



BCS Policy:

Anti-Bullying

Date: June 2015

Bullying is not acceptable and will not be tolerated. To this end the school will endeavour to make all concerned with the school: staff, students, parents, aware of the issues involved.

Staff will, during the course of each year, discuss the issue of bullying, either through staff training days, staff meetings, or at any time the matter might arise.

Students will during the school year be given time to consider the matter of bullying either in devotions, chapel or citizenship lessons. This will be through various means such as discussions, questionnaires, interaction, etc.

Parents will be informed from time to time on the issue of bullying through either Parent Newsletter, Parent Orientation, Parent / Teacher meetings, etc.

Bullying can take different forms such as name calling and teasing, using emails or text messages, isolation from group activities, racist, sexist, sexual orientation, threats, physical violence and taking personal belongings.

Thus bullying is that which is intended to hurt, threaten and terrorise others who may be weaker than themselves.

It is imperative that any form of bullying is reported immediately to a member of staff. The member of staff must report any incidence of bullying as soon as possible to the School Principal.

When bullying is seen to have taken place, details will be recorded by the School Administrator in the Incidence Record Book and sanctions taken.

All cases of proven bullying will lead to a temporary exclusion and serious or persistent bullying may lead to permanent exclusion. Any incidence of bullying will be closely monitored by staff to avoid further happenings.

Records of bullying incidents will be kept by the School Administrator for a period of six months or as long as deemed necessary by the School Principal.

School Statement on Bullying

The staff of The Branch Christian School are committed to providing an environment which enables students to learn successfully, play happily and feel valued and secure. This involves students of all ages learning to get on well together, showing kindness to one another and respecting one another.

1. Bullying is a problem in all schools. It can be physical or mental. It can be unkind and intentional. It can be thoughtless and unintentional. You can be a bully and not know it, but when you feel bullied you certainly know it. You may feel disliked, left out, threatened, frightened or lonely.
2. We do not want anybody to be bullied at The Branch Christian School. We want no one to go through the isolation, the loss of self-esteem, the humiliation and the unhappiness which are brought about by bullying.
3. If you feel that you are being bullied, talk to someone, the School Principal or a Supervisor. It is also right for you to talk to your parents about it and for them to discuss it with the school. Please never regard the reporting of bullying as telling tales, but as playing an important part in keeping The Branch Christian School a place where there is no fear and loss of security. We are keen to help you and pray with you.
4. The bullying will never stop if it is kept secret and no one faces up to it. If you think someone else is being bullied, talk to a member of staff about it. You are assured of your right to be anonymous. God wants us to love what is right and to act where we can against what is wrong, even when it involves our friends.
5. Bullying is an unpleasant fact of life. It is bad for bullies and bad for their victims. We can never get rid of it completely from the world, but we can make things better. If you are a bully and you cannot help yourself, talk to an adult about it. Experience shows that bullies have often themselves been the victims of bullying in the past. Sometimes bullying can be a response to not handling a present problem or recent unhappy experience. Whatever the cause, God is longing to help you, and we will talk and pray with you.
6. What can we do about bullies and the victims of bullying? The first thing is to talk and improve communications, either individually in confidence, in small groups, or in year groups, depending on what people feel comfortable with. We can help people to understand themselves and others and to cope better with life at school.
7. If anyone cannot learn to stop bullying this will lead to discipline and even possibly to exclusion from the school.
8. Our desire is to have a school free from bullying. We all have our part to play to bring this about.

Anti-Bullying: Parents Role

The staff of The Branch Christian School are committed to providing an environment which enables students to learn successfully, play happily and feel valued and secure. This involves students of all ages learning to get on well together, showing kindness to one another and respecting one another. Parents and families have an important part to play in helping The Branch Christian School deal with bullying.

Bullying behaviour – different forms

- Name calling.
- Physical violence.
- Threats.
- Isolating individuals from group activities.
- Racial.
- Sexist.
- Sexual orientation.
- Use of text messaging and email.

Discourage your child from using bullying behaviour at home or elsewhere. Show them how to resolve the difficult situations without using violence or aggression.

Watch out for signs that your child is being bullied, or is bullying others. Parents and families are often the first to detect that a problem exists. Don't dismiss it. Contact the School Principal or School Administrator immediately if you are worried.

