

ANTI-BULLYING POLICY



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Anti-Bullying Policy

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INTRODUCTION

We currently live in a society subject to rapid change, in which education must continually adapt to the social realities of the time. For this reason, we understand that issues affecting coexistence within educational centres are not limited solely to the maintenance of discipline, but also encompass the quality of relationships between students.

Accordingly, the primary aim of this policy is to establish all the necessary mechanisms to prevent and eradicate any form of violent behaviour. The ultimate goal is to promote the development and learning of the students in our school, in line with our educational approach which is based on the pursuit of the full personal development of each student in all dimensions of their being (integral education).

Educating for harmony is a fundamental task for Regnum Christi educational centres. It is essential that the environment of our school, is impregnated with values such as charity and respect, that it reflects as closely as possible the welcoming, communal atmosphere of the family (Mission Document n.108)

The fight against bullying must be ongoing; therefore, strategies and actions must be promoted by education professionals in order to prevent, detect, address and, where appropriate, sanction situations of bullying that may arise.

Through this antibullying protocol, we seek to implement an action plan that enables us to streamline the procedures to be followed in situations of this nature, ensuring a response that is swift, effective and confidential, while at the same time safeguarding the educational objectives of all students involved, both those who have been harmed and those responsible for the behaviour.

In summary, the principles that guide our actions in the prevention of and intervention in cases of bullying are as follows:

- To provide ongoing education for students, families and school staff in respect for diversity, civic coexistence and the responsible assumption of social responsibilities.
- To ensure compliance with the principles and values established in civil law and other educational regulations.
- To implement the school's educational project and model in a professional manner, uniting the efforts of the school and families for the benefit of students.
- To deploy specific resources in this area, including methodologies and awareness campaigns that promote healthy interaction and positive coexistence among students; programmes focused on communication and social skills that foster the internalisation of equality and mutual respect; and regular evaluation techniques, with analysis of results and the formulation of improvement actions.
- To act promptly so that any information received which may indicate a bullying situation, however minor it may appear, is analysed and documented.
- To agree, through a collaborative approach, on all necessary disciplinary and educational measures, prioritising **education over sanction**.

DEFINITIONS

Bullying refers to intentional and repeated behaviour carried out by one or more individuals against another, with the aim of causing harm, distress or humiliation.

- Bullying situations are characterised by the following elements:
- Intentional harmful behaviour.
- Repetition over time.
- Imbalance of power between the aggressor and the victim.
- Negative impact on the victim's emotional, psychological or physical wellbeing.

Bullying may occur within the school premises, during school activities, on school trips, or through digital and online environments when such behaviour has an impact on the school community.

Key Characteristics of Bullying

- It is deliberate and intentional.
- It is sustained over time.
- It involves abuse of power.
- It causes harm and distress to the victim.

Types of Bullying

Bullying can take different forms, all of which are harmful and unacceptable.

The school recognises the following types of bullying, which may occur individually or in combination.

Verbal Bullying

Verbal bullying involves the use of words to cause harm, humiliation or distress to another person. This includes insults, name-calling, mockery, threats, offensive comments or spreading rumours.

Physical Bullying

Physical bullying refers to behaviours that involve physical aggression or damage to a person or their belongings. Examples include hitting, pushing, kicking, tripping, pinching or damaging personal property.

Social Exclusion

Social exclusion involves deliberately isolating or rejecting a person from a group. This may include ignoring, excluding someone from activities, encouraging others not to associate with them, or manipulating friendships to cause emotional harm.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying refers to bullying that takes place through digital or online platforms. This includes sending harmful or threatening messages, sharing images or information without consent, spreading rumours online, or using social media or messaging services to harass or intimidate others.

Cyberbullying is considered particularly serious due to its potential reach, permanence and impact on the victim's wellbeing, even when it occurs outside school hours, where it affects the school community.

PARTIES INVOLVED & CONSEQUENCES

Bullying situations usually involve different parties, each of whom plays a role in the dynamics of the situation. Understanding these roles is essential in order to intervene effectively and appropriately.

The Bully

The bully is the person or group of people who carry out bullying behaviour. Such behaviour may be motivated by a desire for power, control, recognition or dominance over others. Bullying behaviour may reflect underlying personal, emotional or social difficulties and requires an educational and corrective response.

The Victim

The victim is the person who is subjected to bullying behaviour and suffers its consequences. Victims may experience emotional distress, fear, anxiety, loss of self-esteem or social isolation. The school is committed to protecting victims, listening to their concerns and providing appropriate support and intervention.

Bystanders

Bystanders are students who witness bullying behaviour. Their response may contribute to maintaining, escalating or stopping the situation. Bystanders may remain passive, support the bully, or act in defence of the victim. The school encourages students to act responsibly, report concerns and support a culture of respect and care.

Consequences of Bullying

Bullying has serious consequences for all those involved. Its impact extends beyond the immediate situation and can affect the emotional, social and educational development of students.

