



KEMPSEY  
ADVENTIST SCHOOL



# Anti-bullying & Harassment Policy

**NURTURE** FOR TODAY · **LEARNING** FOR TOMORROW · **CHARACTER** FOR ETERNITY.

# 1. Introduction

Kempsey Adventist School is committed to providing a safe and caring environment that fosters respect for others and does not tolerate bullying in all its forms.

## 2. Definition

Bullying is defined as the intentional, targeted and repeated hurting of another person, either physically, emotionally or psychologically. It can be planned or spontaneous, by individuals or groups, of a continuous or repeated isolated nature. In most cases, bullying is further expanded upon in definition as behaviours and actions being repetitious/ongoing in nature.

Bullying can take many forms and exists in both the real world and the online/digital world of computing, phones and the digital community. We consider the following behaviour to be bullying:

### 2.1. Physical

- Any unwanted physical contact or activities
- Hitting, Kicking, punching
- Punching, shoving, spitting
- Making rude gestures
- Taking or damaging something which belongs to someone else
- Forcing others to hand over food, money or something that belongs to them.
- Making someone do something they don't want to do.

### 2.2. Verbal

- Name-calling
- Teasing
- Threatening
- Making fun of someone because of their appearance, physical characteristics, family, faith or cultural background
- Making fun of someone's actions

### 2.3. Indirect

- Excluding others from the game or group
- Spreading untrue stories about others
- Isolating students

*NB – the chronological age, mental age and context of the situation may not always necessitate the definition of bullying apply. All children grow into an understanding of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. It is the role of parents and teachers to assist in this growth of understanding.*

*The behaviours of a Kindy student will be filtered differently to that of a Year 12 student and those with a disability that reduces their capacity to function inside society norms likewise are viewed through a alternate filter; just as is the case inside legislation and law, where age and capacity have determining impacts upon decisions made.*

### 3. Strategies to address bullying

- Openly talk about bullying – what it is, how it affects us and what we can do about it in each classroom and/or small groups as appropriate, and foster a class culture of respect and support for others
- Teach our students the skills which will build their self-esteem and empower them to take responsibility for themselves – and give them the opportunity to practise these skills
- Review our Student Management policy regularly; which clearly states the actions we will take to deal with bullying behaviour.
- In-service staff and parents; on the nature of bullying and what action the school will take regarding it
- Discuss behavioural boundaries, eg: when a 'stir' or joke goes too far
- Display anti-bullying information around the school
- Use our whole school social and emotional resilience training program as a proactive intervention and education cycle for all students.
- To further use staff to address specifically identified student needs and to conduct small group intervention and education work based on issues and events that unfold.

### 4. The following are guidelines for staff in dealing with bullying in the school:-

#### 4.1. Symptoms of victims

- Class/School Attendance
  - truancy
  - refusal or reluctance to attend school
  - refusal to attend on certain days, eg, sports days
  - lateness for school
  - reluctance to leave the classroom
  - constant use of the library
- Academic
  - significant decrease in work output and results
  - distracted in class
  - problems with retention and short-term memory
  - reluctance to participate in class discussion
- Physical
  - tiredness
  - psychosomatic complaints – headaches and stomach aches
  - bed wetting



- lost of appetite
- unexplained bruises and injuries
- torn clothing
- Parents
  - frequent complaints by parents of student's reluctance to attend school due to peer relationship problems
- Discipline
  - increase in the number of students requiring discipline for fighting
  - increase in bus conflicts requiring attention
  - need for increased playground supervision
  - need for increased vigilance

## 4.2. The School will

- Help children feel confident about coming forward
- Keep victim's anonymity protected when speaking to bullies whenever possible
- Encourage teachers not to have favourites – this can instigate bullying because of jealousy
- Be as sure as possible about the incident involved – to be fair to both the victim and supposed bully through diligent investigation.
- Keep written records of offences in the Discipline Record
- Keep things as "low key" as possible, depending on the severity of the case to allow for growth and change
- Keep parents informed when bullying takes place – both the parents of the victim and the bully
- Help students who appear to be left out to be included in activities
- Treat all complaints seriously

## 4.3. Talking to Victims of Bullying

- Believe them – this is important, affirm the child for telling you "Thank you for telling me, you have done the right thing"
- Determine feelings – "How did you feel?" "How do you feel now?" "It sounds like you feel..."
- Time Line Episodes – "Let's take one specific recent situation. Let me try to understand what happened."
- Introduce the concept of "Vicious Cycle" – "Let's try to see what happens in terms of a cycle which is self-perpetuating." "You are not to blame for the cycle but there may be something you can do to break the cycle."
- Behaviour Rehearsal – "What can you say and do that would be different and would break the vicious cycle?" "Let us rehearse that."
- Assertiveness Training – Practice "I" statements
- Praise, Encourage and Goal Setting – "This is fantastic – the new insight you have made. In the next few days, you could experiment with your new skills. How much energy do you need to put into this."



## 4.4. Talking to the Bully

- Determine feelings – “How did you feel?”, “How do you feel now?”, “It sounds like...”
- Discuss Behaviour in Terms of Rights and Responsibilities – “Students have a right to come to school without being bullied, teased or harassed.” “Your responsibility is to treat all fellow students with respect.” “What behaviours of yours have breached this basic right?”
- Outline Consequences – “The consequences for bullying and teasing are clear...”
- Challenge – “Your behaviour has brought about these consequences.” “Is this behaviour helping you?”
- Discuss Alternative Behaviours – “Let’s talk about other behaviours you could try.”

## 4.5. Responsibilities of Staff

- Commit to promoting a school culture of anti-bullying by providing a safe and caring environment and fostering respect for others
- Model non-bullying behaviour in discipline and interaction with students. Undertake training or professional development to better manage bullying situations
- Monitor ongoing relationships between students
- Advise students of more appropriate behaviours – bullying will not be tolerated. To deal with all reported and observed incidences of bullying as set out in this policy
- Ensure that students are adequately supervised within the boundaries of the law
- Report incidences of bullying to the Administration where warranted
- Provide counselling services as required
- Involve prayer as part of the resolution and process

## 4.6. Responsibilities of Students

- Tell if they are being bullied or if they see someone else being bullied – both at school and on the way to and from school
- Help and support someone who is being bullied
- Avoid bullying others
- Come to the aid of anyone they think is being bullied

## 4.7. Responsibilities of Parents

- Familiarise themselves with the school policy on Anti-Bullying
- Teach their children traditional values – honesty, tolerance and right and wrong. Be prepared to learn more by attending information sessions
- Give their children ideas on how to solve friendship and social problems themselves. Children need opportunities to solve their own problems. This is part of becoming a person in society at large.
- Teach boundaries of behaviour
- Watch for signs that their child may be being bullied
- Support their child emotionally if they are being bullied – let them know it is unacceptable and will improve

- Speak to someone on staff at the school if their child is being bullied, or they suspect that this is happening
- Instruct their children to “tell” if they are bullied

## 4.8. Reporting of Bullying

Children and their parents can report incidences of bullying to:-

- Their class teacher
- The Head of School (Junior or Senior)
- The Chaplain for support and advice

## 5. Responding to Reported Incidences of Bullying

Bullying behaviours sit inside the existing behavioural management systems of the school. Both Primary and Secondary schools have procedures in place that process students through behaviour modification and consequences for action timelines.