Bullying Policy

Definition:
Bullying occurs when a person or persons is exposed to repeated negative or harmful actions either physical or psychological. Please see appendix for an extended list of actions that constitute bullying.

Rationale:
Mary Immaculate is committed to providing a safe and caring environment which fosters respect for others and does not tolerate bullying. Mary Immaculate is a community embracing learning in the spirit of Christ and the humanness of all.

This policy aims to:
• reinforce within the school community that no form of bullying is acceptable
• set out processes to be followed when a bullying incident is reported
• develop common understandings of and strategies for managing bullying incidents.

It is the responsibility of the community members therefore to:
• be aware of what constitutes bullying
• report incidents of bullying
• be responsible bystanders
• not bully others – see appendix 2 Rights and Responsibilities.

Reporting and intervention:
Incidents of bullying can be reported to any teacher or the Principal by any community member. All reported incidents of bullying will be reported to the principal and will be responded to as follows by the teacher or principal
• once identified, the perpetrator, target and any witnesses will be spoken to; all incidents will be fully investigated and documented
• both target and perpetrator will be offered support and if necessary be referred to counselling
• when bullying is identified, consequences consistent with the school behaviour policy will be implemented
• there will be ongoing monitoring of the behaviour of identified bullies and targets
• parents of both bullies and targets will be consulted after the event, to see if they need any further information or support.

Conclusion: Every member of our school community has a responsibility to behave in a reasonable manner, to comply with this policy and to treat everyone with dignity and respect.
Appendix:
Bullying can take many forms and can occur between many different individuals, such as:
- Student to student
- Student to adult - student to parent
  - student to staff member
- Adult to student - parent to student
  - staff member to student
- Adult to adult - parent to parent
  - parent to staff member
  - staff member to parent
  - staff member to staff member

We consider the following behaviour to be bullying:

Physical:
- Hitting, kicking, punching
- Pushing, shoving
- Spitting
- Making rude gestures
- Taking or damaging something which belongs to someone else
- Forcing others to hand over food, money or something which belongs to them
- Making someone do something they don’t want to do.

Verbal:
- Name calling, teasing
- Threatening
- Making fun of someone because of their appearance, physical characteristics or cultural background
- Making fun of someone’s actions.

Indirect:
- Excluding others from the game or the group
- Spreading untrue stories about others.

Use of technology:
- Cyber bullying - using social media to hurt others, including email, chat rooms, mobile phones, text, cameras and websites.

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