If your child has been bullied

- Calmly talk with your child about his/her experience and listen to them.
- Make a note of what your child says – particularly who was said to be involved – how often the bullying has occurred – where it happened and what has happened.
- Reassure your child that they have done the right thing to tell you about the bullying.
- Pray with your child.
- Explain to your child that should any further incidents occur they should report then to a Supervisor immediately.
- Make an appointment to see the School Principal and explain to him the problems your child is experiencing.

Talking with the Principal about bullying

- Try and stay calm – bear in mind that he may have no idea that your child is being bullied or may have heard conflicting accounts of an incident.
- Be as specific as possible about what your child says has happened – give dates, places and names of other children involved.
- Make a note of what action the school intends to take.
- Ask if there is anything you can do to help your child or the school.
- Stay in touch with the school – let them know if things improve as well as if problems continue.

If your Child is bullying other Children

Many children may be involved in bullying other students at some time or other. Often parents are not aware that their child is involved in bullying.

Children sometimes bully others because:

- They don't know it's wrong.
- They are copying older brothers or sisters or other people in the family whom they admire.
- They haven't learnt other, better ways, of mixing with their school friends.
- Their friends encourage them to bully.
- They are going through a difficult time and are acting out aggressive feelings.

To stop your child from bullying others:

- Talk with your child and listen to them; explain that what they are doing is unacceptable and makes other children unhappy.
- Pray with your child.
- Discourage other members of your family from bullying behaviour or from using aggression or force to get what they want.
- Show your child how they can join in with other children without bullying.
- Make an appointment to see the School Principal and explain the problems your child is experiencing – discuss with him how you and the school can stop them bullying others.
- Regularly check with your child how things are going at school.
- Give your child lots of praise and encouragement when they are co-operative or kind to other people.

Anti-Bullying: Staff Role

1. The staff of The Branch Christian School are committed to providing an environment which enables students to learn successfully, play happily and feel valued and secure. This involves students of all ages learning to get on well together, showing kindness to one another and respecting one another.
2. Everyone who works at The Branch Christian School should be involved in monitoring and tackling bullying. Bullying is not allowed in the school in any form.
3. Bullying can often take place in a variety of places, e.g.: corridors, classrooms, playground, toilets or on the way to and from school. Staff should be diligent in their general supervision and also keep an eye on them during their 'settling in' period and encourage students to befriend them.
4. New students who have transferred from other schools are often vulnerable to bullying. Please especially keep an eye on them during their 'settling in' period and encourage students to befriend them.
5. Report any concerns to the School Principal who has overall responsibility for students.
6. Students should be encouraged to have caring and responsible attitudes to other people.
7. The incidence book should show:
 - How frequently students have been bullied.
 - In what way it has happened.
 - How often they have been bullied.
 - Whom they tell.
 - What action was taken and by whom.
 - Where bullying takes place.
8. Key points for staff:
 - Never ignore suspected bullying.
 - Don't make premature assumptions.
 - Listen carefully to all accounts – several students saying the same does not mean they are all telling the truth.
 - Adopt a problem-solving approach – which moves students on from justifying themselves.
 - Follow up repeatedly, checking bullying has not resumed.

Anti-Bullying: School Principals Role

The Principal has the main responsibility for ensuring that The Branch Christian School is as free from bullying as possible and that it is dealt with by him when it does occur.

When talking with someone who claims to have been bullied or their parents, be clear about:

- What has happened to them.
- How often it has happened.
- Who was involved.
- Who saw what was happening.
- Where it happened.
- What they have done about it already.

Reassure the child and the parents that you are taking the issue seriously and will take appropriate action.

Talk with those students implicated in the bullying.

Make written notes based on all conversations with students and parents

Take appropriate disciplinary action either in the form of a warning to the students or in more serious or persistent cases in the form of calling in the parents of those doing the bullying

Decide an appropriate course of remedial action to be taken and inform all parties concerned

Advise parents as to how they can help their child at home and at school (in the case of both bully and bullied)

Stay in touch with all those concerned in order to monitor the situation.

In the case of persistent bullying by a student even after help, advice and warnings from the School Principal, suspension should be considered and a remedial plan of action put in place on the student's return. Further bullying may need to lead to the student being permanently excluded from the school.