



**St. John Vianney's Mulgrave
Bullying Prevention Policy**

Bullying Prevention Policy

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1. Rationale

The dignity of the human person is the foundation of all Catholic social teaching and inherent to our education ministry. The Catholic Education Commission of Victoria (CECV) and Catholic Education Melbourne (CEM) recognises the right of all students to feel safe and be free from bullying.

At St. John Vianney's, we do not tolerate bullying, harassment or violence in any form and we believe bullying can have a serious long-term impact on one's sense of self-worth, personal growth and self-esteem. Every person has the right to feel safe from verbal, physical and emotional abuse.

Students and staff are to adhere to our behaviour code:

- *People feel safe*
- *Teachers can teach*
- *Students can learn*
- *We look after each other and our belongings*
- *We do our best*

As a result, St. John Vianney's has zero tolerance for bullying.

2. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to demonstrate the strong commitment of St. John Vianney's Mulgrave to the care, safety and wellbeing of all students at our school. It provides an outline of the policies, procedures and strategies developed to keep students safe from harm, including all forms of bullying (including, but not limited to: physical, verbal, social and cyber) in our school environment, on campus, online and in other locations provided by the school.

Furthermore, the aim of the policy is to:

- Alert the school community to signs and evidence of bullying or harassment and their responsibility in reporting it to staff whether as observer or victim.
- Ensure that all reported incidents of bullying or harassment are followed up and that support is given to both victim and perpetrator.
- Seek parental and peer-group support and co-operation at all times.
- Empower students to tell adults when bullying or harassment occurs.

This policy applies to St. John Vianney's school staff, including school employees, volunteers, contractors, parents and carers, and students.

3. Definitions used in this Policy

The Australian Government website www.bullyingnoway.gov.au/teachers/index.html states that:

"Bullying is an ongoing misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that causes physical and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power over one or more persons. Bullying can happen in person or online, and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert).

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders.

Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying. However, these conflicts still need to be addressed and resolved."

Bullying may occur in relation to but is not restricted to:

- culture
- gender
- race
- ability or disability
- physical appearance
- beliefs
- age
- religion
- economic status
- sexual harassment
- homophobia

Types of bullying include direct physical bullying, direct verbal bullying, indirect bullying and cyberbullying.

3.1 Direct physical bullying

Direct physical bullying includes:

- punching, kicking or pushing;
- interfering with or damaging property;
- offensive gestures, notes or material .

3.2 Direct verbal bullying

Direct verbal bullying includes:

- threatening, verbal abuse;
- shouting ;
- teasing.

3.3 Indirect bullying

Indirect bullying includes:

- spreading rumours;
- deliberately excluding someone from activities or events;
- victimising someone because that person has made a complaint, is proposing to make a complaint, has helped someone else make a complaint and/or is acting as a witness to a complaint;
- mimicking.

3.4 Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying includes behaviour that constitutes direct and indirect bullying using digital technologies such as a mobile phone or over the internet on social networking sites such as Facebook or Twitter.

3.5 What bullying is not

Bullying is not:

- single episodes of social rejection or dislike;
- single episode acts of nastiness or spite;
- random acts of aggression or intimidation;

- mutual arguments, disagreements or fights.

These actions can cause great distress and should be addressed; however they are not examples of bullying unless actions are *deliberate and repeated*.

For conduct to constitute as bullying there does not have to be any intention to cause harm or discomfort. Every individual should therefore consider how their conduct could be perceived by others, even in circumstances where they think their behaviour is acceptable.

(See Appendix: *Further Definitions of Bullying*)

4. Roles and Responsibilities

4.1 The Role of School Staff:

Staff at St. John Vianney's have the responsibility to:

- model appropriate behaviours to all members of the SJV School Community at all times;
- address all reported and observed incidents immediately in accordance with the steps set out in this policy;
- discharge their duty of care to students; and
- report incidents of bullying to parents, the Principal, Deputy Principal and Student Wellbeing Leader.

If a bullying situation is reported to the school, the following steps will be adhered to;

1. The complaint will be investigated by the classroom teacher and / or a member of the School Leadership Team
2. The complaint will be documented for future reference
3. If the complaint is shown to have substance, then the following process will be adhered to:
 - a. The complaint will be managed with a sense of urgency which may include restrictions on play areas and interactions with others.
 - b. The investigation will include the classroom teacher, a member of the Leadership team and the children involved.
 - c. Restorative conversations for the victim and the bully in the presence of the classroom teacher and a member of the Leadership team (This will only occur if deemed appropriate).
 - d. Appropriate peer support for a student who has been bullied will be organised.
 - e. Notifications to all parents and carers will occur.
 - f. If appropriate, a Behaviour Plan will be formulated for a student found to have bullied another student.
 - g. Counselling/support for the victim and the bully may be offered.

When assessing action to be taken in response to particular reports of bullying conduct, the need to provide the utmost support for the victim will be given paramount consideration.

4.2 The Role of Students:

All students at St. John Vianney's have a responsibility to:

- not engage in bystander behaviour; and
- assist a peer if they are being bullied by reporting it to a teacher; and
- not bully others; and
- if possible, screenshot cyberbullying and report this to a teacher and parent.

4.3 The Role of Parents and Carers

Parents and Carers at St. John Vianney's have the responsibility to be our partners in bullying prevention by:

- being aware of the signs of bullying, for example, unwillingness to attend school, damaged clothes, pattern of feeling unwell, and missing equipment;
- informing the classroom teacher or Principal as soon as possible if they become aware of bullying behaviour;
- supporting their child to inform a teacher if he/she is being bullied or has observed it; and
- providing the school with screenshots of cyberbullying where possible.

Parents and carers are not to approach a student alleged to have engaged in bullying conduct to their child. Rather, parents and carers should address their concerns to their child's classroom teacher, a member of the School Leadership Team or the Principal.

5. Preventative measures

At St. John Vianney's we take prevention of bullying very seriously. The following initiatives support this:

- the teaching of explicit relationships skills through Social and Emotional Learning in each classroom supported by the Right, Resilience and Respectful Relationship documents
- circle time
- positive behaviour for Learning support from CEM
- buddy bench & school wide buddy program
- school Representative Council
- provide staff with ongoing professional learning related to bullying
- provide material and resources on bullying, resilience, social skills and social emotional learning regularly in level and school newsletters, school website
- celebration of social inclusion on days such as Harmony Day and Day of Action Against Bullying

6. Related Policies

6.1 Catholic Education Melbourne Policies

6.2 School Policies

- ICT / Cyber Safety Policy
- Responsible use of Social Media Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Parents Code of Conduct
- Positive Behavior Management Policy

7. Additional resources

- National Centre Against Bullying - Alannah and Madeline Foundation
- National Safe Schools Framework
- Safe Schools Hub
- Bullying No Way: www.bullyingnoway.gov.au
- Beyou
- Lifeline: 13 11 14
- Kids Helpline: 1800 55 1800
- Parenting Ideas - Michael Grose
- Rights, resilience and respectful relationship – [Link](#)

8. Evaluation

This policy will be referred to yearly and reviewed cyclically or when required

9. Ratification

This policy has been ratified by the school staff and the Parish Education Advisory Board

Appendix: further definition of bullying

The national definition of bullying for Australian schools

(<https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/Resources/FactSheets/Documents/bnw-factsheet-1-bullying-definitions.pdf>) says:

Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening.

Bullying can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time (for example, through sharing of digital records).

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have immediate, medium and long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders. Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.