Consequences for the Victim

Victims of bullying may experience a wide range of negative effects, including:

- Anxiety, fear and emotional distress.
- Loss of self-esteem and confidence.
- Social isolation and difficulties forming relationships.
- Academic difficulties or school refusal.
- Psychosomatic symptoms or mental health concerns.

Consequences for the Bully

Students who engage in bullying may also experience negative consequences, such as:

- Disciplinary or corrective measures.
- Difficulties in developing healthy social relationships.
- Reinforcement of negative behaviour patterns if not addressed.
- Potential long-term social or emotional difficulties.

Consequences for Bystanders

Bystanders may also be affected by bullying situations. Possible consequences include:

- Feelings of fear, guilt or helplessness.
- Normalisation of harmful behaviour.
- Emotional distress or anxiety.
- Reduced sense of safety within the school environment.

PREVENTION

Parents, teachers and even students themselves all play an essential role in the prevention of bullying, in order to promote positive coexistence within the family, social and educational spheres and to prevent all forms of socio-emotional harm.

At the beginning of the school year, the School Leadership Team will inform each group of the importance the school places on relationships between individuals, within a framework of shared values based on dialogue shared values and participation. Information will also be provided on the main pillars of the Coexistence Plan relating to the prevention of and intervention in cases of bullying.

Prevention takes place before any bullying incident occurs. As noted in previous sections, its objective is to avoid situations of this nature through information, training and awareness-raising. All members of the educational community must be involved in this process.

Accordingly, the following basic requirements are established, which should be fostered from an educational, tolerant and responsible perspective:

- The primary objective is, as stated above, to enable all students to discover and live out values such as respect, consideration and charity towards all, and especially towards the most vulnerable, as well as to develop their sense of social responsibility.
- Secondly, it is necessary to help students understand the concept of bullying, in order to convey its unacceptability in any area of life. It is important for students to be aware of the serious consequences that bullying may entail, so that they can develop sufficient empathy towards peers who may suffer from it. The aim is to inform and raise awareness among students in order to prevent bullying behaviour.
- Channels of communication with students must always remain open and accessible. Indeed, if we do not establish regular communication in which students feel comfortable and safe, it is unlikely that they will trust adults enough to approach them and share their concerns. There must be accessible adults or educators to whom students can turn in confidence to discuss their problems or difficulties and seek advice and support. It is of vital importance to know students well, including their friendships, as well as their concerns and worries both at school and within their family and social environments. The foundation of prevention lies in presence and observation; therefore, accompanying students is essential and constitutes the true heart of our educational approach.

In order to put the two previous points into practice, there must be coordinated and agreed action and support on the part of the school, reflected consistently in all initiatives undertaken by the Centre.

Roles and Responsibilities in Prevention

School Leadership

School Leadership is responsible for promoting a positive school culture, ensuring that anti-bullying policies are implemented effectively and providing the necessary resources for prevention and intervention.

Wellbeing and Protection Coordinator

The Wellbeing and Protection Coordinator supports the implementation of preventive measures, awareness campaigns and training activities related to bullying prevention and student wellbeing.

Teaching and Non-Teaching Staff

All staff are responsible for fostering respectful behaviour, identifying early signs of bullying, acting promptly when concerns arise and reporting any suspected situations in accordance with the protocol.

Families

Families play a key role in prevention by promoting respectful behaviour, maintaining open communication with the school and reporting any concerns related to possible bullying situations.

Students

Students are encouraged to respect others, reject any form of bullying, report concerns and contribute actively to a safe and supportive school environment.

Preventive Tools and Measures

The school uses a range of preventive tools and measures to support bullying prevention, including:

- Educational and awareness-raising activities.
- Training sessions for staff, students and families.
- Anonymous reporting channels.
- Pastoral support structures.
- Promotion of digital responsibility and online safety.

INTERVENTION PROCESS

Action Plan

When a situation of suspected bullying is identified, the school will activate an Action Plan to ensure a prompt, proportionate and effective response.

Reporting the Situation

Any member of the school community who becomes aware of a possible bullying situation has a duty to report it without delay to the appropriate member of staff or safeguarding structure. Reports may be made by students, families, staff or through anonymous reporting channels. All reports will be treated seriously and handled confidentially.

Verification of the Situation

Once a report has been received, the school will assess the information available in order to verify whether the situation constitutes bullying.

This verification process may include interviews with the students involved, consultation with staff, review of relevant information and observation of interactions, ensuring respect for the rights of all parties.

Decision-Making Process

Based on the information gathered, the school will determine the appropriate course of action, taking into account the severity, frequency and context of the behaviour.

Decisions will be guided by the principles of student welfare, proportionality, educational purpose and compliance with safeguarding procedures.

Intervention Plan

Once a bullying situation has been verified, the school will activate an Intervention Plan aimed at protecting the victim, addressing the behaviour and restoring a positive learning environment.

Drafting of the Report

A written report will be prepared documenting the information gathered during the verification process. This report will include factual descriptions of the situation, the students involved, actions taken and any evidence collected.

All information will be handled confidentially and recorded in accordance with safeguarding and data protection requirements.

