

Our school vision statement challenges us to focus on “strong positive relationships” and Values that include caring, respect and friendship towards others. We all have a right to be respected and a responsibility to respect each other as we strive to develop a safe and supportive learning community at Flagstaff Hill R-7 School. Bullying and harassment are not acceptable in such an environment. Flagstaff Hill R-7 School is committed to preventing and eliminating bullying in all its forms. We do this by teaching students skills which foster respect for self and others.

### **What is bullying?**

Bullying is behaviour that hurts, threatens, embarrasses or intimidates someone. When a group or an individual uses their power to target or hurt another person repeatedly, this is bullying. There is an intention to cause fear, distress and/or harm. It is defined by the effects on the victim, not the intent of the person/s doing the bullying. Bullying can occur between adults, between students, adult/s to student/s and vice-versa.

### **Some examples of bullying include:**

- Teasing
- Name-calling and ‘put-downs’
- Spreading rumours
- Making threats
- Deliberately excluding people from activities/groups
- Physical aggression such as shoving, hitting, throwing things at someone
- Pushing, damaging or hiding someone’s property
- Making threatening or offensive gestures
- Threatening or offensive SMS or emails

### **As a student, what can I do to stop bullying?**

- Have a variety of friends to mix with at recess or lunch time. Have these friends over to your place after school/weekends to extend such friendships.
- Be courageous. If you witness bullying, don’t join in. Take a stand by walking away or telling the person doing it to stop. Tell someone on staff that you trust if you feel it is on-going.
- Show care and respect for others in and outside the classroom. Make a special effort towards a student who seems lonely or who is having a hard time by inviting them into your friendship group.
- If you get involved in bullying yourself, remember how it felt when someone was unkind to you. Say sorry and **stop it**.

### **If you are being bullied:**

- Act confidently, even if you feel scared. Imagine any hurtful comments bouncing off you like water off a duck’s back.
- Stay away from places that aren’t comfortable for you
- Take a deep breath. Remind yourself that the person who is bullying has the problem, not you. Don’t take it on board. Use helpful self-talk like: ‘This is about them, not me’. Walk away.
- Tell the person/people that you don’t like what they are doing or what they are saying. Tell them to stop it. Look at them directly and say confidently: ‘Stop it’ or ‘Cut it out! That’s not OK’ or ‘I don’t like what you’re doing.’
- If the behaviour continues, tell your parents, your teacher or a staff member you trust. It is your right to be safe and treated with respect. Staff

- will deal with your complaint in a confidential manner.
- Avoid trying to get even. It often makes the problem worse.

### **What will happen if you are bullying students?**

- You may be identified in the regular Bully Audit
- The school will follow the processes outlined in the Behaviour Development Policy.
- You will be counselled by your classroom teacher. You will be given the opportunity to resolve the situation and discuss the issue with the person you bullied.
- If you persist in bullying you will be referred to a member of the administration team for counselling and to develop a solution to the problem. Your parents will be contacted.
- If you are found to be bullying again a consequence will be applied. This may include:
  - In-school isolation (recess and lunchtime).
  - Letter home to parents/parent interview.
  - Counselling program.
  - Loss of privileges.
  - Suspension.
- If bullying continues your parents will be called in to discuss further action.

### **What do staff members do to stop bullying?**

- Incorporate positive, preventative, anti-bullying strategies in their classroom programs.
- Be positive role models to students in their behaviour and communication style.

- Intervene speedily to all witnessed or reported bullying and follow-up regularly.
- Be familiar with our school's Student Behaviour Management Policy and how the school deals with bullying, and highlight our policy and procedures to students regularly.
- Adopt positive classroom management strategies.
- Ensure that all the areas of our school have a visible staff presence at breaks, when moving to a specialist teaching class area and before and after school.

