

# St. Brendan School No Bully Policy

## Introduction

This policy has been created to support our core Catholic values of respect and empathy, and to support our students in learning together.

This policy applies to all students, parents, faculty, and adults on our campus, whether employed by the school, working as contractors, or volunteers.

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## Vision for how everyone interacts at our school

At St. Brendan School, we are committed to creating a compassionate culture that fosters mutual respect, empathy, and appreciation of individuality, and the courage to make moral, thoughtful, and kind choices. We do this all in a spirit of cooperation.

Our goal is to create a comfortable and inclusive environment in which students, parents, faculty, staff, and clergy work together to solve problems appropriately. We strive to develop the gift of understanding by trying to see one another through the eyes of Christ. Here are some examples of what we strive for. No student spends recess alone for want of a friend. Students go out of their way to make sure that no one is left out. Students compliment each other and give supportive comments to each other. Students are accepting and appreciative of each others differences.

## Definitions

In any school community, there will be occasions when students do not get along. Sometimes students attempt to hurt, exclude or take power from another student. Sometimes these behaviors are motivated by anger, jealousy, possessiveness, insecurity, or lack of skill in dealing with conflict. This policy is designed to guide our community in responding to bullying and aggression, so that students move past these behaviors and develop the skills to learn and play together as part of a community.

**Bullying** occurs when a student (or group of students) attempts to take power over another student. Often bullying is repeated, where students adopt the roles of target, bully, bully-follower and bystander. The main ways in which bullying happens are:

**Physical bullying**, when a student uses physical force to hurt another student by hitting, punching, pushing, shoving, kicking, spitting, pinching, getting in their way or holding them down. It is also bullying to interfere with another student's belongings, to take or break their possessions, and to demand or steal money.

**Verbal bullying**, when a student directs words at another student with the intention of putting them down or humiliating them. This includes threatening, taunting, intimidating,

insulting, sarcasm, name-calling, teasing, put-downs and ridiculing. It is also verbal bullying when a student uses hostile gestures towards another student, such as making faces, staring, giving the evil eye, and eye rolling.

**Relational bullying**, when a student influences another student's friendships and relationships through deliberately leaving them out, spreading gossip and rumors about them, whispering, giving them the silent treatment, ostracizing or scape-goating. This also includes writing words or creating cartoons, posters or drawings about another student designed to hurt or humiliate that student.

**Cyber bullying** refers to the use of cell-phones, text messages, e-mails, instant messaging, web blogs and postings to bully another student in any of the ways described above. Examples of cyber bullying are sending threatening or insulting messages by phone and e-mail, posting embarrassing pictures and information about others on blogs or social networking sites such as MySpace or Facebook, forwarding to others a private e-mail that was meant for your eyes only and spreading hurtful rumors online.

**When bullying is also harassment.** Bullying is part of a continuum of aggression and may, at times, amount to harassment. Harassment occurs when a student is the recipient of threatening, disturbing or unwelcome behaviors because of a particular characteristic. [Sexual harassment is dealt with under the sexual harassment policy that you can find at the end of this policy.] Whether or not bullying amounts to harassment, our school will not tolerate student bullying on our campus, at school-sponsored events, and against students traveling to and from school.

## **Roles of Each Sector of School Community**

### **How Our School Will Respond to Incidents of Bullying**

We are committed to a culture in which we treat each other with respect and empathy. We see bullying and harassment as impediments to realizing our school's values for how we all get along. This part of the policy describes the role of each of us in responding to bullying and in supporting the unique culture of our school.

#### **The Principal**

- The Principal is responsible for ensuring that everyone at the school is aware of this policy.
- The Principal designates one week each year to be KIDS Week to foster the values of community, respect and empathy.
- The Principal ensures that all staff (both teaching and non-teaching) have sufficient training to respond to incidents of conflict and bullying.
- The Principal will designate one or more members of staff to facilitate the Solution Team response to bullying and will ensure that the designated individual(s) is/are trained in this response.

- The Principal ensures that all parent volunteers are aware of this policy and of their responsibility to refer all incidents of bullying and harassment to the principal.
- The Principal ensures that all students understand their right to safety and respect, and that they do not have to tolerate bullying from anyone.
- The Principal consults as appropriate with other faculty members such as the classroom teacher, to address incidents of bullying and, where appropriate, initiates a Solution Team response.

### **Teachers and Staff**

- All teachers, administrators and staff are role models for living by the school's values of respect and empathy. They remain mindful at all times of their role in establishing a school climate based upon these values.
- Teachers raise awareness of harassment and bullying regularly throughout the year and especially during KIDs Week
- Teachers and staff act swiftly to address incidents of bullying and will use their discretion as to whether they need assistance from the Principal, a Solution Team facilitator or another member of the staff.
- Teachers and staff should let the principal know immediately if they become aware of incidents of harassment or bullying.

### **Parents**

- In this section, references to parents include guardians, volunteers and coaches.
- Parents support the school values of respect and empathy in all their interactions with other parents, teachers, and students. Parents are respectful when communicating to faculty any concerns they may have about the operation of the school and work cooperatively with the school to assist their child in meeting the academic, moral, and behavioral expectations of the school.
- Parents actively encourage their children to show respect, empathy, and acceptance to students and staff at the school.
- Parents who become aware that their child is being excluded or bullied, or who suspect that their child may be bullying others, are strongly encouraged to immediately contact their child's teacher or Principal for help.
- All parents are expected to participate in anti-bullying awareness programs provided by the school.
- Parents who serve as volunteers or coaches have the same responsibility as staff to monitor students, and to report acts of harassment, bullying, and intentional exclusion.

### **Students**

Our school is a community. All students need to get along, whether or not they are actually friends. Here are things that students can do to keep our school bully-free.

- Be mindful how others might perceive your actions or words.
- Do not engage in harassment and bullying.
- Do not be a bully-follower.
- If you see harassment or bullying, be an ally to the student that is being targeted.

- Intervene if you are able or immediately seek adult assistance if you cannot intervene.
- If you are harassed or bullied by other students, speak out. Do not give your power away and take on the role of target. Remember that you have the right to respect and ask these students to stop.
  - If the harassment or bullying continues, seek help. Our school encourages you to tell a teacher with whom you feel comfortable or the principal. The fact that you have made a report will not affect your grades or position in the school in any way.
  - Our school takes a problem-solving approach to bullying. We have a member of staff that can pull together a team of students in your grade and ask them to solve the bullying. Many Solution Teams have successfully stopped the bullying after one or two meetings without the use of punishment.
  - Never take revenge, or ask someone to retaliate, against another student who has reported bullying.

### **Solution Team Facilitators**

- The Solution Team™ response to bullying was created as a non-punitive way of addressing bullying dynamics. Under the Solution Team response, an adult facilitator pulls together a group of students to solve the bullying of one of their peers.
- The principal designates one or more faculty members to be Solution Team Facilitators.
- A Facilitator will initiate a Solution Team response, when requested by a campus administrator, by meeting with a student that is being bullied.
- The Facilitator will explain the Solution Team response to the target and ask the target whether they would like this to be used on their behalf.
- The Facilitator will inform the parents of the child being targeted if their child has asked for the help of the Solution Team response.

### **The Relational and Respect Action Team**

- The Relational and Respect Action Team is a standing committee to oversee the implementation and review of this policy and to help our school live by our values of respect and empathy.
- The Relational and Respect Action Team will meet at least once each semester.