Activation of the Intervention Plan

Based on the findings of the report, the school will activate the appropriate intervention measures, ensuring a coordinated and proportionate response.

The Intervention Plan may involve the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Wellbeing and Protection Coordinator, School Leadership, pastoral staff and, where appropriate, external services.

MEASURES

Provisional Measures

Where necessary, provisional measures may be adopted to protect the victim and prevent further harm while the situation is being addressed.

- Increased supervision of students involved.
- Temporary separation of the students.
- Adjustment of timetables or activities.
- Pastoral or emotional support measures.

Corrective and Educational Measures

Corrective measures will be educational in nature and proportionate to the seriousness of the behaviour.

- Educational guidance and reflection activities.
- Restorative practices, where appropriate.
- Behavioural monitoring and follow-up.
- Disciplinary measures in accordance with the school's regulations.

Types of Offences and Sanctions

In accordance with the School's Internal Regulations and the principles set out in this protocol, bullying-related behaviour may constitute a disciplinary offence. Offences are classified as minor, serious or very serious, considering the nature of the behaviour, its repetition, intent, impact on the victim and the surrounding circumstances.

Minor Offences

Minor offences include behaviours that, while inappropriate and contrary to the values of the school, do not in themselves constitute sustained or systematic bullying.

- Occasional inappropriate comments, jokes or gestures that may cause discomfort or offence.
- Isolated incidents of teasing, mockery or exclusion, without repetition or intent to cause sustained harm.
- Minor conflicts or disagreements between students that are resolved promptly.
- Failure to comply with behavioural guidelines or instructions related to respectful coexistence.
- Lack of cooperation with preventive or educational measures established by the school.
- Educational and corrective measures will be applied, prioritising guidance, reflection, mediation and restorative approaches.

Serious Offences

Serious offences include behaviours that are repeated or intentional and that cause emotional, psychological or social harm to another student.

- Repeated verbal abuse, insults or humiliation directed at a student.
- Deliberate and sustained social exclusion or isolation.
- Harassment, intimidation or threats, including through digital or online platforms.
- Spreading rumours or false information with the intention of harming another student.

Failure to comply with corrective or educational measures previously applied.

Behaviour that significantly disrupts coexistence within the school environment.

Sanctions may include disciplinary measures in accordance with the School's Internal Regulations, combined with educational and restorative interventions.

Very Serious Offences

Very serious offences include severe, persistent or particularly harmful behaviours that seriously undermine the dignity, integrity or safety of a student and constitute a safeguarding concern.

- Physical aggression or acts of violence against another student.
- Serious psychological intimidation, coercion or threats.
- Sexual harassment or behaviour of a sexual nature.
- Cyberbullying involving the dissemination of humiliating, threatening or harmful content.
- Bullying behaviours involving discrimination based on personal, social or cultural characteristics.
- Any behaviour that may constitute a criminal offence or require intervention by external authorities.

Where required by law, referral to external safeguarding or legal authorities.

Very serious offences will be corrected with the following sanctions:

Carrying out tasks at the school outside teaching hours, which may contribute to the improved development of the school's activities.

Temporary prohibition from taking part in extracurricular or complementary school activities, for a maximum period of three months.

Change of the student's group. Exclusion from certain classes for a period of more than six school days and less than two weeks.

Suspension from the school for a period of more than six school days and less than one month. Transfer to another school, when permanent expulsion is not appropriate because the student is in compulsory education.

Permanent expulsion from the school.

Educational sanctions must be gradual and progressive, as well as varied and proportionate, and must always be implemented with a reparative and formative purpose, helping the aggressor to discover and embrace the value of coexistence and respect for others. As with all disciplinary measures in our schools, they should not be limited to promoting external behavioural change but should aim at internal change through the acquisition of the attitudes and skills necessary for living together.

When a student commits any of these offences, the corresponding sanction will be applied and duly communicated to his or her family, with the incident recorded in the academic file.

Offences will lapse after 12 months from the date on which the events took place.

Sanctions will lapse 12 months from the date on which the sanction was notified.

School holiday periods established in the official school calendar will not be taken into account in calculating the prescription periods for offences and sanctions.

HARASSMENT IN ANY FORM MUST BE REPORTED

This document is a protocol for school bullying. However, we must not forget that there are other types of harassment that can take many forms and occur in a wide variety of contexts.

Unfortunately, nowadays we experience different types of harassment which, in most cases, are recognised as reprehensible and even illegal behaviours, and which can occur in any area of our daily lives, including online (cyberbullying).

As an Educational Centre, we must be available to support and assist students who may be experiencing any other form of harassment outside the school. Indeed, students take part in many extracurricular activities organised by other centres where they may also become victims of some kind of harassment. Likewise, within the family environment, it is sadly possible that one of our students may be suffering harassment or some form of aggression.

For this reason, teaching and support staff must always pay close attention to the students, as any voluntary or involuntary sign or unusual behaviour that draws attention must be communicated immediately to the School's Management Team.

Our aim is to be an educational community based not only on academic excellence but also on the personal guidance of students throughout their entire school life.