

Anti-Bullying Policy

A. Introduction

This policy articulates our approach and actions to ensure every child and involved with the school is safe from any overt or covert bullying, manipulation or subjugation.

B. How we understand Bullying

We understand 'bullying' as a behaviour by an individual or a group that is usually repeated over a period of time and is intended to hurt someone physically or emotionally.

The repetition of the act, deliberate intention to hurt and imbalance of power in the relationship differentiate **bullying from teasing**.

Bullying behaviour can occur in different ways:

Physical: This involves hurting an individual's body or possessions. Examples of physical bullying are biting, hitting, kicking, making mean or rude hand gestures, pinching, poking, pushing, spitting, taking or breaking someone's things, tripping, etc.

Verbal: This involves saying or writing mean things about an individual or a group. Examples of verbal bullying are belittling, name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, taunting, teasing, threats, etc.

Social and Emotional bullying: This involves hurting someone's reputation or relationships. Few examples of social and emotional bullying are: humiliation, intimidation, leaving someone out on purpose, manipulation and coercion, ridicule, telling others not to be friends with someone, threatening gestures, tormenting, spreading rumours about someone, embarrassing someone in public, etc.

E-safety: The growth in electronic media in everyday life and an ever-developing variety of devices create additional risks for children.

Risks and dangers of being online include:

- Inappropriate content.
- Ignoring age restrictions and communicating with unknown adults or other children (which make children vulnerable to bullying and grooming).
- Grooming and sexual abuse.
- Sharing personal information.
- Gambling or running up debts.
- Cyber bullying.

We believe the best way to protect our students is to teach awareness and understanding of risk, particularly through personal, social and health education, sex and relationship education or wellness programs. It includes appropriate and frequent opportunities to teach children how to recognise when they and others are at risk and equips them with the skills, strategies, and language they need to take appropriate action.

C. Our strategies for preventing bullying

Whole-school awareness and campaign

- Orientation sessions for the entire school and new students and staff members every Academic year
- Visible reminders of key messages in the school premises and school buses
- Recognition of positive behaviours linking them with school values
- Active involvement of Student Council in preventing and reporting bullying
- Observing International Anti-Bullying Week with planned activities

Selection of Safeguarding Student representatives

· At Sancta Maria, we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our students so that they are safe, happy and learning. Only then we can achieve our vision of unlocking every learner's potential for a better world. One of our recent initiatives in this direction is the **Safeguarding student representatives**. Safeguarding representatives are students who will be trained to recognize and report safeguarding concerns.

Safeguarding Representatives' responsibilities:

- Act as a bridge between students and school staff, helping to ensure that safeguarding concerns are addressed quickly and effectively.
- Meet at agreed intervals to discuss any specific cases/issues and review this policy annually.
- Organise awareness sessions for all school staff, students and parents.
- Create a culture of vigilance and promoting student welfare.

Responding to bullying incidents by students

- While we hope the positive behaviour policy and preventive measures will discourage bullying intentions and practices, we are committed to taking corrective measures when instances of bullying are reported or found out.
- The following table delineates our response actions towards the perpetrator when a bullying behaviour takes place in school premises:

	EARLY YEARS & PRIMARY SCHOOL	MIDDLE SCHOOL	HIGH SCHOOL
Level 1	<p>First verbal warning by Class Teacher</p> <p>Second verbal warning by GLC</p> <p>Circle time with the entire class**</p>	<p>First verbal warning by Class/ Subject Teacher</p> <p>Second verbal warning by GLC</p> <p>Circle time with the entire class**</p>	<p>First verbal warning by Class/ Subject Teacher</p> <p>Second verbal warning by GLC</p> <p>Circle time with the entire class**</p>
Level 2	Time-out/ class specific actions	Privilege(s) taken away *	Privilege(s) taken away *
Level 3	Meeting with Division Head and note sent to parent to which the parent should respond within 2 working days.	Meeting with Division Head and note sent to parent to which the parent should respond within 2 working days.	Meeting with Division Head and note sent to parent to which the parent should respond within 2 working days.
Level 4	Visit Principal's Office	Visit Principal's Office	Visit Principal's Office
Level 5	Principal and Division Head meet the parents	Principal and Division Head meet the parents	Principal and Division Head meet the parents
Level 6	Temporary or permanent detention in very serious cases	Temporary or permanent detention in very serious cases	Temporary or permanent detention in very serious cases

- ****Privilege is any activity or special status a student is entitled to. Privileges may include but are not limited to the following:***

PE lesson/Club activity/Art/Library/Music lesson/Night Out / Sleepover in School/Field Trip/Competitions/House Meet/Class or School Leadership role.

- ***At Levels 4-7, parents will receive written communication from school and will be kept in the loop about any follow-up actions.***

Each incident from Level 1 onwards will be recorded in the School Concerns Log which will be a confidential record of all reported bullying behaviours.

- ***The student who has been bullied will be given adequate counselling support and the matter will be dealt with sensitivity and confidentiality***

*****Circle time is a structured activity that allows children to practice social skills, follow the rules and routines, and develop a sense of community. It also allows educators to assess each child's needs and interests. By participating in group discussions, sharing experiences, and taking turns, children learn how to interact with their peers, express themselves, and build meaningful connections.***

The following table delineates our response actions when a bullying behaviour takes place on **school bus**:

Level 1	Bus Monitor (student) will remind the student about the school's anti bullying policy and likely consequences if the behaviour doesn't stop.
	ASA will give a verbal warning and may ask the student to sit in the front section of the bus.
	If the student apologises and does not repeat the behaviour, no further action will be required.
Level 2	Bus Monitor (student) will bring the issue to the attention of any member of school who will inform the relevant Class Teacher. The Class Teacher will issue a verbal warning and may refer the student to the School Counsellor.
	ASA will make a note of the bullying behaviour in the bus register and will report to Admin in charge on the same day. She will ask the student to sit in the front section of the bus.
Level 3	Privilege(s) taken away and intervention by coordinator.
	Note will be sent to the parent to which the parent should respond within 2 working days.
Level 4	Meeting with Division Head.
Level 5	Principal, Head of Admin and Division Head meet the parents.
Level 6	Temporary or permanent exclusion from school transport or detention from school in very serious cases.

Parents' role in preventing bullying

We strongly believe that parents/carers can play a significant role in preventing bullying behaviours by taking active interest in the child's social and online life and working constructively with the school. We encourage parents/carers to inform the school immediately if they suspect any case of bullying and cooperate while necessary follow-up steps are taken by the school. We request parents/carers to refrain from approaching another student to discuss the matter or to "tell them off". This will not be appropriate in any circumstance.