St. Joseph’s School is a Catholic community promoting excellence in education, and living the ideals of Strength and Kindliness in the tradition of the Brigidine Sisters.

VISION:
St. Joseph’s Primary School is committed to:

- Giving witness to the Catholic faith and honouring the Brigidine charism.
- Treating each individual with respect and dignity.
- Providing excellent teaching and learning opportunities allowing all to celebrate gifts and talents.
- Ensuring a safe and nurturing learning environment.
- Developing strong partnerships with Parish, family, school, wider community and the natural environment.

KEY UNDERSTANDINGS:
The National Safe Schools Framework was developed to provide schools with a set of guiding principles to help school leaders and teachers to take a proactive whole-school approach to developing effective student safety and wellbeing policies. This vision includes creating learning environments which are free from bullying, harassment, aggression and violence.

WHAT IS BULLYING
Bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons. Bullying can occur face-to-face, over the phone, via email, social networking sites, instant messaging or using mobile phone technologies including text messaging. Bullying can involve many different forms of unreasonable behaviour, which can be obvious (direct) or subtle (indirect).

Bullying can be intentional, where the actions are intended to humiliate, offend, intimidate or distress, whether or not the behaviour did have that effect. Bullying can also be unintentional, where actions which, although not intended to humiliate, offend, intimidate or distress, cause and should reasonably have been expected to cause that effect. Sometimes people do not realise that their behaviour can be harmful to others. In some situations, behaviours may unintentionally cause distress and be perceived as bullying.

WHAT IS NOT BULLYING
Mutual arguments and disagreements (where there is no power imbalance).
Not liking someone or a single act of social rejection.  
One-off acts of meanness or spite.  
Isolated incidents of aggression, intimidation or violence.

**KEY POINTS**
- There are different ways of bullying.  
- Targeted children/adults can become bullies themselves.  
- Family and school tolerance of inappropriate behaviour contributes to incidence of bullying.  
- It is important for parents, children and staff to use common language when addressing the issue.  
- Staff are required to follow the same procedures when dealing with bullying.  
- The school offers the same avenues of support for both bullies and targets.  
- Parents and teachers require opportunities to become informed and well equipped to deal with bullying incidents by under going Professional Development.  
- That St Joseph's develops an effective approach to anti-bullying in which all parties are considered equally.  
- To create an environment where children feel safe and that they belong and have the skills to deal with bullying if it becomes an issue.  
- St Joseph’s plans and delivers teaching and learning experiences around the issues of bullying in order to inform the students and give them appropriate strategies to deal with bullying and to deliver the message that bullying is not ever acceptable.

**STRATEGIES:**
Prevention. Intervention. Postvention

1. **Prevention:**
- Everyone knows the characteristics of bullying and has a common definition.
- Every class teaches about bullying early in Term One each year and returns to it as needed, including cyber bullying.
- Aggressive, Passive and Assertive behaviours are taught with the emphasis on Assertiveness.
- The role of the bystander and influence of the peer group in giving the bully power is discussed and alternatives provided.
- There is effective home/school communication on the subject.
- The playground is carefully monitored at all times, and no technology such as phones or laptops are to be used out in the playground during recess.
- Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS) is a whole school approach that supports this policy. This ensures;

1. The use of empirically-tested instructional principles to teach expected behavior outside the classroom to all students.  
2. The monitoring and acknowledgement of students for engaging in appropriate behavior outside the classroom.  
3. Specific instruction and pre-correction to prevent bullying behavior from being rewarded by victims or bystanders.

Anti-Bullying Policy 2012 draft 1-1.pages
4. The correction of problem behaviors using a consistently administered continuum of consequences.
5. The collection and use of information about student behavior to evaluate and guide decision making.
6. The establishment of a team that develops, implements, and manages the PBIS effort in a school.

2. Intervention:
   - Bullying incidents are dealt with using a common approach by all staff members.
   - Initial questions are asked to determine whether the situation is bullying and what steps have already been taken.
   - A method of Shared Concern (appendix 1.) is used to come to a resolution.
   - If a resolution is not possible, consequences may then apply as stated in the school’s Discipline Policy depending on the situation.
   - Incidents are recorded on the google docs-PBIS

3. Postvention:
   - Stage Three of ‘Method of Shared Concern’ and also follow up meeting at two weeks. Meetings with parents.

   ORGANISATION
   - Information through classroom Social Emotional Learning sessions and supported by P-6 social skills programs, buddy system, student leadership, playground supervision, home/school participation and the implementation of PBIS.

   - Regular gathering of data on bullying within the school-Termly or more often when deemed necessary. Data is gathered on line-google docs. Data is compared to other years etc. Data has been kept since 2008. Data is collated and kept in the Principal’s office. Data is shared with staff, students and parents. When presenting data to any audience that might potentially identify an individual or individuals, aggregated data is used.

   PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT and MONITORING
   - Initial PD and ongoing given by the Bullybusters Team and their books. Ongoing PD is held through a review of policy, procedures and resources. Should there be a need, a staff meeting is allocated during the year to clarify or refresh strategies.
   - Bullying Audits taken late first term to assess the students’ feelings and acted on if necessary. Surveys repeated later in the year to evaluate the school performance in regard to Bullying.

   RESOURCES:
   - Bullying
     - Bounce Back
     - e-smart website.

The Take A Stand Together mobile app is also available for download to show students and parents how to identify and deal with bullying.
Appendix 1.
**Method of Shared Concern**

Stage 1. First Meeting
- Each bully is interviewed separately, commencing with the ring leader.
- Interview target after speaking with bullies.
- Encourage the bullying students to formulate solutions to bring about a change in behaviour.

Stage 2. Follow – up meetings
- Review solutions with target and bullies individually.
- Review after a week.

Stage 3. Group Meeting
- Bullies and target meet together to maintain changes in behaviour.
- Each bullying student makes a positive comment to the target.
- Affirm students on their change in behaviour and sticking with their solutions and discuss how this can be maintained.

Reminders:
- Gather as much information as possible prior to meeting the students.
- Interview students individually and consecutively.
- Document each interview.
- Each interview is 8-10 minutes.
- Seek solutions not blame.
- Find a private place.
- Set date to follow up (2 weeks)

*Should this method prove unsuccessful move to a more punitive approach as outlined in the school’s Discipline policy.*

Advantages of this method:
- Solution focused rather than blame.
- Secondary victimization can be avoided.
- Individual interviews create better communication.
- Increases empathy.
- No time wasted on why questions.

Written in 2008
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Kitty Hancock and Staff.