

## **NEW LIFE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL NO BULLYING POLICY**

It is the policy of the New Life Christian School to maintain a safe learning and work environment that is free from bullying. Students, staff, and the school community are expected to conduct themselves in a respectful, Christian manner, and demonstrate a level of respect and dignity towards others. NLCS prohibits all forms of bullying.

**DEFINITION:** Bullying is *intentional* harmful behavior initiated by one or more students and directed toward another student. For our purposes, it takes place in the school, on school property, or on school field trips. Examples of bullying are as follows:

- **Verbal:** name calling, put downs, racist remarks, repeatedly teasing, threats, spreading rumors, sending inappropriate (violent, sexual, malicious, etc.) notes or pictures in any medium (magazine, over a cell phone or internet, etc.)
- **Physical:** pushing, hitting, shoving, biting, hair pulling, scratching, spitting, tripping, damaging or stealing the victim's property, locking a person in a room, making mean faces or rude gestures, initiating or forcing inappropriate touching, etc.
- **Social:** ostracism or exclusion, ignoring, being blatantly unfriendly, alienating, etc.
- **Psychological:** acts that instill a sense of fear or anxiety, etc.
- *Any act that insults or demeans an individual in such a way as to cause distress, fear, and reluctance to attend school, a decline in work standards or problem behaviors.*

### **AWARENESS:**

- Annually, as part of the required in-service training for all school staff, the headmaster or designee shall arrange for Bullying Awareness and Response Training. Because adults must take the initiative in combating bullying, they must be watchful for bullying warning signs, closely supervising children on the playground, in the classrooms, hallways, rest rooms, gym, etc.
- Teachers will, as needed, conduct class discussions, role-playing, and activities to educate the students in seeking help from an adult, reporting incidents, speaking up and supporting the victim, expressing disapproval of bullying behavior, responding assertively to the bully, walking away from bullying behavior, etc. This information may be presented in Bible, Health, Social Studies, and/or other classes. Late enrolling students will be educated by the teacher as part of their first week orientation.
- At the beginning of the school year during the Back to School Assembly, and as needed, the headmaster or designee shall ensure that the student body is familiar with the No Bullying Policy. School and class policies, rules and consequences will be posted in the classrooms and school office. School policies will be posted on the website. *Bullying Incident Reports* will be available in each classroom, school office, and on the website. A "Bully Box" is available by the school office for students to report suspected bullying incidents, if desired. Students may also turn the reports into their teachers, the front office or the Guidance Counselor. The Guidance Counselor will check the "Bully Box" every 2-3 days.

- The principal or designee shall notify the parents/guardians that our Bullying Awareness and Procedures are listed in the Student Handbook and on the website. The headmaster or designee shall also encourage parents/guardians to sign the school's "No Bullying" Pledge acknowledging that they support the school's efforts to implement a "No Bullying" Program. Refer to the attached "No Bullying" Pledge.

### **REPORTING:**

- Students and staff are prohibited from knowingly falsely accusing another of bullying. Disciplinary action, up to, and including expulsion/suspension for students and termination for staff, shall be taken if they knowingly make false reports.
- Any member of the school staff receiving a suspected bullying report (verbal or written) shall address the matter as soon as possible, prior to the end of the school day. The staff member shall assess the situation to determine if the behavior meets the criteria for bullying or if the behavior is an isolated incident that can be resolved within the classroom. (Not all conflict constitutes bullying.)
- If the behavior meets the criteria for bullying, the staff member must report this to the headmaster or designee immediately in order to protect the alleged victim. The staff member is to immediately forward a *Bullying Incident Report* to the headmaster for investigation. The staff member shall remind the victim/witness that "No one deserves to be bullied and we are going to do everything we can to stop it." The staff member is to commend the victim/witness for bringing the matter to the attention of school staff, and they are to begin intervention strategies for the victim.
- The headmaster or designee will promptly and thoroughly address suspected reports of bullying. He will individually meet with the victim/witness and bully privately. If he determines that bullying has occurred, he will act appropriately within the discipline codes and will take reasonable action to end the bullying. The message for the child who bullies will be, "Your behavior is unacceptable, and mean, and must be stopped." If necessary, he will inform the student that he/she will be closely monitored, and the student's movements outside the classroom will require adult supervision at all times until trust has been built and all bullying behaviors cease. He will also ensure the careful monitoring of the victim during this time, by enlisting the help of a class buddy. He shall ensure that prior to the end of the school day, notification of the incident has been given to the parents/guardians of both the victim and the offender, and that steps have been initiated to address and resolve the issue. An intervention plan will be developed in cooperation with the parents of the bully. Parental notification and the intervention plan shall be documented on the *Bullying Incident Report*. If necessary and appropriate, the police will be contacted.
- Copies of the *Bullying Incident Report* shall be given to the victim's and offender's teachers, be placed in the victim's and offender's files in the school office, and be sent home to their parents. The report will serve as a reference for the school staff in determining whether or not a *pattern* of bullying behavior or abuse exists in regards to the offender or the victim.