

## **::: POLICY AGAINST BULLYING :::**

The Bishop's School believes that all students should have a safe and inclusive school environment. Bullying is inconsistent with the values and principles of The Bishop's School and is not tolerated. This Policy applies to all students and prohibits students, and any other member of the School community, including teachers, staff, parents and volunteers from engaging in conduct toward students that is prohibited under this Policy. Conduct that violates this Policy is prohibited on School grounds and at School-sponsored events, activities, functions and programs. This conduct is also prohibited on School buses and other vehicles owned, leased or used by the School, and through use of any technology or any electronic device. See *Acceptable Use of Technology Policy*. This may include conduct that occurs off-campus or via social media or other electronic communications. Bullying which occurs at locations and activities that are not School-related or through the use of technology or an electronic device that is not owned by the School is prohibited if the conduct impacts, affects or adversely reflects upon the School community or any member of the School community.

### **Prohibited Conduct**

Bullying is defined by this Policy as:

Any physical or verbal act or conduct, including communications made in writing or electronically (including, but not limited to email, instant messaging, text messages, blogs, mobile phones, online games, chat rooms and posting on a social network), directed toward one or more students that has or can be reasonably predicted to have the effect of one or more of the following:

- Placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to that student's person or property;
- Causing a reasonable student to experience a substantially detrimental effect on physical or mental health;
- Causing a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with academic performance; or
- Causing a reasonable student to experience substantial interference with ability to participate in or benefit from the services, activities or privileges provided by the School.

While the California Education Code defines bullying as conduct meeting the above requirements that is severe or pervasive, conduct need not be severe or pervasive in order for the School to determine that there has been a violation of this Policy.

Examples of bullying may include, but are not limited to:

- Social exclusion
- Threats and intimidation
- Stalking
- Direct physical contact, such as hitting or shoving, or attempting to make physical contact or inflict physical injury
- Theft
- Public humiliation
- Destruction of property
- Verbal or written insults, teasing or name-calling
- Creating a false profile on a social networking platform, for the purpose of having one or more of the effects listed above

Students are also prohibited from engaging in any conduct towards any employee of The Bishop's School, that if directed towards a student would be defined as bullying and prohibited under this Policy.

### **Complaint Procedure**

Students and parents who believe that they have experienced, witnessed or have relevant information about bullying should immediately report the matter to The Bishop's School, either orally or in writing. Students and parents may report the matter to the head of school, the head of the middle school, the head of the upper school, dean of students, assistant head of school/chief advancement officer or their teacher. Alternatively, students and parents may choose to report bullying to any other employee of the School with whom they are comfortable, such as a counselor or coach, all of whom must report the matter to the head of school under this Policy. While The Bishop's School does not limit the time frame for reporting, immediate reporting is important as the School may not be able to investigate as thoroughly or consider as wide-range of corrective actions the longer the time that has passed between the alleged misconduct and the report.

### **Interim Measures**

The Bishop's School may provide appropriate interim support and reasonable protective measures, if and as needed, based on the particular applicable circumstances, to protect against further acts of bullying, to provide a safe educational environment and/or to protect the integrity of an investigation. The Bishop's School will, in its sole judgment and discretion, determine the necessity and scope of any interim support and/or measures.

### **Investigation**

After The Bishop's School receives an oral report or written complaint or otherwise learns of an alleged potential violation of this Policy, and also receives any clarification requested, the head of school or designee will determine the appropriate course of action, which may include initiation of an investigation. If the School initiates an investigation, it will conduct the investigation, as it deems appropriate, in its sole discretion.

Students and parents are expected to fully cooperate in any investigation as needed. The withholding of material information in an investigation by the individual(s) who made the report and/or who was reportedly subjected to conduct that violates this Policy, witnesses, the individual accused of engaging in conduct that violates this Policy, is prohibited. Any individual who fails to fully cooperate with the investigation or abuses the process by withholding material information or providing false information, may be subject to appropriate, disciplinary, corrective or other action, up to and including expulsion from School.

### **Confidentiality**

Reports of bullying will be kept confidential, except as needed to conduct an investigation, to take interim measures, to protect and safeguard students and employees, to take disciplinary, corrective or other action, to conduct ongoing monitoring, if already known to multiple students, employees, or other community members, as needed in relation to any administrative or legal proceedings, or as otherwise required by law.

**Remedial and Disciplinary Action**

The Bishop's School will determine if the conduct violates School Policy and if so, the appropriate disciplinary, corrective or other action. Any student determined to have violated this Policy will be subject to disciplinary, corrective or other action, up to and including expulsion. Any violation of this Policy by a parent will be considered a violation of the School's parent behavior expectations, and may be grounds for expulsion of the offending parent's child(ren). As a separate policy, harassment is also prohibited by the School's Policy against Harassment, Discrimination and Retaliation.

**Anonymous Reports**

Members of the faculty and staff may not make reports under this policy anonymously. Students and parents may make reports anonymously, but generally no disciplinary action will be taken based solely on an anonymous report. Although there are circumstances in which an anonymous report can be better than none at all, it is far more difficult to determine the facts of what occurred if complaints are made anonymously.

**False Complaints/Abuses of Process**

Because allegations of discrimination, harassment, hazing or bullying are serious and can be damaging to accused persons' reputations, any person who knowingly, maliciously or recklessly makes a false complaint will be subject to severe discipline. In addition, because candor and honesty are essential to the investigation and remediation process, they are required of all participants, including third-party witnesses.

The withholding of material information in an investigation by complainants, witnesses and/or the accused party is prohibited. All members of the community are expected to cooperate fully in an investigation conducted by the School; failure to demonstrate such cooperation will lead to disciplinary action. Abuse of the process, including falsifying information, will result in discipline being imposed, up to and including dismissal from school or termination of employment.