



**St. Stephen School**

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## **Bullying and Cyberbullying**

St. Stephen School is committed to providing a safe, positive learning environment for all students. The school recognizes that bullying creates an atmosphere of fear and intimidation, detracts from the safe environment necessary for student learning, and may lead to violence that is more serious. St. Stephen School prohibits any form of bullying or cyberbullying.

### **Definitions**

*“A person is bullied when he or she is exposed, repeatedly and over time, to negative actions on the part of one or more other persons, and he or she has difficulty defending himself or herself.” Dan Olweus*

Bullying is an intentional written, verbal, or physical act or series of acts directed at another person or group of people.

Cyberbullying is an intentional electronic act or series of acts, through the utilization of computers, the Internet, social media, interactive technologies, or any electronic devices that are directed at another person or group of people.

This definition includes three important components:

1. Bullying is aggressive behavior that involves unwanted, negative actions.
2. Bullying involves a pattern of behavior repeated over time.
3. Bullying involves an imbalance of power or strength.

When bullying or cyberbullying occurs in a school setting, that is severe, persistent or pervasive, it has the effect of:

1. Substantial interference with a student’s education.
2. Creation of a threatening environment.
3. Substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school.

By definition, a school setting includes the school building itself, school grounds, school vehicles, designated bus stop or at any school sponsored activity, supervised or sanctioned by the school.

## **Reporting**

St. Stephen School encourages students who experience any form of bullying or cyberbullying to promptly report such incidents to a teacher or the principal. In addition, any student, school employee, or person associated with the school is expected to report bullying that is observed.

All complaints of bullying shall be investigated promptly, and corrective action shall be taken when allegations are verified. Confidentiality of all parties shall be maintained. No reprisals or retaliation shall occur as a result of good faith reports of bullying.

Each student shall be responsible to respect the rights of others and to ensure an atmosphere free from bullying.

Every teacher will review this policy annually with students. The policy shall be posted on the school website.

## **Anti-Bullying Investigation Procedure**

Once a parent or student has made a report of bullying to the school, that report will be documented and the threat level will be determined. If a student or individual is in immediate danger, local law enforcement will be notified. Next, the school principal notify the parents of all parties involved, and begin a process of investigation. During this time, for the safety of those involved, students may be asked to remain home. Remote learning via google classroom will be utilized if necessary.

During the investigation, the principal will interview those involved and those that may have been a witness to the bullying. Reference will be made to the definitions of bullying outlined above in this policy.

It will then be determined if the bullying claim is valid. Finally, the findings will be shared and consequences will be assigned if warranted.