

Definition

What is bullying?

Bullying is when, over a period of time, an individual or group intentionally harms a person who find sit hard to stop this behavior from continuing. Bullying can be characterized as: Causing distress, not only at the time of the attack but also by the threat of future attacks, and an imbalance of power that is inappropriate and with the intention to hurt.

Its nature may be:

Verbal: name-calling, put downs, threats, (spoken, written, electronic or cyber).

Physical: hitting, tripping, punching, throwing objects, stealing.

Social: ignoring, hiding, ostracising,

Psychological: stalking, threatening looks or gestures, spreading rumours, damaging possessions.

Bullying is totally unacceptable in our school community and Mel Maria Catholic Primary School will do all it can to counter this behavior.

Standing by and watching or encouraging bullying by others is also unacceptable. Such action indicates you condone bullying.

Bullying is different from children simply acting impulsively, having a disagreement or difference of opinion or playing boisterously without thought for the opinions of others.

Students who are bullied can:

- Tell the student who is bullying to stop. State quite clearly that the behavior is unwelcome and offensive
- Ignore them and walk away
- Seek help. Talk about it to someone you trust
- Report it to a member of staff, a trustworthy friend or buddy. Feel confident that an incident can be solved
- Talk it over openly with your parents – they can help you make a decision
- Do NOT retaliate with physical or verbal abuse
- If you are experiencing bullying on the way to or from school, tell your parents and walk home with a friend
- Write a description of the event and place it in the class meeting box or give it to a teacher and/or
- Find someone else to play with.

Students who see someone being bullied can:

- Tell the person to stop
- Be a friend to the person being bullied
- Encourage the person being bullied to inform someone
- Seek help. You can decide to do something about it and help to protect others
- Write a description of the event and place it in the class meeting box or give it to a teacher
- Talk it over with a teacher.

‘We can always talk with someone we trust about anything, no matter what.’

Parents/caregivers can:

- Encourage your child to talk with you
- Listen to your child sympathetically and take the situation seriously
- Try not to overreact; remember that the other children involved will have their own views of what happened
- Assure your child that it happens to most people at some time. We learn to avoid it, cope with it or confront it
- Reassure your child that it is not happening because there is something wrong with him or her
- Assist your child to discuss any incidence of bullying with a teacher
- Be willing to inform the school of any cases of suspected bullying
- Tell your child that physical or verbal retaliation on their part is not the answer
- Be aware of the signs of distress in your child (e.g. unexplained bruises/scratches, unwillingness to attend school, a pattern of illness, missing/damaged equipment or clothing, loss of confidence, declining academic performance)
- Refrain from talking directly to other children who may have been involved
- Set a good example when resolving your own conflicts
- Be positive about your child’s qualities and teach them to respect differences
- Take an active interest in your child’s social life and friends.

‘Always try to work through the school, but talk with your child about what you are doing and why.’

Strategies used by staff at Mel Maria Catholic Primary School to help manage bullying.

- Respond pastorally to any reported incidents of bullying
- Involve other staff as appropriate e.g. Principal, Assistant Principal
- Provide appropriate playground supervision
- Wear yellow vests while on duty so the students can locate a teacher easily
- Provide opportunities in the curriculum to address bullying (including cyberbullying)
- Adopt positive classroom management strategies
- Provide positive role models for students
- Provide other professional support as appropriate e.g. School Social Worker
- Include relevant information and articles in the school newsletter, at assemblies
- Encourage parents to contact a teacher about concerns related to their child or other students as appropriate.

Strategies used by the school community to help manage bullying.

- Use every opportunity to encourage positive social interactions between all members of the school community
- Provide positive role models
- Promote students' sense of concern and responsibility
- Build resilience and self-confidence
- Keep the lines of communication open.

Our Purpose

*To be part of an accepting community;
an authentic Catholic school
where Catherine McAuley's ideals of justice,
respect, compassion and
service to others prevail
and where all learning
is a joy to be experienced
in an educational community
questing for excellence.*

Our Values Include:

*Community
Service
Respect
Peace
Joy
Witness
Compassion
Hope
Justice
Truth
Sense of Wonder*

The Bullying Response Plan is to be read in conjunction with the school's Pastoral Care and Behavioral Management Policies.



MEL MARIA CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

*SCHOOL VISION
'Excellence in Catholic Primary Education'*

Bullying Response Plan

Mel Maria Catholic Primary School respects the rights of all those in the school community to:

- Feel safe
- Be treated with respect
- Be free from all forms of bullying.
- Learn within a caring environment that lives the Gospel values.