

St Patrick's Catholic School, Katanning



Dealing with Bullying, Harassment, Aggression and Violence Policy

"The Catholic school will be concerned with the development of students as responsible, inner-directed individuals of Christian virtue, capable of free choice and of making value-judgements enlightened by formed Christian conscience." Bishop's Mandate p13

RATIONALE:

St Patrick's has a responsibility to provide an educational environment that promotes the dignity and respect of the person and, therefore, aims to encourage the development of positive relationships between students (and all members of our community) and to reduce behaviour issues including all forms of bullying, harassment, aggression and violence. The policies and practices that a school employs should enhance the dignity of the human person and reflect the Principles of Pastoral Care as espoused in the Pastoral Care Framework (2007).

Learning outcomes, physical health, emotional, psychological and spiritual wellbeing can be adversely affected by bullying, harassment, aggression and violence. Students who are bullied, subject to aggression or harassed tend to have poorer health, lower self-esteem, more interpersonal difficulties, higher levels of loneliness, depression, suicidal ideation and increased anxiety. They are also more likely to have a dislike of and want to avoid school, higher absenteeism and lower academic competence. The effects of bullying can begin early in life and, for some, last a lifetime.

AIM:

At St Patrick's we aim to create an environment where students' rights to learn and feel safe are appreciated. We aim to provide an environment that is positive and challenging, allowing students to reach their full potential. We aim to provide an environment where rules are applied consistently, fairly and consequentially.

At St Patrick's, we aim to provide an environment where our school motto "Concern" and our shared values flourish.

Concern for God

Concern for Self

Concern for Others

PRINCIPLES:

At St Patrick's, we deal with bullying, harassment, aggression and violence based on Gospel values. For example:

- We promote a positive approach to dealing with students, staff and families at all times.
- We aim to promote a safe, caring and respectful environment, based on the dignity of the human person 'created in the image and likeness of God.
- We affirm the rights of all members of the school community to feel safe and be safe at school.
- We acknowledge that being safe and supported at school is essential for student wellbeing and effective learning.
- We accept responsibility for developing and sustaining safe and supportive learning and teaching communities that also fulfil the school's child protection responsibilities.
- We encourage the active participation of all school community members in developing and maintaining a safe school community where diversity is valued.
- We actively support young people to develop understanding and skills to keep themselves and others safe.
- We commit to developing a safe school community through a whole-school and evidence-based approaches.
- the use of any form of *child abuse*, *corporal punishment* or other *degrading punishment* to manage student behaviour is explicitly forbidden.

These terms are defined in accordance with the *Guide to Registration Standards and Other Requirements for Non-Government Schools:* *child abuse*

At St Patrick's we have implemented the following 10 elements in order to create a safe learning environment for our students:

1. Leadership commitment to a safe school
2. A supportive and connected school culture
3. Policies and procedures
4. Professional learning
5. Positive behaviour management focussed on relationships
6. Implementation of the Catholic Education Child Safety framework
7. A focus on student wellbeing and student ownership
8. Early intervention and targeted support
9. Partnerships with families and community
10. Student Code of Conduct in line with our school values

At St Patrick's, the staff, students and parents exercise the following roles and responsibilities:

Rights:

- The right to learn
- The right to feel safe
- Be treated with courtesy and respect
- To be listened to
- To deal with situations and communicate in a positive and professional manner
- To feel like they belong
- The need for confidentiality and privacy

Responsibilities:

- Treating others with courtesy and respect
- Listen to others
- To be active participants in the faith life of the school community
- Acceptance/understanding of all members of the school community (empathy/dignity)
- Maintain open communication

- Foster Confidentiality and privacy

DEFINITIONS:

Harassment, Aggression and Violence:

- These may be seen as one-off behaviours and reactive to the moment. For example, fighting, swearing, teasing. If the behaviour is repeated it may be classified as bullying.

Bullying:

- Is a repeated and unjustifiable behaviour
- Is intended to cause fear, distress and/or harm to another by threatening, intimidating, tormenting, harassing and/or hurting
- May be physical, verbal or indirect /relational
- Is conducted by a more powerful individual or group
- Is against an individual or group who is unable to effectively resist.

Types of Bullying

	Direct	Indirect
Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hitting, Slapping, Punching • Kicking, Tripping • Pushing, Strangling • Spitting, Biting, Stabbing • Pinching, Scratching • Throwing things, e.g. stones 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting another person to physically harm someone
Non-Physical Verbal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mean and hurtful name-calling • Hurtful teasing • Demanding money or possessions • Forcing another to do homework, perform particular actions or commit offences such as stealing • Cyber-Bullying 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spreading nasty rumours • Trying to get other students to not like someone
Non-Physical Non-Verbal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Threatening and/or obscene gestures • Cyber-Bullying 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliberate exclusion from a group or activity • Removing and hiding and/or damaging belongings

Child Abuse

The use of any form of *child abuse*, *corporal punishment* or other *degrading punishment* to manage student behaviour is explicitly forbidden.

