

Possible signs of bullying

It can be difficult for a person to tell others that bullying is occurring. The following signs *might* indicate that an individual is being bullied.

School

- Unwilling to go to school
- Significant drop in work standards
- Wanting to change the way they travel to and from school

Emotional

- Personality changes
(confident to loss of confidence)
- Sudden outbursts of temper
- Mood swings
- Nightmares

Physical

- Psychosomatic complaints
(like frequent stomach aches)
- Loss of appetite
- Unexplained bruises, cuts, scratches

Social

- Not wanting to play with friends
- Withdrawal from extra curriculum activities
- Beginning to bully other children/siblings



What to do if your child reports bullying

It is important to find out what happened, who was involved, when and where the incident occurred, as well as if anyone saw the incident. It is a good idea to write down what you find out.

Under no circumstances should parents approach students or other parents.

It helps if parents:

- Involve children in making decisions about what to do
- Listen to what they say
- Tell them they are understood and believed

It does not help if parents:

- Get angry or upset or feel guilty
- Trivialise the incident
- Blame the child or blame the school
- Accuse people without knowing the facts and listening to both sides
- Look for scapegoats

The next step is to make an appointment to discuss the issue with either the Class Teacher or Principal. Once reported, all stakeholders will be communicated with in regard to investigations, consequences, and on going support and guidance for those involved.



Our Lady of Lourdes School, Dardanup



Many Minds One Heart

A Guide to Dealing with Bullying and Harassment

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Where students can feel safe and secure in a caring, community environment

BULLYING is defined as any **consistent** and **conscious** behaviour by a person which hurts, injures, embarrasses, upsets or frightens another person to the point where it is difficult for them to deal with the situation themselves.

Bullying may take many different forms including:

- Verbal (put-downs, name calling, teasing)
- Physical (fighting, kicking, tripping, pushing)
- Social (lies or rumours are told about someone to make others not like them, being ignored, left out on purpose)
- Psychological (put-downs, looks/gestures, threats)

Silence Reinforces Bullying

How is the school helping?

Our Lady of Lourdes has a whole-school approach to dealing with the issue of bullying. The 'Dealing with Bullying' Policy is made available to all staff and students to ensure that there is an ongoing awareness of the issues, as well as a coordinated, effective response to bullying incidents.

The purpose of this pamphlet is to let parents know about the Policy, and how they can support the school in dealing with the issue of bullying.



What your child can do if they are bullied

If the bullying is serious or repeated then your child should report the incident to staff at school. There is a range of other possible options you should encourage your child to try:

- If the behaviour is not serious (such as a single, moderate incident of name calling) then ignore it
- Get away from the bullying situation as quickly as possible
- Tell the bully to stop it
- Avoid high risk places and times
- Do not retaliate by becoming a physical or verbal bully yourself
- Build a support network
- Laugh it off, use humour
- Don't be afraid to talk about incidents with friends, teachers or family to help your child decide on how to handle the situation.

Parents should report bullying to the class teacher or Principal if it is serious and ongoing. Staff will also be vigilant, as a collaborative team, to detect and deal with bullying, if and when it arises.

What your child can do if they see uncaring behaviour

Bystanders are people who are present, but who may not be directly involved in, an uncaring or bullying situation.

Bystanders have the ability to help prevent further bullying by:

- Refusing to join in the bullying.
- Not spreading rumours or gossip about others.
- Not going along with someone being excluded.
- Telling the uncaring person that his or her behaviour is unwanted or unfair and unacceptable.
- Intervening as the bullying occurs e.g. "leave them alone" (if possible)
- Seeking out an older student or student leader to intervene.
- Offering support to the person who is bullied and making suggestions about how to deal with it.
- Encouraging the person who is bullied to get help from a staff member or from his or her family.
- Not allowing the situation to continue.
- Seeking help if the person being bullied does not act.

If your child cannot intervene immediately encourage them to report the incident to a member of staff as soon as possible. Your child may wish to make this report anonymously.



Cyber Safety

What is Cyber Bullying

Cyber bullying is when someone (or a group of people) uses technology to verbally, socially or psychologically bully.

Cyber bullying can happen in chat rooms, through social networking sites, emails or mobile phones.

Cyber bullying can occur 24/7 and invade the home/personal space.

What are we doing at Our Lady of Lourdes

We are educating students on the importance of cyber safety. At school, students are supervised on computers that are monitored.

What can parents do

Top Tips for Parents

1. Never allow computers in the bedroom
2. Negotiate an online contract
3. Use a filter/parental controls
4. Monitor and supervise
5. Know your children's passwords
6. Talk with your children regularly about what they are doing online

Source: Prof Donna Cross & Dr Michael Carr-Gregg 2009

