

# **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

We, the members of École Sister O'Brien School, are committed to building a safe and caring, respectful school environment. Bullying behavior will not be tolerated. Guided by the Gospel values and our school Code of Conduct, bullying behavior will be dealt with in a serious and timely manner.

The members of École Sister O'Brien believe that we have the right to a safe, caring and respectful school environment. We also have the responsibility, by our actions, to ensure that each one of us is in a safe, caring and respectful school environment.



## **DEFINITION OF BULLYING**

A person is bullied when he or she is repeatedly exposed to negative actions on the part of one or more people causing emotional, psychological and/or physical harm. These negative actions are intentional and hurtful. Bullying can be verbal, physical, relational or reactive; including use of technological devices. Bullying involves an imbalance of power, creates fear, and is not gender specific.

## **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

The effectiveness of this policy will depend on the level of open and honest communication between everyone involved.

A. In addition to the expectations outlined in the school Code of Conduct, all students are expected to:

- Be positive and caring role models
- Refrain from bullying or being bystanders to acts of bullying
- Be active participants in school-wide and class anti-bullying initiatives
- Be active participants in social skills programming
- Report acts of bullying to appropriate school personnel, parents/guardians
- Conduct themselves in a manner consistent with Gospel values and the teachings of Jesus Christ.

1.1 Students who choose to engage in bullying behavior are expected to:

- Take all necessary steps to stop bullying behavior
- Be aware, responsible and accountable for bullying behavior
- Learn and apply respectful strategies to overcome bullying behavior
- Accept the consequences of their behaviors

1.2 Students who witness bullying behavior are expected to:

- Try to stop the bullying behavior by telling the people involved that the behavior is unacceptable, and not be a bystander
- Honestly and accurately report bullying behavior
- Support the person being targeted in positive ways

1.3 Students who are the target of bullying behaviors are expected to:

- Honestly and accurately report bullying behaviors
- Learn and apply respectful strategies to counter bullying behaviors.

B. All members of École Sister O'Brien staff are expected to:

- Provide a supportive environment that upholds the Gospel values and encourages positive relationships between students, staff, and parents/guardians
- Investigate all reports of bullying
- Address bullying behaviors in an age appropriate manner
- Maintain a comprehensive anti-bullying policy, guided by our school Code of Conduct, comprised of: anti-bullying programs and strategies, investigation of reports of bullying, intervention and follow-up
- Keep lines of communication between home and school
- Encourage and educate students in reporting incidents of bullying behavior
- Teach social skills programs that help students learn respectful strategies to counter bullying behavior
- Conduct themselves in a manner consistent with Gospel values and the teachings of Jesus Christ.

C. Parents, Guardians, Parish, and Community Members are expected to:

- Be active contributors to a safe, caring and respectful school environment
- Learn about bullying behaviors and related issues
- Inform the school if bullying is suspected
- Work with the school to resolve identified bullying incidents in a positive manner.

## **PROCEDURES**

### **A. Prevention:**

- Creating a safe, caring and respectful school environment free from bullying behaviors is our ultimate goal. Prevention strategies are ongoing and will include: a broad-range of educational experiences focusing on social skill development and understanding of bullying behaviors, using the Gospel values as a common language; open communication; following and implementing our school Code of Conduct in conjunction with the anti-bullying policy; open communication and collaboration.

### **B. Investigation of Reported Bullying Behavior:**

- The safety of all students is the primary focus
- Students involved will be spoken to, given the opportunity to speak, and dealt with individually using age appropriate interventions
- Information related to the bullying behavior will be gathered and documented from all students involved, including any witnesses.
- A Bullying Incident Report may be completed.

### **C. Actions if Bullying Behavior is Evident:**

- 1.1 Actions to address incidents of bullying behavior shall take into account:
  - The safety of all the students at École Sister O'Brien School
  - The developmental and maturity levels of students involved
  - The levels of harm that have occurred

- Any similar related incidents in the past and/or continuing pattern of behaviors
  - The surrounding circumstances and the context in which the incidents occurred
  - The relationships among the people involved
- 1.2 All those involved will be informed individually that there will be follow-up of the incident. The behavior of each student (regardless of role) is to be monitored to determine future actions.
  - 1.3 The in-school administration and/or the classroom teacher(s) shall determine an appropriate way to communicate with the parents/guardians of the students involved.
  - 1.4 The in-school administration may request assistance from Student Services personnel, the Police Resource Officer, or other appropriate resources.
  - 1.5 Consequences for bullying behavior may include:
    - Discussion, problem solving, reviewing behavioral expectations
    - Loss of privileges, detention, reprimand, action plan
    - Behavioral Contract
    - Removal from class (in-school suspension)
    - Referral to Student Services
    - Restitution, community service, counseling
    - Alternative programming, alternative placement.
  - 1.6 In the event that efforts expended by the staff with the students involved are unsuccessful and further bullying incidents are found to occur, the following procedures will be followed:
    - In-school administration shall complete a Bullying Incident Report
    - Parents/Guardians of the students will be involved and invited to meetings to discuss the student's involvement in the incident(s). In most cases these will be separate meetings
    - A written record will be kept of the action plan. Such records will be kept in a confidential file by the principal or designate and reviewed as appropriate – annually, monthly or weekly.
    - If the plan involves suspensions or expulsions, the division procedures shall be followed.
  - 1.7 Intentionally and falsely accusing another student of bullying behavior shall be considered bullying behavior and dealt with as such.

#### **D. Policy Communication:**

- The in-school administration shall review this policy at the beginning of each school year with all members of the École Sister O'Brien School community, including staff, students, parents/guardians.
- The anti-bullying policy will be placed in the student handbook