ST MARY'S ANGLICAN GIRLS' SCHOOL

A POLICY FOR THE PREVENTION OF BULLYING AND TEASING

St Mary's Anglican Girls' School has, amongst its aims, the provision of an environment where every student has the opportunity to develop her potential in a caring, safe place.

St Mary's is a school that values fidelity to the principles of truth, honesty and honour in personal conduct. This means the showing of care, consideration and respect for others. As a consequence of this we expect students to be tolerant of others' beliefs whilst having the courage to uphold their own.

This also means that bullying or harassment will not be tolerated.

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WAYS TO PREVENT BULLYING

1. Respect yourself and others.
2. Work to create a pleasant school environment for all.
3. Learn to tolerate and accept individual differences.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is any behaviour intended to hurt, threaten or frighten another person. This most often means that the person being bullied feels powerless to stop the behaviour.

For actions to be called bullying, the behaviour is usually repetitive over time and involves an imbalance of power.

Bullying may be verbal, social, physical or psychological.
Examples of bullying include:

- calling hurtful or racist names
- being picked on
- teasing
- spreading rumours
- excluding someone
- deliberately ignoring or avoiding
- constant "put downs"
- pushing, bumping, hitting
- sending hurtful notes
- taking or damaging property

Children may bully for a variety of reasons, some of which are:

- she may feel powerful when bullying
- she may feel the behaviour increases her acceptance by others
- she may not know other ways of expressing anxiety, fear or envy
- she may feel uncomfortable relating to others on an equal basis

What can you, as parents do?

Focus on her behaviour, reinforcing that it is the behaviour and not her as a person which is unacceptable. Labelling a student as a bully reinforces the idea that she cannot control her behaviour. Instead focus on her power of CHOICE in how she behaves and responds to others.

Explore with your daughter situations in which she is most likely to bully, identify her feelings at these times and brainstorm alternative behaviours to bullying.

WHAT IF YOUR CHILD IS BULLYING OTHERS?

WHAT CAN PARENTS DO?

Listen to your child:
- take any talk of bullying seriously

Be alert for any sign of distress:
- unwillingness to attend school
- decline in academic performance
- loss of confidence and uncharacteristic mood changes
- withdrawal from social activities
Teach your child:
  • the difference between aggression and assertion by setting an example
  • the basics of conflict resolution
  • constructive responses to bullying

Act for your child:
  • If your daughter is being bullied please alert the school. There are a number of ways this can be dealt with. Every situation will be different and therefore will be dealt with on an individual basis.

Take an active interest:
  • in what's happening at school
  • in her friends and her social life

Build her self-confidence:
  • by recognising and affirming her positive qualities
  • by valuing her for who she is
  • by encouraging her and acknowledging her efforts

What should you do if you are being bullied?

1. Tell the bully to stop. State clearly that their behaviour is not right, and that you find it offensive.
2. Ask for help. Talk about it with someone you trust. There is nothing so awful that you can't talk about it with someone.
3. Report it to your Link Teacher, another teacher, the Chaplain or one of the School Counsellors. You will be listened to because the School will not tolerate bullying.
4. Tell your Parents. Do not wait until it is so awful that you don't want to come to school.

What should you do if you know someone else is being bullied?

Care enough to do something about it, even if it does not affect you personally.

Tell someone – your Link Teacher, another Teacher, the Chaplain or one of the School Counsellors.

WHAT CAN STUDENTS DO?

HELP MAKE OUR SCHOOL A HAPPY AND SAFE PLACE