These terms are defined in accordance with the *Guide to Registration Standards and Other Requirements for Non-Government Schools: child abuse*

Four forms of child abuse are covered by Western Australian law:

1. Physical abuse occurs when a child is severely and/or persistently hurt or injured by an adult or a child’s caregiver.
2. Sexual abuse, in relation to a child, includes sexual behaviour in circumstances where:
 - a) the child is the subject of bribery, coercion, a threat, exploitation or violence;
 - b) the child has less power than another person involved in the behaviour; or

- c) there is a significant disparity in the developmental function or maturity of the child and another person involved in the behaviour.
- 3. Emotional abuse includes:
 - a) psychological abuse; and
 - b) being exposed to an act of family and domestic violence.
- 4. Neglect includes failure by a child's parents to provide, arrange or allow the provision of:
 - a) adequate care for the child; or
 - b) effective medical, therapeutic or remedial treatment for the child.
- *corporal punishment*
Any punishment in which physical force is used and intended to cause some degree of pain or discomfort, however light; typically involving hitting the child with the hand or with an implement; can also include, for example, forcing the child to stay in an uncomfortable position. It does not include the use of reasonable physical restraint to protect the child or others from harm [from UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *General Comment No. 8* (2006), paragraphs 11 and 15: CRC/C/GC/8, 2 March 2007].
- *degrading punishment*
Any punishment which is incompatible with respect for human dignity, including corporal punishment and non-physical punishment which belittles, humiliates, denigrates, scapegoats, threatens, scares or ridicules the child [from UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, *General Comment No. 8* (2006), paragraphs 11 and 16: CRC/C/GC/8, 2 March 2007]."

SCHOOL RULES, EXPECTATIONS AND PARENT COMMUNICATION

Harassment, Aggression, violence and bullying will not be tolerated at St Patrick's. Whilst efforts will be made to reconcile differences and attend to the perpetrators needs, initial effort will go towards the victim and the perpetrator will receive consequences appropriate to their behaviour.

Student behavior will be monitored via the use of Class Dojo. Class Dojo allows for instant messaging to parents and allows for parents to track their child's behaviour throughout the day. In more extreme cases, parents will be notified via phone by either the class teacher, Assistant Principal or the Principal. Pastoral care notes will also be tracked through SEQTA software.

All students are aware of our school rules and expectations, and as such, breaking these rules will be dealt with accordingly.

Appropriate and Inappropriate Behaviours, and Varying Levels of Consequence

Every action has a consequence. Acknowledgement and recognition of acceptable behaviour, positive changes and continued effort are powerful ways to encourage appropriate behaviour. Likewise, appropriate consequences need to follow irresponsible behaviour.

At the class level:

- Teachers and students establish rules and guidelines for acceptable class behaviour.
- School rules displayed in each classroom.
- The teacher employs a behaviour plan that is made explicit to students and parents.
- Individual behaviour plans are developed for students with specific needs.
- Positive behaviours are encouraged and affirmed through Class Dojo and/or "Concern" cards. Negative behaviours are monitored and dealt with accordingly.
- Pastoral care notes will also be tracked through SEQTA software.

At the school level:

- Staff, students and parents are made familiar with both the staff and student 'Codes of Conduct'.
- All staff *consistently* employ the school behaviour plan, making it explicit to students and parents.
- Positive behaviours are encouraged and affirmed through Class Dojo and/or "Concern" cards. Negative behaviours are monitored and dealt with accordingly.

- Pastoral care notes will also be tracked through SEQTA software.

At all times, the onus will be on students to take responsibility for their behaviour, to make appropriate decisions and when they do/do not, accept the consequences of such as appropriate to their level of maturity. Consequences may include, but not limited to:

- loss of Dojo's
- being removed to a buddy class
- being sent to the office
- missing out on recess or lunch, or both
- completing a reflection sheet
- receiving in-office instruction
- notifying parents
- missing out of whole school events

Buddy Classes:

When appropriate, students will be removed from class and placed in a buddy class for a time appropriate to their level of maturity and within reason. This step should happen before students are sent to the office; however, there will be occasions when students are sent to the office dependant on severity of their behaviour. Buddy classes are as follows:

- Year 5/6 to Year 1/2
- Year 3/4 to K/PP
- K/PP to Year 3/4
- Year 1/2 to Year 5/6

STAFF:

In the event a staff member is feeling bullied, staff are asked to speak to the schools Harassment Officer (Mrs Helen Robinson) or Principal, dependant on who the accused is. If this is not possible, staff may wish to contact the regional officer who represents the school.

Staff deemed to be engaged in or seen to be inciting bullying, harassment, violence or aggression will be issued with a written warning.

IN CONCLUSION:

The dignity of all will be respected and every opportunity will be made to reconcile differences. Harassment, aggression, violence and bullying will not be tolerated at St Patrick's.

Revised: 2019

Review: 2021