



St Teresa's School

BULLYING POLICY

St Teresa's School has a zero tolerance policy with regard to bullying. This policy is aimed at addressing bullying that occurs among learners.

DEFINITIONS

1. Bullying is a social problem and instances of bullying occur in all areas of human endeavour involving personal relationships.
2. It is any action, physical, verbal or psychological, which humiliates, hurts or diminishes the dignity of another.
3. It involves the false use of power, whether of size or seniority, over another.
4. Bullying is deliberate, repeated, hurtful behaviour, which continues in spite of the bully having been asked to stop.
5. In a bullying situation, the bully, the victim and the bystander are equally responsible: if the victim does not ask for help from an adult, the bullying cannot be stopped, and the bystander has a moral duty to report a bullying situation to a staff member within the school environment.

TYPES OF BULLYING

6. Physical: Inflicting physical pain of any form; taking, using or damaging any article belonging to another without permission, or any physical action which may diminish the dignity of another.
7. Verbal: Diminishing the dignity of another using verbal attacks such as threats, teasing, mockery, "dissing", racial slurs and hate-speech, foul language and name calling.
8. Psychological: Intimidation, rumour-mongering, ostracizing, manipulation and domination; the use of body language, facial expression, or writing hurtful or damaging things about another, or any other action which psychologically diminishes the dignity of another.

THE APPROACH TO BULLYING AT ST. TERESA'S MERCY SCHOOL

9. As bullying is a social problem, the School educates learners in their rights and responsibilities to fellow learners.

The School

- 9.1 Makes learners aware of the existence of bullying and of its detrimental effect on individuals and the community, through RE lessons, workshops, guest speakers.
- 9.2 Engages in ongoing discussions with learners in the respective sections of the school to combat bullying among learners.
- 9.3 Uses mentoring and counseling to modify negative behaviour that leads to bullying.
- 9.4 Uses mediation, including peer mediation with a teacher in attendance, to help parties to resolve relationship issues.
- 9.5 Deals severely with persistent bullying if the above does not impact positively on behaviour.

PROCEDURES TO DEAL WITH BULLYING

10. Procedures may differ according to sections.
11. Bullying behaviour needs to be identified and addressed pro-actively. This may include providing counseling for the bully, which will be coupled with a warning of the consequences of a repetition of bullying behaviour. Behaviour will be reported to parents.
12. If behaviour is repeated, a parent interview will be called and strategies for intervention and behaviour modification will be outlined. Professional counseling, regular report-backs and a positive improvement in behaviour will be expected.
13. If there is a repetition of bullying behaviour, learners must be aware that it is considered an act of serious misconduct according to the Code of Conduct and serious consequences will follow. These may include suspension or expulsion from the school.