



ALKIMOS

BAPTIST COLLEGE

courage faith service

Bullying Prevention Policy

Bullying is not a new phenomenon, but attitudes to bullying have significantly changed in recent times.

Alkimos Baptist College aims to proactively tackle the bullying issue and aims to provide sound support structures for victims of bullying.

All staff of the College have a duty of care to students, ensuring a safe and non-threatening environment for all.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is:

Bullying is a **repeated pattern of behaviour** by one person towards another which is designed to hurt, injure, embarrass, upset or discomfort that person.

It can be:

- physical aggression
- the use of put-down comments or insults
- name-calling
- damage to the person's property
- deliberate exclusion from activities
- the setting-up of humiliating experiences

Bullying is when a person:

- is called racist or hurtful nicknames
- is hit, punched or kicked
- is threatened
- is sent nasty notes
- is ignored deliberately
- is teased repeatedly in a nasty way
- is picked on
- has rumours spread about them
- is excluded from the group
- has property hidden, damaged or destroyed
- has graffiti written about them
- is ridiculed in class

All teachers are firmly committed to putting an end to acts of bullying.

Examples of Bullying:

Physical

e.g. hitting, punching, kicking the victim; taking or damaging the victim's property.

Verbal

e.g. name calling; constant teasing; insults; racist comments; sexist comments, gossiping, ridiculing.

Emotional

e.g. excluding peers from groups; spreading rumours; stalking; interference with, or damage to personal property, extortion, demanding help or money.

Bullies are:

People who look for victims, i.e. those who don't appear to be confident and who don't stand up for themselves. Bullies behave in the way they do because:

- They are jealous of other people
- They don't know how to feel successful in other ways
- It helps them to be noticed by other people
- It makes them feel powerful to bully someone else
- They feel inferior to others and use bullying as a way of covering up those feelings and trying to convince others that they don't feel inferior.

Common Characteristics of Bullies

- Often attention seeking
- They bully because they think they are popular and have the support of others
- They do not accept responsibility for their behaviour
- They have a need to feel in common with their peers
- They will continue to bully if the victim and observing peer group do not complain
- They show no remorse for hurting another child
- They have higher than average aggressive behaviour patterns
- Often have parents who bully them and support their child's aggressive behaviour

A person who is bullied can:

Talk about it – bullies thrive on silence.

Discuss it with:

- friends
- family
- teachers
- anyone you can relate to.

Don't get misled by the "dobber" tag – it is used to protect the bullies!

Common Characteristics of a Victim

Most children are approached by a bully at school. It is often the child's response that will determine if they will be bullied again. Children who are highly vulnerable often become victims. Such children:

- Often have poor social skills and lack confidence
- Believe that bullying is their fault and if this is the case they are unlikely to seek help
- Are desperate to fit in

In desperate cases, children who are repeatedly victimised see suicide as the only escape. For the majority of victims, emotional scars last a lifetime.

How to Handle Bullying:

- don't retaliate; look for advice
- talk to your parents
- write down the things the bully has said or done to you and how you feel. Date each entry.

Then you may:

- report the above to the School Principal.

Victims of bullying will be supported. No one deserves to be bullied *even if* their behaviour is irritating or annoying. There are other positive and constructive ways to deal with irritating and annoying behaviour.

PREVENTION POLICY

Purpose of Prevention Policy:

- Prepare students to manage and resolve conflict in non-aggressive and non-violent ways
- Although bullying instances are comparatively rare in the College, to further reduce the incidence of bullying in the school
- Create an opportunity for students and staff to develop the skills necessary to handle these situations with the minimum of distress
- Assist the College community to manage frustration and conflict in non-violent ways

This is done through:

1. The Behaviour Management Policy (see Alkimos Baptist College Behaviour Management Policy)

- The policy is presented and discussed with students and parents / guardians in their entry interview.
- The policy is reinforced within year groups e.g. During Form Period or Christian Ed. lesson we have guest speakers, Bully Buster plays
- The Behaviour Management Policy is clearly reinforced with the students as they engage with it. This is also reinforced to parents of students who engage in bullying behaviours.
- Parents are contacted with concerns re. students behaviour, whether victim or bully.
- Reported incidents of bullying are followed up quickly and carefully.
- Victims of bullying are protected, cared for and followed up (College Counsellor, Principal, Deputy)
- Bullies are tracked / monitored.
- Incidents of bullying e.g. where a child's immediate physical welfare is in jeopardy, are dealt with immediately.

2. The College Environment

- The College aims to be welcoming from the Front Office to the day-to-day classes. We aim to build trust between staff and students, mutual respect and a violence-free atmosphere.
- Positive behaviours are modelled by all members of the College community.
- Positive behaviours are acknowledged and rewarded e.g. gold certificates, merit certificates, Good Samaritan certificates etc.
- Discipline system that is fair, firm & non-violent.
- A sense of belonging and empowerment for all members of the school community.

3. The Curriculum

The curriculum allows for opportunities to:

- Understand the nature of bullying
- Christian Ed. lessons or Worship Assemblies, including programs such as PATHS and Kids with Courage Programs.
- Health Education Curriculum
- Incidental through thematic work
- Understand personal safety

- Guest speakers for all years
- Develop interpersonal communication and problem solving skills e.g. negotiation, mediation, conflict resolution and assertiveness
- Christian Education Curriculum
- Individual counselling
- Develop self-confidence and self-esteem
- Cross-curricular: each subject / department can promote this via a range of activities e.g. achieving success, praise
- Whole College approach to praise & encouragement
- Acquire the ability to understand, respect and care for others
- College ethos

4. The Code of Behaviour

As outlined in the Behaviour Management Policy

5. Response to Bullying

- On the report of an incidence of bullying the Principal will interview the victim in a safe setting away from bully and other students.
- The safety of the victim and his/her welfare is prime consideration at this stage. Where a child is distressed a staff member will remain with the child.
- Any witnesses are interviewed.
- The accused bully is interviewed and allowed to speak freely to give their view.
- Where actual bullying is evident this will be discussed with the bully and a first warning given (verbal). The bully's parents will be contacted, including further steps in the Discipline System. The bully is also warned regarding any revenge / having friends take revenge / further bullying of the victim.
- The victim is provided with feedback and including the warning for the bully and the implications should anything further arise. Ongoing support structures are offered e.g. from staff, chaplain, counsellor, psychologist, etc. The victim's parents are contacted.
- In the case of a second instance the bully would be suspended for one day.
- In the case of a third instance the bully would be suspended for one day, and this would be the final chance.
- In the case of a fourth instance in a year, the bully would leave the College.
- A record will be kept of all reported incidents on the relevant student's file including details of harm to the victim, personal factors of the students involved, care / action taken on behalf of the College. And / or other agencies e.g. police, any underlying causes.
- Any repeated occurrences/similar instances must also be documented.
- Support for victim (and witnesses where applicable) is recorded.

Review

An annual review of the policy (as part of general review) will take place, or as the occasion arises.