

ADDENDUM: Bullying Policy

At St. Stephen Martyr we believe that every person (student, staff, and faculty) has the right to a safe and respectful learning environment. SSM is committed to making sure that every student can reach their highest potential in all areas of physical, academic, emotional, and spiritual.

Members of the school community refuse to tolerate bullying of any kind. We recognize the negative impact that bullying has on a student's health, learning environment, and community as a whole. We strive to promote a culture of kindness and compassion. In doing so, our philosophies coincide with the PeaceBuilders program that we have adopted. We ask each individual in our school to abide by principles of the PeaceBuilders Program at home, school, and community each day.

Bullying is defined by the State of Kentucky, and according to KRS 525.070 "a student is guilty of bullying, or harassment when he/she has the intent to intimidate, harass, annoy, or alarm another student while at school, or at a school event" This may include:

- Verbal: (examples include name calling, hurtful teasing, put downs, taunting, and threatening, derogatory comments, inappropriate jokes, etc.)
- Physical: (examples include: pushing, shoving, kicking, biting, etc.) or any deliberate physical act of harm against another person
- Social: (exclusion, rumors, gossip or revealing personal information embarrassing or publicly humiliating, etc.)
- Cyber: Offending, threatening, and harassing others through technological means. This includes, but is not limited to email, instant messages, web pages, blogs, video and digital photo images, and/or text messages.

*When we are made aware of any form of bullying that takes place outside of school we will notify parent/guardian out of concern for the safety of all students.

Bullying is also defined federally as unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Stopbullying.gov

It is the hope of SSM that these proactive efforts below help to prevent acts of bullying, and also provides an environment where students feel safe to share concerns and report issues if/when necessary.

Each year SSM introduces and reviews anti-bullying education with all classrooms K-8. Education in the classrooms is implemented within the first month of each school year, facilitated by the school counselor. This includes informing and reminding students of reporting procedures, as well as discussing the graduated consequences of acts of bullying and the S.T.O.P. Process (see below)

Speak Up/Be Safe is provided yearly to grades 1-6 that educates students on abuse and ways to respond. This program also includes discussion on bullying.

PeaceBuilders Curriculum and philosophy is also taught throughout the school year every year using grade appropriate instruction.

Parent Workshops will also be provided as needed educating parents on policies and procedures that SSM follows, also informing parents/guardians of how to make a formal report if needed.

Student input is also highly encouraged, suggested, and valued when looking at the formation of bullying policy and procedures for SSM.

Procedural Guidelines:

- If bullying/harassment behavior occurs, students and/or parents are to report it to the teacher, counselor, and/or principal by completing a Peace Builders Reporting Form. These can be found online under the Counselor's Corner Webpage, or in the main office, counselor's office, and in every teacher's classroom.
- The student that is filling out the form, and the person accused of the acts of bullying are asked to share his/her views of the act/incident. This is for grades 4-8. Students in grades K-3 will complete a Peace Treaty in accordance with the PeaceBuilders Curriculum
- It is then determined after the meeting with all parties involved as to whether or not it is considered to be bullying or developmental conflict. This is determined by the principal and counselor.
 - If it is determined to NOT be considered bullying then a discussion between the two students is set up to determine the next steps towards resolution of conflict. This is facilitated by the counselor.

- If it is determined to be bullying, then the person showing bullying behavior will participate in the S.T.O.P. Process (Solutions to Ongoing Peace) in which they will make amends to the target/victim.
- This S.T.O.P. Process allows each individual to feel heard and make steps toward restoring peace and justice to all involved. Consequences with the accused student will also be discussed. Consequences will usually be taken in sequential steps except in severe breach of conduct.

Consequences include:

1st offense: Unacceptable behavior is discussed with student and the student participates in the S.T.O.P. Process. (For K-3, a peace treaty is completed). The student makes a commitment to not do it again; parents are notified.

2nd offense: Student loses privileges with class as decided by principal and counselor. The consequence will fit the inappropriate behavior. Student participates in the S.T.O.P Process; parents receive 2nd notification.

3rd offense: Student serves one day in-school suspension; a behavior plan is developed including counseling. The pastor will be informed; parents receive 3rd notification.

4th offense: A mental health evaluation is required for student to return to school; Student is suspended for three days and until the evaluation results are reviewed by principal and counselor.

5th offense: Student is suspended indefinitely or expelled.

- Forms will then be completed, level of consequences will be determined, and parent notification will also be sent home. These forms are expected to be reviewed, signed, and returned the following school day.
- An email notification will also be sent to the student's teachers to make them aware of what took place.

These forms are included in the handbook or on the school website for your review

PeaceBuilders Peace Treaty Form (grades K-3)

PeaceBuilder Reporting Form (grades 4-8)

Parent Notification Form (grade K-8)

Our expectations are for students to formally report any and all incidents. This includes acts of bullying that they may experience, but also witness (as a bystander). In order to keep our children safe at school, we need to know what is occurring. We cannot be at all places at all times throughout the day, therefore it is essential that students step forth and report any incident that has happened immediately.

