

A Sample School Bully Policy

At (fill in the name of your school here), there is a zero tolerance of bullying. Teachers, administrators, children, and parents are committed to a schooling environment in which mutual respect, caring, friendship, forgiveness, and hospitality are practiced. We do not believe that bullying is an inevitable part of childhood. We believe that children learn best in a nonviolent community.

Bullying Defined

Bullying is a behavioral manifestation of spiritual crisis in which an individual bully or group of bullies seeks relation with another person or persons through repeated acts of violence over time. The behaviors of bullying are intended to hurt and disturb others. These acts of violence may be physical and/or emotional (threatened or carried out). There is always an imbalance of power between the bully and the bullied. Bullying can take place by individuals, informed groups of persons, formal Organizations, or nations.

The following are bullying behaviors:

- Belittling others because of religious traditions
- Belittling others because of race and/or cultural identities
- Belittling others because of patterns of speech
- Belittling others because of physical appearance
- Belittling others because of an emotional, mental, or physical disability
- Belittling others because of because of sexual orientation
- Hitting, slapping, or pushing persons over time
- Starting and/or perpetuating rumors, making suggestive or derogatory sexual comments, or making bodily gestures that intimidate or embarrass others
- Shunning and/or silencing others
- Demanding money, personal belongings, and sexual favors by extortion
- Making emotional threats, including name-calling and “dissing”

If We Are Victims of Bullying

- We may feel unsafe and afraid, with little hope that life will ever change
- We may be too embarrassed to talk with parents or teachers about the situation
- We may feel humiliated or enraged
- Our school grades may get worse
- We may have low self-concept
- We may withdraw from social functions, such as dances, parties, and youth groups
- We may lose interest in church, prayer, and community service
- We may become very negative at home, treating parents and siblings poorly
- We may erupt in acts of violence ourselves in order to protect our (because of feelings of frustration or hopelessness).
- We may become self-destructive in our behavior
- We ARE created in the image of God

If We Are the Bully

- We may have been bullied at home by adults and/or siblings. We may have been bullied at school by teachers, administrators, or bus drivers.
- We may appear to be popular. Or we may have a small circle of friends who are not in the “mainstream” of the school.
- We may make cloaked threats, such as, “After school tonight!”
- We may be con artists, appearing to be “good” around adults, but being violent around other children.
- We may have low self-concept.
- We may know no other way to be in relation with others than through the practices of bullying and violence.
- We may seek pleasure through violence.
- We may be older and bigger than those whom we bully.
- We ARE created in the image of God.

What Shall We Do Together to Prevent Bullying?

- Bullying is an issue for the entire school/church community: administration, teachers, staff, volunteers, parents, and students.
- The entire school community will model hospitality, caring, and friendship in word and action.
- The entire school community will refuse to be a bystander to bullying. Incidents or suspected incidents will be reported immediately to the appropriate Community Life Committee chairperson. This chairperson will be elected to serve a two-year term. The chairperson will be elected from the administration, teachers, and staff. The Community Life Committee will be composed of two persons elected annually from each of the following areas: administration, teachers, other staff, children (aged ten and above), parents, and other volunteers. The principal is a permanent member of this committee.
- The Community Life Committee will conduct an annual in-service day for administration, teachers, staff, and volunteers on the topic of bullying.
- The Community Life Committee will be committed to the value of diversity.
- Each member of the Community Life Committee will be on the lookout for spontaneous “acts of kindness.” These acts of kindness will be publicized (by newsletter, electronic campus communication system, or other appropriate means) weekly. This will include all members of the school community.
- The Community Life Committee will act as a resource to the school for resources related to bullying.
- Each member of the Community Life Committee will be introduced to each class of students, parents, and to staff. Each member will wear a special “CLC” button that everyone at the school recognizes.
- The Community Life Committee will develop a system of procedures to be followed should an incidence of bullying arise.

What Shall Teachers Do to Prevent Bullying?

- Teachers will not ignore bullying behavior.
- Teachers will intervene, even at risk to personal safety.
- Teachers will be on time to class and to other school functions.

- Teachers will engage students in conversation about bullying.
- Teachers will take appropriate steps to stop bullying, including contacting the Community Life Committee.
- Lessons about respect for self and others will be part of an ongoing, integrated curriculum.

What Shall Students Do to Prevent Bullying?

- Students will recognize what bullying is.
- Students will not bully others, even if their best friends are bullying someone.
- Students will report bullying to a teachers, their parents, or a member of the Community Life Committee.
- If you are bullied or if you are the bully, take responsibility to talk with someone on the Community Life Committee.

What Can Parents Do to Prevent Bullying?

- Practice empathy at home.
- If your child talks to you about bullying, take her or him seriously. Contact the school immediately, referring to the bullying policy.
- Be familiar with the school's bullying policy.
- If your child is the bully, seek the school's help.
- If you child is bullied, do not encourage your child to seek revenge.
- If your child's grades fall significantly, if your child develops a pattern of sadness or despair, or if your child refuses to go to school, contact the school principal.
- Monitor playmates and know the families of your child's friends.
- If your child frequently complains of stomachaches or other illnesses, schedule a conference with your child's teacher.
- Tell your child that it is your responsibility as a parent to protect her or him and that parental involvement in matters of bullying is normal.
- Monitor television programs, video games, magazines, movies, and Internet sites that a child may access.

Ken Rigby in his book, *Bullying in Schools; And What to Do About it*.
 Xavier College (a boys school in Melbourne)
 As quoted by Ronald Cram in *Bullying: A Spiritual Crisis*