

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY
Trinity Lutheran School
Alma, Missouri

Our school mission is “Trinity Lutheran School provides a Christ-centered education, lasting more than a lifetime.” The Vision of Trinity Lutheran School is to nurture each student, provide academic excellence and create strong, faithful, compassionate leaders who inspire and serve others in their journey with Jesus Christ.”

In accordance with and in support of the Mission and Vision statements, Trinity Lutheran School believes that individuals have the right to learn, and to be safe and secure at school. We endeavor to build a safe, caring, and supportive environment for all members of our school community. We do not tolerate bullying or harassment in any form. Bullying and violent physical acts are not acceptable in this school and any incidences will be dealt with seriously and appropriately.

Purpose of this Policy: To provide guidelines for all staff and the school community ensuring that there is a clear definition of bullying, and to outline clear procedures for reporting and responding to bullying.

DEFINITION OF BULLYING: The National Safe Schools Framework defines bullying as repeated verbal, physical, social, or psychological behavior that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons.

The definition of bullying has three critical aspects - a *repeated* action, the *misuse* of power within relationships, and behavior which *causes harm*; all three aspects need to be present in order for behavior to be called bullying. Both conflicts or fights between equals and single incidents are not defined as bullying. Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders.

For use with younger students: Bullying is when someone keeps targeting another child again and again, and tries to make them feel bad. They say or do many mean and hurtful things, make fun of them a lot, try to stop them from joining in or make others not like them.

Although it isn't nice if someone says or does something mean to someone else, we don't necessarily call that bullying. It also isn't bullying if children have an argument or disagreement.

For use with older students: Bullying is when one student (or a group) keeps targeting another student again and again to upset or hurt them. They might hurt them physically, try to socially isolate them, or to say and do many mean or humiliating things to them.

Although it's neither respectful nor acceptable if someone behaves in a mean or aggressive way on one occasion, that isn't bullying. A fight or disagreement between students of equal power isn't bullying.

PREVENTION

The best way to prevent bullying is to create an atmosphere of good behavior where pupils treat each other and staff members with respect, and to teach children about the

Practical Ways for building a positive school culture and climate:

- Model respectful behavior to all members of the school community at all times.
- Explicitly teach pupils what respectful language and respectful behavior looks like, acts like, sounds like, and feels like in class and around the school. Importance of understanding and tolerating differences between people. This may be done in lessons, assemblies, and in class in order to respond to specific situations. Display key respect messages in classrooms, in assembly areas, and around the school. Involve pupils in the development of these messages.
- Catch them being good — notice and acknowledge desired respectful behavior by providing positive attention.
- Consistently tackle the use of discriminatory and derogatory language in the school — this includes racist language and language that is belittling of pupils with a disability or social/emotional need.
- Give constructive feedback to pupils when respectful behavior and respectful language are absent.
- Have a system of encouragement and rewards to promote desired behavior and compliance with the school rules and routines.
- Explicitly teach pupils about the appropriate use of social media.
- Positively encourage pupils to comply with the school rules on mobile phone and internet use. Follow up with pupils who ignore the rules.
- Actively involve parents in awareness raising around social media.
- Highlight and explicitly teach school rules in pupil friendly language in the classroom and in common areas.
- All staff should actively watch for signs of bullying behavior.
- Ensure there is adequate playground/school yard/outdoor supervision.

WHOLE SCHOOL COMMUNITY RESPONSIBILITY

We believe the whole school community has a responsibility to be proactive in preventing bullying and harassment. This policy outlines the responsibilities of school staff, students and parents.

The School Has a Responsibility to:

- Provide professional learning to ensure that all staff have a thorough understanding of bullying and harassment and are able to apply the policy according to its intentions.
- Be proactive in preventing bullying and harassment and supporting students by: embedding discussion and activities in the curriculum in order to promote awareness and understanding.
- Apply the policy consistently and consulting with the school community in order to review the effectiveness of the policy.
- Actively work with the school community to promote a culture that will not tolerate bullying and harassment and where students feel safe talking about their needs.
- Set the standard of mutual praise and support, so making bullying less likely.
- Empower students with appropriate strategies to deal with incidents.

