others; rude gestures.
- **Psychological and Cyberbullying:** spreading rumours; hiding or damaging possessions; inappropriate use of information technologies, such as using email, websites/social media or text messaging to hurt others; using the internet or mobile phones to spread rumours or misinformation; unauthorised use of camera phones to cause harm to others.
- **Social- Emotional:** deliberately excluding others from a group; refusing to sit next to someone; overtly encouraging other people to actively ignore or avoid a person.
- **Extortion:** threatening to take someone's possession, food or money.
- **Property:** stealing, hiding, damaging or destroying property.

### **Bullying isn't:**

- mutual arguments and disagreements
- single episodes of social rejection or dislike
- single-episode acts of nastiness or spite
- random acts of aggression or intimidation

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<sup>2</sup> National Centre Against Bullying

Bullying is a **serious** problem.  
Bullying is **everyone's responsibility**.  
Bullying **hurts**.

**If it happens to you, tell someone!**

### **How parents can help**

Although no parent can 'bully-proof' a child, the risk of being bullied can be reduced by parents who are responsive to a child's needs, employ an authoritative (not authoritarian) style of parenting and help their child to develop into a friendly and cooperative individual.

If bullying occurs it is best be tackled by parents and teachers working together.

Parents can play an important part in a number of ways:

- Through reducing the risk that their children will be bullied through responsive and responsible, non-authoritarian parenting
- Through helping their children to acquire good interpersonal skills, especially making friends and acting assertively when necessary.
- In supporting their children if they do become involved in bully/victim difficulties at school and being prepared to share the problem and work collaboratively with the school to solve it.

### **If your child is being bullied...**

- Calmly speak to your child about the bullying
- If your child has difficulty discussing it with you, use stories or play to get information or suggest they speak to someone they trust but perhaps is not related. Talking about similar problems experienced by other children or reading stories about it may help the child think about the problem and consider possible solutions.
- Explain to your child that 'telling' is different to 'telling tales' or 'dobbing in' – 'telling' is when you are worried and need help. 'Telling tales' or 'dobbing in' is when you just want to get someone else into trouble
- Find out as much information as you can about:
  - What happened
  - Who was involved
  - When it happened
  - Where it happened
  - Who else saw it happen
  - How they responded to the bullying
  - How often it happens
- Record the information so that you can accurately share it with the **school**.
- After speaking with your child, make a time to speak to your child's teacher.

Actions that the school may take include:

- Loss of privileges/restrictions
- Parental interview
- Behaviour Management Program
- Social Skills Program
- Counselling

**All reports of bullying will be taken seriously.**

### **Website links for parents and children**

<http://www.ceosyd.catholic.edu.au>

<http://www.kenrigby.net/>

<http://www.ncab.org.au/>

[http://www.ncab.org.au/Assets/Files/AMF\\_BullyingHurts\\_DL\\_final.pdf](http://www.ncab.org.au/Assets/Files/AMF_BullyingHurts_DL_final.pdf)

<http://www.cybersmart.gov.au/Parents.aspx>

<http://www.maritsyc.com.au>