

Bullying is defined as a pattern of habitual abuse toward another student or students. It is characterized by an imbalance of power between the students involved. Harassment and bullying are defined similarly, however in education, it is understood that bullying is a repeated behavior while harassment may be a one-time event. Both bullying and harassment involve physical or verbal intimidation/aggression.

Saint Vincent School recognizes that bullying/harassment of any kind has a negative effect on school climate. Students who are isolated, intimidated, and fearful cannot give their education the single-minded attention they need for success. Bullying/harassment can also lead to more serious violence. Every student has the right to an education and to be safe around school.

Because of the Christian climate and Catholic culture of Saint Vincent School, harassment of any kind will not be tolerated. Occurrence can be on or off campus, within or outside the school day, during a school activity, or during free time. Immediate and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken whenever it is determined that a violation of this policy has taken place. The intervention and consequences will be according to the nature and severity of the incident(s) or situation(s). However, in every case, the following actions are taken:

1. A report of harassment/bullying is made to faculty, staff or administration. It may also be observed and reported by students, teachers, faculty, staff or administration. All reports are followed up on by the administration in a timely manner.
2. The teacher and/or administration speaks with the main students involved individually. (The teacher and/or administration may speak with the main students involved together also.)
3. If the bullying/harassment is unknown to the parents, they are notified by the teacher or administration.
4. The teacher, administration, and possibly the student support director and/or counselor discuss the appropriate actions and consequences.
5. The teacher or administration informs the parents of the victim(s) and the parents of the person(s) doing the bullying/harassing of the events.
6. The teacher or administration provide appropriate follow-up.

Parents/guardians are asked to notify the teacher or administration immediately if they suspect a student is being bullied or harassed, or is bullying or harassing others. Parents/guardians can do this via email, phone, or by using this Problem Solving Form:

Bullying Harassment Form

Appropriate actions/consequences that are typically imposed include:

1. Writing/drawing an apology.

2. Verbally apologizing to the student who was harmed. That student also has an opportunity to share how s/he was affected by the offense.
3. Processing with the administration verbally and in writing during the school day, usually during a recess or specialty class. This processing will include an examination of how others were affected by the student's actions, what the student should have done differently, how others regard the student because of his/her actions, and other questions.
4. Discussing more serious consequences that will happen if the student reoffends.

If the offense is repeated or deemed more serious,

1. A behavior contract is implemented (see link to Student Behavior Contract).
2. The student may be suspended, usually in-school.
3. A more extensive processing occurs in these instances which includes Fr. Norman and Mr. Green, and possibly Mrs. West, the counselor.
4. Counseling may be mandated if applicable.
5. If no improvement is shown upon review of the [Student Behavior Contract](#), the student may be asked to leave the school. We will always work in partnership with parents to avoid expulsion, however, in some instances our educational setting is not the best placement.

We also attend to the student(s) who is harmed. That person will have an opportunity to tell the student who offends how the offense affected him/her. We encourage the students to be empowered to speak up for themselves--at best in front of the person who is harassing them, but at least to tell an adult about the harassment. Because we value community and the relationships within it, we will always offer an opportunity for resolution/reconciliation in an effort to repair the hurt to the relationship(s).