The Role of School Principal and Staff

- Take prompt action when incidents of bullying and harassment are witnessed or reported. This means intervening to prevent such incidents.
- Apply the school policy in a consistent manner, both within a classroom setting and on the school grounds.
- Treat seriously claims of bullying
- Monitor those who have been bullied or harassed and those who have instigated the bullying and harassment.
- Maintain communication with parents in relation to issues of bullying/harassment.
- Explicitly teach students that research indicates that “bullying stops within 10 seconds of peer intervention.” (Hawkins et al., 2001)

The Role of the Principal:

- Document each incident
- Discuss with students involved (at teacher’s discretion)
- Contact parents/care-providers.
- Contact/meet with all parties concerned
- Implement/initiate consequences.
- Initiate interagency meetings as needed.
- Continue to monitor.

The Role of Teachers and Support Staff

- All staff take all forms of bullying seriously and intervene to prevent incidents from taking place. Classroom teachers will investigate and attempt to resolve the problem. If an incident is not resolved it is then passed onto the principal.
- Classroom teachers are responsible for informing other staff of any children with potential difficulties, and situations that have arisen.
- Document each incident.
- Discuss with students involved.
- Familiarize and collate all information to aid knowledge of reasons behind bullying.
- Inform parents.
- Teach explicit skills/strategies that empower students.
- Establish a classroom environment where:
 - Students feel safe
 - Expectations are clearly defined
 - and consequences are applied for inappropriate behavior.

The Role of the Student:

- Students must understand the definition of what bullying and harassment is and is not.
- Report incidents of bullying/harassment immediately to their teacher.
- Be proactive in preventing bullying/harassment behaviors in their peers.
- Allow others to be safe at school.
- Accept consequences when involved in bullying and harassment.
- Take part in conferences and mediations in order to resolve issues.
- Support other students who may be subject to bullying and harassment.

The Role of the Parents:

- Parents have a responsibility to support the school's Anti-Bullying Policy and to actively encourage their child to be a positive member of the school.
- Understand the definition of what bullying and harassment is and is not.
- Resolve social media issues involving their child that occur outside the school
- Support the school in resolving incidents of bullying.
- Make it clear to their children that bullying and harassment are not acceptable.
- Support the consequences supplied by the school.
- To set an example of how to appropriately solve and resolve differences if they occur.

Responding to Bullying

When an incident of bullying comes to the attention of a teacher or other staff members, the steps listed below will be taken. The teacher that the incident is reported to is responsible for starting the process listed below, involving other staff members as needed.

PERPETRATOR/S

VICTIM/S

Gather information from whoever presents to report incident/situation.

Check immediately to ensure health of both victim and perpetrator are taken care of

Meet with both perpetrator/s and victim/s, separate if more than one as soon as possible to speak with them separately.

Discuss series of events

Discuss series of events

Encourage acknowledgement of the situation and their contribution to the incidents

Inform or reassure them of their rights
Encourage them to report any future incidents

Develop constructive responses that the perpetrator may need to do or have

Provide feedback on how incident is being or will be addressed and resolved

Reflect on what has occurred by filling out a Reflection Form

Develop a plan to change behavior - an action plan that sets out goals and timelines and shows what is going to take place to 'Help make things right'

Contact Parents via the Reflection Form or for more serious cases, a phone call.

Contact Parents & involve them at whatever Level necessary while the issue is in the Process of being resolved.

Maintain regular contact throughout the resolution process to monitor attitude and behavioral changes.

Meet regularly with victim to check and review progress until issue is resolved.

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INFORMATION GATHERING GUIDE

In gathering information it is recommended that the staff understand:

- The past - What happened?
- The present - Who is affected? What can be done about it?
- The Future - What changes can be made to prevent it happening again?
- The procedure focuses on the following five questions:

What happened?

What were you thinking at the time?

Who has been affected by what you have done? In what way?

What do you think you need to do to make things right?

What will you agree to do next time?

