

## Carmel School Bullying Policy

While it is our hope that all Carmel students behave with kindness and are inclusive at all times, there may be times when students act inappropriately towards one another. This policy aims to give guidance to parents, students and teachers regarding the response and protocol if and when bullying occurs.

### *Definition of Bullying*

Bullying is an ongoing misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that causes physical and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power over one or more persons. Bullying can happen in person or online, and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert).

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved. These include the alleged bully, the target / recipient of the bullying behavior and bystanders. A bystander is someone who sees the bullying or knows that it is happening to someone else.

Further information on types of bullying can be found [here](#).

Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.

Behaviours that do not constitute bullying include:

- mutual arguments and disagreements (where there is no power imbalance)
- not liking someone or a single act of social rejection
- one-off acts of meanness or spite
- isolated incidents of aggression, intimidation or violence.

However, these conflicts still need to be addressed and resolved which will be done by the class teacher (primary) or Deputy Head of Primary and Dean of Students (secondary). If necessary, these incidents will be referred to the Head of Primary / Secondary.

### *1. Reporting bullying*

Allegations of bullying can be raised with any member of staff that the pupil or parent feel comfortable sharing the information with. Parents and students can raise the issue either in writing (preferable) or in person.

This information will be shared with (either in writing or a record of the conversation) the Head of Primary, Head of Secondary or the Principal. An allegation of bullying is a serious matter and will be handled with professionalism, in confidence and with sensitivity.

## 2. School response to bullying

If a student makes an allegation of bullying, either personally or via their parent(s), the staff member will:

- Listen carefully and calmly, and document what the student says. (*Staff member will clarify if there are immediate safety risks and let the student know how these will be addressed*).
- Collect additional information by speaking to all students involved, including bystanders. Records will be kept of all conversations.
- Notify parents of parties involved and inform them of the incident and course of action. This plan will be recorded on an Individual Behaviour Plan and will be reviewed at agreed upon intervals until resolution.
- Discuss a plan of action with the students, informing the students and the parents of what the next steps will be.
- In most cases there will be a consequence and/or guidance / counselling for the alleged bully. Counselling will also be offered to the recipient of the bullying and the bystanders involved. This will include the provision of suggestions on what to do if the bullying occurs again.
- Set a date for follow up review/s.
- Record the incident in the school's student data management system.

Students who continue to bully and not remedy their behaviour will face the consequences of in school suspension, out of school suspension and possible expulsion.

Students should also be aware that students with a track record of bullying and a repeated record of mean behaviour on the school records management system (SEQTA) may find themselves ineligible for leadership positions at the school.