



Kaitaia Abundant Life School

**Anti Bullying Policy
2009**

Kaitaia Abundant Life School – Anti Bullying Policy

Purpose:

It is vital that our school have a policy for the elimination of bullying because bullying is a behaviour that is in direct opposition to the Vision Statement and Mission Statement of our school and the Christian Special Character that our school was established to demonstrate.

Vision statement: *To be a dynamic Christian school which produces outstanding Godly young people who will have a lasting positive impact on our community, our country and the nations.*

Mission Statement: *Our mission is to be a Christian School that partners with families to produce young people of academic and personal excellence in a safe environment.*

The Extracts below are taken from the Kaitaia Abundant Life School Christian Special Character Management Policy:

All activities in the school must sit underneath the umbrella of the Special Character as defined in the integration agreement which follows. As a general guide the bible is our textbook for what are and what are not Christian behaviours and activities.

Section 18 Special Character Agreement

The School's Special Character as hereinafter described, shall incorporate education with a Special Character as provided in the School AND IT IS HEREBY AGREED AND DECLARED that the School shall at all times in the future be conducted and operated so as to maintain and preserve the School's Special Character and these presents shall be interpreted so as to maintain and preserve the Special Character of the School.

God the Father, Jesus His Son, and the Holy Spirit are relevant to every area of study and endeavour in the school.

The school reflects this by:

- (a) Using the Bible as the basis for exploring God's world, and as a standard against which to compare and interpret all curriculum material.
- (b) Teaching Christian values and behaviour through the process of acknowledgement of sin, repentance, and acceptance of Jesus' gift of grace.
- (c) ...
- (d) ...
- (e) Providing an environment where children, parents and teachers can experience Godly relationships, showing the character of Christ in love, discipline, respect, honour and trust, and witness an exemplary demonstration of Biblical truths in the lives of others.
- (f) Providing staff who are suitable role models of the qualities it seeks to engender in the students.

Underlined portions of the agreement above show the importance that the governors and management of this school place on behaviour that is Christlike and honouring of others. Clearly bullying cannot be allowed to occur in a school that aims to produce "outstanding Godly young people".

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is any behaviour performed by anyone within the school community that is intended to force another person to do something against their wishes or is intended to put another person down or deliberately make them feel afraid.

Bullying includes:

- racist bullying
- special needs bullying
- homophobic bullying
- sexual harassment bullying

Some typical examples of bullying:

- calling someone names
- writing horrible comments about a person
- sending nasty texts, emails or making unkind phonecalls
- threatening someone
- physically hurting someone eg, punching or kicking them
- excluding someone from activities
- stealing or damaging a person's property
- playing tricks on someone
- making a person feel uncomfortable or scared.

Elimination of Bullying

School wide surveys show that bullying occurs in our school in spite of the effort that staff put into teaching biblical values and encouraging students to love and respect one another. An ongoing active approach is required across many levels to eliminate bullying in our school.

Strategies to eliminate bullying:

1. All staff work to encourage all students to make their own personal decision to follow Christ and his teachings.
2. All staff determine to personally set an excellent example for students, role modelling Christ like behaviour especially when dealing with conflict situations.
3. Adopt the two greatest commandments as a school wide guide for our interactions with God and others and reinforce these using assemblies, and classroom devotion times:
"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind; and, Love your neighbour as yourself." Luke 10 v 27
4. Ensure that all staff deal with cases of bullying as soon as they occur in accordance with the procedure below.

5. Inform the wider school community of the school's policy and procedures with regard to bullying so that parents know that the school is determined to eliminate this behaviour and know who to talk to if it should occur.
6. Make all students aware of the school's policy and procedures with regard to bullying so that students know that the school is determined to eliminate this behaviour and know who to talk to if it should occur.
7. Run programs within the school assembly and devotions time to discuss the issue of bullying and how students should deal with this if it occurs.
8. Investigate the integration of the Kia Kaha programme into the school and consult with staff and the wider community over this. The aim being to have a school wide approach with practical tools to eliminate bullying.
9. Bring in guest speakers on an ongoing basis to reinforce the focus of elimination of bullying.
10. Continue to survey students on a regular basis regarding the incidence of bullying in our school to determine the effectiveness of the policies and procedures in place and to reinforce the fact that the school is determined to eliminate bullying.

Procedure when an incidence of bullying is identified:

Complaints regarding bullying may be received from affected students, peers of affected students, others in the playground, parents and other whanau or others in the community.

All complaints of bullying at Kaitaia Abundant Life School are to be taken seriously and investigated in the following way:

In cases where the alleged bullying has involved incidents and actions that require discipline by Senior Management then the case should be referred to the Deputy Principal immediately. All other cases should be dealt with by the classroom teacher initially.

The recommended procedure for dealing with bullying is as follows:

1. Meet with the affected student

- Ask the student exactly what the bully is/was doing and how that makes them feel and write down specific details.
- Reassure the student that it is not their fault and that bullying is not okay.
- Reassure the student that together you'll be able to stop the bullying.
- If the student is being bullied because they are different, talk to them about how God created diversity and why being different is OK.
- Tell the student they must tell a trusted adult every time they're bullied and this doesn't mean they're 'telling on others'.
- Ask the student what they would like to have happen and reassure the student that you will do something about it.

- Where appropriate and possible tell the student that you take their complaint seriously and that you will be talking to their parents, as well as to the bully and the bully's parents.
- Phone the student's parents if appropriate to explain what has happened and what action has been taken.

2. Work out a plan with the affected student

- Decide who the student will tell when they're being bullied.
- Think of some simple things the student can do when the bullying happens. First ignore the bully, and if that doesn't work tell the bully to stop, and if they continue, walk away and tell an adult.
- Encourage the student to stick with their friends when they are out – bullies are less likely to come near them if others are around.

3. Dealing with a bully

All stories have two sides and the next step must be to meet with the alleged bully to get their side of the story. A bully will seldom admit what they have been doing without persuasion and this is where collecting robust evidence from the victim (and possibly witnesses) will be useful.

Where a clearly identified case of bullying has occurred the following steps should be taken:

- Make the bully aware that the school is determined to eliminate bullying and that their actions are regarded as very serious.
- Ask the bully to consider how their actions will make the victim feel and how they would feel if they were treated in that way.
- Discuss with the bully what Jesus meant when he said "love your neighbour as yourself" and endeavor to understand along with the bully what is happening in their heart that would make them want to behave in this way.
- Where ever possible pray with the bully that they will be able to avoid this behaviour in the future.
- Arrange for the bully to make up for their misdemeanor through an after school detention or other suitable punishment
- Discuss with the bully what will happen if they are found to have behaved in a similar way in the future.
- Contact parents of the bully to explain what has happened and what action has been taken.
- Arrange for the bully to write a letter of apology for their actions addressed to the victim and have them take it home to their parent / guardian for signing.

Other possible actions:

- Investigate the possibility of holding a restorative justice meeting involving all parties affected by the behavior that has occurred.
- Consider using the “no blame approach” as advocated in Kia Kaha resources
- Consider enrolling a student who has demonstrated bullying behavior in the peer mentoring program that runs in the school. (Refer Deputy Principal Pastoral for details)