

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Related Policies

- Pastoral Care
- Suspension of Students
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Employee Code of Conduct

Overview

Our community is united in its stance that bullying will not be tolerated at St Thomas Aquinas Primary School. This means that all members of our community – students, staff, parents and carers treat each other with dignity and respect by modelling appropriate social behaviour at all times. All members of our community all share a responsibility for preventing it.

For the purposes of this policy, bullying is defined as:

Intentional, repeated behaviour by an individual or group that causes distress, hurt, harm or undue pressure. It can involve all forms of harassment, discrimination (based on sex, race or disability), humiliation, domination and intimidation of others.

Types of bullying behaviour can include:

- **verbal** – for example, name calling, teasing, abuse, humiliation, sarcasm, insults, threats
- **physical** – for example, hitting, pushing, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting, rude gestures
- **social** – for example, ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating, making inappropriate gestures
- **psychological** – for example, spreading rumours, glaring, hiding or damaging possessions, malicious SMS and email messages, inappropriate use of camera phones or social media.

Parents will be notified if a child is accused of bullying or a child discloses that they are being bullied, by a member of the School Leadership Team.

Goals

At St Thomas Aquinas Primary School we aim to:

- reinforce and define within the school community what bullying is, and the fact that it is unacceptable,
- educate and alert everyone within the school community to the signs and evidence of bullying and to have a responsibility to report it to staff whether as observer or victim,
- ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are addressed and recorded [by the Assistant Principal](#) appropriately and that support is given to all people involved,
- seek parental and peer-group support and co-operation at all times.



Implementation

At St Thomas Aquinas Primary School we will:

- ensure parents, teachers, students and the school community are aware of the school's position on bullying,
- educate the school community about the forms of bullying and define what bullying is and is not
- report the actions of bullying to the School Leadership Team.

Prevention Education

At St Thomas Aquinas Primary School we:

- encourage professional development for staff relating to bullying, harassment and proven counter-measures,
- build community awareness and input relating to bullying, its characteristics and the school's programs and response. This may be promoted through the school newsletter, School Community Council meetings, the Parent Support Committee and other community gatherings,
- strive to provide programs that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving,
- implement and reinforce the school rules and values across the school,
- ask that classroom teachers clarify at the start of each year the school policy on bullying,
- promote and teach anti-bullying messages and strategies.

Early Intervention

At St Thomas Aquinas Primary School we:

- encourage children and staff to report and document bullying incidents involving themselves or others,
- ask that classroom teachers and the principal on a regular basis remind students and staff to report incidents of bullying,
- encourage parents to contact the classroom teacher and/or school if they become aware of a bullying problem,
- promote the construction and continued use of classroom Rights, Responsibilities and Expectations ([class rules](#)) and reward for positive behaviour and resolution of problems.

Intervention

At St Thomas Aquinas Primary School we:

- take bullying seriously. Once identified each person involved will be spoken with, and all incidents or allegations of bullying will be fully investigated [by the Assistant Principal](#), documented [and findings reported to the Principal](#);
- inform students and staff that they have been identified by others as being involved in a bullying incident,
- offer support to all people involved,
- contact parents and consequences are implemented consistent with our school's Behaviour Management Policy,
- take staff bullying very seriously and the principal will commence formal disciplinary action in line with the Catholic Education Office (CEO) Code of Conduct for employees if necessary.

Follow-up

At St Thomas Aquinas Primary School we:

People involved in incidents of bullying will be dealt with on an individual basis and consequences may include:

- exclusion from the playground,
- exclusion from the classroom,
- withdrawal of privileges,
- ongoing support for all people involved,
- recommendation to the school counsellor, with parental consent,
- school suspension,
- reinforce positive behaviours and restore child's privileges.
- encourage classroom meetings where issues may be discussed and resolved,
- have support structures in place for our Behaviour Management Policy,
- continually, yet gently, monitor those children that have been involved in a bullying incident,
- follow the CEO Code of Conduct for employees.

For additional information on the Child Protection Code of Professional Standards for Catholic School and System Staffs Policy on the CEO website, please go to the CEO intranet- Policies- Code of Conduct