Throughout the information gathering process we strive to:

- Empower individuals to deal appropriately with unacceptable behavior
- Create a safe and supportive environment
- Develop active relationships among all members of the community
- Focus on the behavior of concern and repairing the harm
- Develop a community that shares responsibility for the rights of others

BULLYING - PROCEDURES POLICY

- I. Trinity will practice zero bullying tolerance as the standard of behavior. Teachers will actively and consistently teach positive behavior, dissuading aggressive or harassing behavior, and use Jesus as the model of behavior.

- II. Students who are caught in the act of bullying will be subject to the discipline process as summarized below.
 - A. Warning - When a minor incident occurs, the teacher will take the opportunity to help students define bullying and to express the inappropriateness of bullying, referencing Jesus' example of reaching out in love and kindness, and practicing the blessings of the Holy Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, gentleness, faithfulness, self-control (Galatians: 5:22-23).

 - B. Inform parents - After a second incident, teachers will inform parents of their child's actions.

 - C. Inform Principal - The principal is involved after the second warning has occurred.

 - D. Confer with parents and principal - After a third incident, gather invested staff Persons and discuss the situation.

 - E. Law enforcement will be notified when criminal intent is obvious.

- III. Possible Options for Action (Need not be done in order, to be determined by Severity of actions);
 - A. Refer student to counseling or therapy

 - B. Assign school or community service project.

 - C. Draw up a behavioral contract.

 - D. Visit to principal's office - Confer with teachers and parents.

 - E. Time-out in principal's office - Student may need to spend 30 minutes to one hour sitting in the principal's office. Student may be asked to write a report related to the topic of bullying behavior (according to appropriate age level).

 - F. Consult with Pastor.

- G. Suspension from School - from one to three days. After consultation with the parents, teacher, and input from the principal, the student may receive a three day suspension. The student may be asked to develop his own positive behavioral plan.
- H. Suspension of longer duration - After a three day suspension, the principal, after consultation with the parents, teacher, and the Board, may suspend for up to a semester.
- I. Expulsion - When every effort to correct the inappropriate behavior has been exhausted, and after consultation with parents, teachers, Pastor and the Board of education, the Principal may expel the student.

Review by the Board of Education: November, 2019

Approved by the Board of Education: November 15, 2018

Anti-Bullying Policy Agreement

After reviewing the Anti-Bullying Policy and Procedures, please sign and return this form to the school office.

_____, parent(s) of _____

have read and reviewed the Anti-Bullying Policy. We have reviewed the policy with our child(ren). We are fully in agreement with the policy and will comply with the policy and procedures. We will support the school in its endeavor to provide a safe, comfortable environment for students and staff.

Parent Signature

Date

Parent Signature

Date

Student Signature

Date

Student Signature

Date

Student Signature

Date

REFLECTION FORM

Date: _____

What happened?

What did I do?

Why am I here?

What could I have done differently?

How can I make amends?

What will I do next time?

Student Signature _____

Teacher Signature _____

Principal Signature _____

November 16, 2018

Dear Parents,

As a part of our Accreditation work we have written a more in-depth Anti-bullying Policy. The purpose of this policy is to bring awareness by defining bullying and outlining clear procedures for reporting and responding to bullying.

The primary focus for this policy is awareness and prevention. The school has a responsibility to ensure that all staff members have a thorough understanding of bullying and harassment and are able to apply the policy according to its intentions.

Parents have the responsibility to support the school policy and to actively encourage their child(ren) to be positive members of the school and to set an example of how to appropriately solve and resolve differences if they occur.

For prevention, as a staff we are periodically engaging students in awareness activities in individual classrooms and in group assemblies and activities. We are launching a “Caught Caring” Campaign which will highlight individual students who are “Caught in the act of being kind and caring”.

We encourage you as parents to observe and be aware of how your child engages with other children and reacts to situations. Please talk about the Anti-bullying Policy with your child(ren), and then sign and return the enclosed agreement form.

In the future, this Policy will be a part of the School handbook, and will be reviewed annually by the staff and Board of Education. Input from you as parents is always welcomed and appreciated.

Creating a safe, caring and supportive environment requires that everyone involved is working toward the same goal. Thank you in advance for supporting the school.

Sincerely,

Trinity Lutheran Staff