Questions/concerns that you may have regarding our process:

- **Why Report Formally?**

Some students want to report anonymously, however research has shown that reporting anonymously does not make the bullying stop. There has to be some sort of process of restoring justice and peace between the bully and target. It also empowers the target with a sense of confidence and a voice to remove helplessness.

- **What about Confidentiality?**

SSM will strive to maintain confidentiality of any student that is reporting as a target and/or bystander. We also respect the confidentiality of the person accused of the bullying. Any information related to the consequences of these actions will only be disclosed to the parent/guardian and school personnel.

- **What about Retaliation?**

School staff will discipline any student who retaliates against anyone who reports an incident of bullying. This will not be tolerated at SSM, and will move the person accused of bullying to higher steps on the graduated consequences list. Each student is told about this during the S.T.O.P. Process.

- **What about False Allegations?**

If someone intentionally and falsely accuses someone of bullying behavior, this will be dealt with as bullying behavior itself, and handled as any other act of bullying.

- **How to Explain Tattling Versus Telling (Reporting)**

Tattling is defined as telling an adult about another student's actions with the intention of getting that student in trouble. Reporting/Telling is telling an adult about another student's actions with the sole purpose of getting help with a difficult situation, for example one that is repeatedly hurtful.

Parent and Student Support is Vital for the success of this process. We feel confident that the steps and procedure that we are putting in place will help to address issues of bullying, however we also need support at home. Please bring any concerns to the attention of the teachers, counselor, and/or principal.

All administrators, teachers, staff, and students share the responsibility to ensure that bullying does not occur at our school. Our Anti-Bullying Policy Requires the Following:

Role and Requirements of SSM Staff Members:

- Be alert to signs of bullying
- Act promptly regarding suspicion and/or awareness or any notification
- Report incidents immediately to principal and/or counselor
- Offer support and encouragement to students being bullied
- Continue to encourage students to report any bullying behavior that they witness
- Model kindness and respectful communication to students and staff
- Work to develop a classroom culture and school that is inclusive, safe, and caring for all

Role of Parents/Guardians:

- Report concerns of bullying behavior to child's teacher as soon as possible following the incident. If concerns are not handled sufficiently, a report should be made to the counselor and/or principal.
- Support the school's policy, and encourage your child to avoid bullying behavior, as well as stand up/report any behavior they witness.
- Have conversations with your child(ren) about any acts of meanness you may see through media, real life, etc, and encourage them to speak up.
- Model kindness, respectful communication and appropriate conflict resolution

Role of Students:

- Report incidents they experience and/or witness at the time of the incident
- Stand up for others when possible and safe to do so. Refrain from joining in.
- Refuse to let others be bullied.
- Include everyone in play.
- Treat others with respect and dignity that is expected of any SSM Catholic School Student.

PeaceTreaty™

Instructions: Older children write answers. Younger children answer the questions, which are written down by others.

How did I hurt others today (*Notice Hurts*)?

How can I replace hurting behaviors with helping behaviors?



Signature of PeaceBuilder™

Signature of Staff

Signature of Other Adults
(as needed, such as site leadership, family, or staff member)

Other questions for a wise adult to talk about with a PeaceBuilder:

What other hurting behaviors happened after you did a hurting behavior?
(Examples: hitting, name calling, teasing, tattling)

What helping behavior did you really want to happen before you did a hurting behavior?
(Examples: being friends, sharing)

How would everybody know this treaty is working?
(Examples: an adult might write a note, a friend might say something)

St. Stephen Martyr Parent Notification Form

Your child _____ was reported for engaging in the following behavior:

This is your child's _____ 1st _____ 2nd _____ 3rd _____ 4th _____ 5th reported bullying incident. With each offense a student moves to a higher level of consequences (see below). Please discuss this incident with your child. It is important that he/she understands that bullying behaviors will not be tolerated at St. Stephen Martyr.

Principal's Signature _____

Teacher/Counselor's Signature _____

Consequences for Bullying Behavior

(Ordinarily the steps will be taken in sequence except in cases of severe breach of conduct)

1st offense: Unacceptable behavior is discussed with student and the student participates in the S.T.O.P. Process. (For K-3, a peace treaty is completed). The student makes a commitment to not do it again; parents are notified.

2nd offense: Student loses privileges with class as decided by principal and counselor. The consequence will fit the inappropriate behavior. Student participates in the S.T.O.P Process; parents receive 2nd notification.

3rd offense: Student serves one day in-school suspension; a behavior plan is developed including counseling. The pastor will be informed; parents receive 3rd notification.

4th offense: A mental health evaluation is required for student to return to school; Student is suspended for three days and until the evaluation results are reviewed by principal and counselor.

5th offense: Student is suspended indefinitely or expelled.

Parent's Signature _____ Date _____

Student's Signature _____ Date _____