Rationale

The foundation of Catholic teaching about life and relationships is respect for the human person. "The equality of men rests essentially on their dignity as persons and the rights that flow from it" (CCC 1935). For this reason St. Catherine's is committed to addressing all issues of bullying.

Policy

At St. Catherine's we believe that all students have a right to a safe, healthy and secure school environment. The school will not tolerate any conduct that undermines an individual's right to feel safe and it will take necessary steps to correct and prevent the behavior. This applies to students, staff and parents during regular school hours and school sponsored activities.

Procedure

At St. Catherine's we look first to prevent bullying. To create a safe school community we employ the following strategies:

- Teach respect for all people, made in God's image, in every aspect of school life.
- Integrate qualities of compassion, kindness, reconciliation, tolerance, respect and justice with religious education, liturgies, assemblies and daily school life.
- Ensure positive classroom environments with student-oriented methods of learning, opportunities for achievement and success, clear expectations of behaviour, and personal responsibility.
- Teach age-appropriate social skills to develop healthy interpersonal relationships.
- Provide a Student and Parent Code of Conduct for all to review annually.
- Affirm the value of the individual by teacher-led, age-appropriate discussions with students assuring them that they need not endure any form of bullying and explore positive ways of resolving conflict.
- Educate students on their responsibility to report and take an active stand against bullying.
- Provide positive teacher role models who consistently display appropriate behaviours and attitudes favouring a culture of respect.
- Provide staff development training in bullying prevention.
- Involve parents through education on bullying at school assemblies and literature on anti-bullying strategies.
- Increase supervision in identified high-risk areas of the school premises.
- Periodically review the Anti-Bullying Policy and response protocols of the school based on staff, parent and student input.

Should an incident of bullying occur, students are expected to:

- Immediately report the incident of bullying to a staff member.
- If a student, parent or guardian of a student involved in the incident feels that the resolution of the incident or complaint was inappropriate the student or the parent of the student should contact the principal.

Should an incident of bullying occur, parents are expected to:

- Immediately report incidents of bullying to a staff member.
- Educate their child on their responsibility to report, and take an active stand against bullying acts.
- Rely on staff to investigate and resolve each complaint of bullying.
- If they feel that the resolution of the incident was unsatisfactory or inappropriate, they should then take steps to resolve their concerns through the School's complaint policy

Response Protocols

To address and correct bullying behaviors, the staff of St. Catherine's will:

- Deal directly and promptly with bullying behavior including:
    1. Stopping the hurtful behavior,
    2. Supporting students who seek help, and
    3. Reporting the incident immediately after resolving the incident to the Principal who will promptly prepare a written report of the incident and take any further appropriate measures.

- Recognize the pattern and characteristics of bullying.
- Inform and obtain parental collaboration and support in responding to the bullying behaviour.
- Determine consequences by age and maturity of individuals involved, the degree of harm done, incidences of past or continuing pattern(s) of behaviour, relationship between parties involved and context in which incident(s) occurred.
- Ensure that a follow-up occurs and assess whether the response to the bullying incident has led to the desired outcome.
- Educate students on their responsibility to report and take an active stand against bullying acts.
- Increase supervision in identified high-risk areas on the school premises.
- Create positive classroom environments to lower psychological and physical aggression including:
  - Student-oriented methods of teaching,
  - Opportunities for achievement and success,
  - Positive teacher/student relationships,
  - Social commitment,
  - Clear expression of behavior and personal responsibility,
  - Specific classroom lessons devoted to teaching acceptance and tolerance,
  - Positive teacher role models who consistently display appropriate behaviours and attitudes favouring a culture of respect.
- Periodically review the Anti-bullying Policy and response protocols of the school.

Definitions
Bullying is a pattern of repeated actions targeted at a person in a deliberate manner, intended to reduce the perceived power that person has over the situation or to harm that person. All acts of bullying have the characteristics of being dehumanizing, intimidating, humiliating, threatening, and evokes fear of physical harm or emotional distress in the person being targeted.

Bullying encompasses a wide range of behaviours within a relationship between a dominant and a less dominant person or group where:
- An imbalance of the perceived power is manifest through aggressive actions.
- Physical or psychological (verbal and social) abuse occurs.
- Negative interactions occur directly (face-to-face) or indirectly (gossip, exclusion).
- Negative actions occur with intent to harm, which can include some or all of the following:
  - i. Physical actions such as punching, kicking, biting and initiating unwanted sexual touching can hurt the person's body, damage belongings or make the person feel badly about himself or herself; Verbal actions such as threats, name calling, insults, racial and cultural slurs or inappropriate jokes and/or comments. Also includes sexual harassment that is when a person or group hurts another person by taunting or discussing sensitive sexual issues, creating sexual rumours or messages, and making derogatory comments on a person's perceived sexual identity;
  - ii. Social exclusion such as spreading rumours, ignoring, gossiping, excluding.
- Negative actions are repeated and/or the intensity or the duration of the actions establishes the bully's dominance over the person. The person thus becomes a victim of injustice.
- Information and communication technologies are used to physically threaten, verbally harass or socially exclude an individual or group.

Reference:	Approved:
School Policy 12 – Complaints	St. Joseph's Parish Education Committee
CISVA Policy 408 –Harassment and Bullying Prevention	**Date(s) Revised:**
CISVA Policy 302 – Complaints	January 27, 2020