Anti Bullying Policy

Rationale/ Purpose:
At St Jakobi, we believe that all children have the right to a safe environment that allows all people to feel safe and develop their full potential and ability to relate freely to others. Therefore bullying and harassment of any kind will not be tolerated, including but not limited to exclusion, victimisation, racism or sexism. Involvement in these things means both the direct involvement and the passive support of others whilst bullying is taking place.

Definition:
At St Jakobi we believe:
Bullying and harassment are used synonymously.
Bullying Is defined as a repeated behaviour which causes another person to feel hurt, fear or embarrassment.

Bullying can take a number of different forms
- Physical – a person or group of people using physical actions such as hitting, kicking, biting, scratching, spitting, tripping, pushing, unwelcome touch, rude gestures or repeatedly and intentionally damaging someone’s belongings
- Verbal – negative words used repeatedly to upset someone eg name calling, insults, homophobic or racist remarks, verbal abuse
- Social – spreading rumours, writing offensive comments, playing nasty practical jokes, mimicking, deliberately excluding
- Psychological – intimidation, stalking, manipulating where repeated and intentional
- Cyber – bullying via social media. This may occur outside of school hours, however any action which negatively affects any member of the school community is not acceptable and will be dealt with by the school.

Bullying is not
- Mutual arguments or disagreements
- A dislike of someone that is not acted upon
- Random or one off events

Bullying is not about whether the offender perceives their actions as bullying; it is about whether the recipient is feeling the actions as bullying.
Bullying has social consequences – victims of bullying can feel unsafe, alone, frightened and confused. Friendships and relationships may deteriorate and self esteem lower.
Long term effects of bullying may be
- Mental health problems and depression
- Difficulty in maintaining positive relationships
- Dislike of self, therefore possible self harm
- Alcohol or drug abuse
- Negative, and even suicidal, thoughts
Reducing bullying in our school:
All members of the school community can help by:

- Being friendly and respectful to one another
- Looking for signs of bullying in the school community and reporting it to a trusted adult.
- Acting to protect those who are experiencing bullying.
- Refusing to join in if encouraged by others.
- Helping others to stop bullying
- Listening and helping when those being bullied confide

Reporting bullying:
All cases of bullying will be treated seriously and with urgency.

Any member of the school community may report bullying to any staff member, who will then report it to the Principal.

How will our school deal with bullying?

- Teachers will make use of social skill programs and the relevant aspects of the Australian curriculum, in particular Health, to teach about bullying, the effects of bullying, the role of bystanders and strategies to deal with bullying.
- Teachers will focus on bullying as part of St Jakobi’s Safety Week at the beginning of every year, in every class, with a particular focus on strategies for how to deal with bullying.
- Use a buddy system to encourage friendships.
- Provide adequate playground and classroom supervision.
- Include circle time or an age appropriate equivalent after recess and lunch play to allow students the opportunity to report playtime difficulties and/or bullying.
- Provide opportunities to build resilience both in the classroom, and through programs run by the School Chaplain.
- Staff will model non-bullying behaviours.
- Encourage people to report acts of bullying.
- Staff will take an allegation of bullying seriously and act quickly when reports are received.
- Inform parents and students to keep a screen shot or print out of e-bullying where ever possible, and supply to the school.
- The matter may be referred to the Principal for investigation and resolution if class teachers are unable to resolve it. Principal to interview all involved, including bystanders, in order to establish facts. If an act of bullying is found to have occurred, parents to be notified. A behaviour contract will be established and reviewed regularly.
- Ensure that students who bully understand that gaining retaliation for getting into trouble is in fact further bullying, and will not be tolerated.
- School chaplain may be involved in counselling.
- Where a student feels unable to report the matter to staff, parents are encouraged to do so on their child’s behalf.
- Provide staff PD, including restorative justice practices, for dealing with bullying.
- The Principal will notify Police as soon as any serious suspected e-bullying, including that captured on a technological device, occurs.

The main aim is to restore positive relationships between members of the school community.

Any action taken against perpetrators will vary according to the circumstances. Examples of possible actions are as follows:

- Isolation for ½ day including lunch
- Required to attend mediation or counselling
Following a second offence parents may be required to attend an interview at school. The student will be required to complete and sign a negotiated behaviour form. If any further case, suspension or expulsion will occur. (Expulsion may occur immediately in serious cases.)

Appendix:
www.cybersmart.gov.au
www.bullyingnoway.gov.au
decs documents on bullying

Other policies applicable to this policy: iPad Agreement; Anti Bullying Policy – Staff and Parent; Behaviour Management Policy
Date Implemented: March 2015
Date of Review: 2018