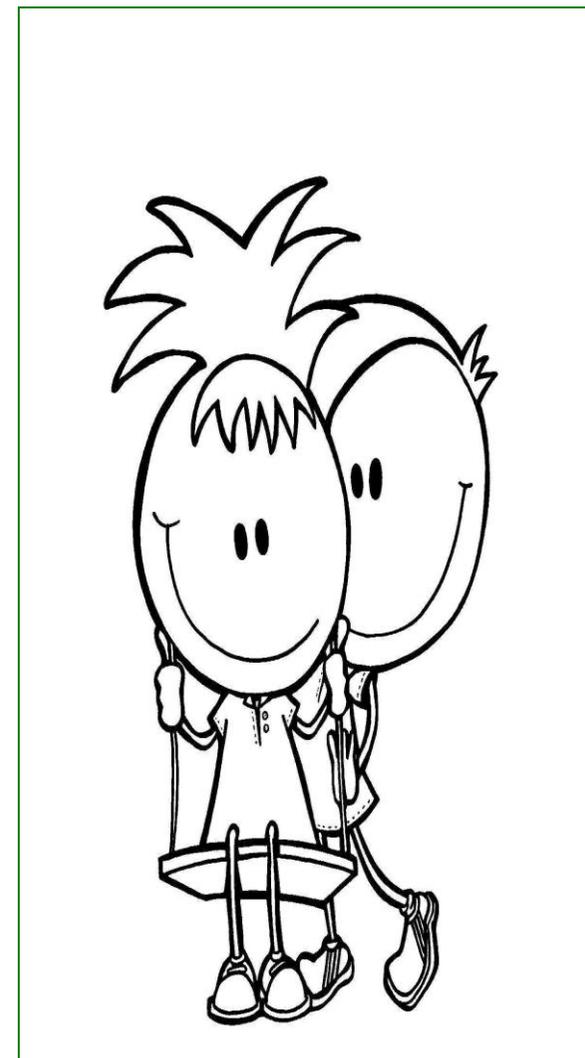
### As a parent or guardian, what can I do to stop bullying?

- Make it clear that bullying is unacceptable.
- Be positive about your child's qualities and encourage your child to be tolerant and caring.
- If your child tells you of a bullying scenario they have witnessed report the matter to your child's teacher.
- Be vigilant for signs that may indicate that your child is being bullied. These include: reluctance to go to school, mood swings, a pattern of somatic illnesses like headaches and stomach aches, sleep disturbance, and social withdrawal.
- If your child reports that they are being bullied, encourage them to talk freely. Take note of as many details as possible. Discuss ways of addressing the issue. Inform the school. At all stages of the process you will be consulted and informed about interventions taken to resolve the issue.
- Discourage any form of retaliation. Discuss positive strategies your child can use. Seek support and further strategies from other parents, friends and teachers.

## PARENTS CAN HELP

### Take an active interest:

- In your child's social life
- In what is happening at school
- ENCOURAGE YOUR CHILD
  - to bring friends home.
  - To accept and tolerate differences in others.
- BUILD HIS OR HER SELF CONFIDENCE
  - by recognising and affirming his or her positive qualities
  - by valuing him or her for who he or she is.
- DISCUSS WITH YOUR CHILD
  - The school's expectations about behaviour.
  - Ways to respond if his or her rights are infringed.
- ENCOURAGE CONSTRUCTIVE RESPONSES
  - Physical bullying or persistent teasing should be reported.
  - Hitting back or retaliating with name calling won't solve the problem.
- SET AN EXAMPLE
  - Be firm but not aggressive in setting limits.
  - Be positive in the things you say and do.
- BE ALERT FOR SIGNS OF DISTRESS
  - Unwillingness to attend school.
  - Dropping off in the quality of school work.
  - Damaged clothing or frequent loss of personal property.
  - Loss of confidence or mood changes.
  - Withdrawal from social activities.
- ACT
  - If your child is being bullied, discuss the issue with the class teacher or a member of the Leadership Team.



## BULLYING POLICY