Impulsively indicates you condone bullying.

Stan, Maria, Catholic Primary School community and Mel Maria Catholic Primary School will do all it can to counter this behavior.

Standing by and watching or encouraging bullying by others is also unacceptable. Such action indicates you condone bullying.

Bullying is different from children simply acting impulsively, having a disagreement or difference of opinion or playing boisterously without thought for the opinions of others.

**Definition**

**What is bullying?**

Bullying is when, over a period of time, an individual or group intentionally harms a person who finds it hard to stop this behavior from continuing. Bullying can be characterized as: Causing distress, not only at the time of the attack but also by the threat of future attacks, and an imbalance of power that is inappropriate and with the intention to hurt.

Its nature may be:

Verbal: name-calling, put downs, threats, (spoken, written, electronic or cyber).

Physical: hitting, tripping, punching, throwing objects, stealing.

Social: ignoring, hiding, ostracising,

Psychological: stalking, threatening looks or gestures, spreading rumours, damaging possessions.

Bullying is totally unacceptable in our school community and Mel Maria Catholic Primary School will do all it can to counter this behavior.

**Students who are bullied can:**

- Tell the student who is bullying to stop. State quite clearly that the behavior is unwelcome and offensive
- Ignore them and walk away
- Seek help. Talk about it to someone you trust
- Report it to a member of staff, a trustworthy friend or buddy. Feel confident that an incident can be solved
- Talk it over openly with your parents – they can help you make a decision
- Do NOT retaliate with physical or verbal abuse
- If you are experiencing bullying on the way to or from school, tell your parents and walk home with a friend
- Write a description of the event and place it in the class meeting box or give it to a teacher and/or
- Find someone else to play with.

**Students who see someone being bullied can:**

- Tell the person to stop
- Be a friend to the person being bullied
- Encourage the person being bullied to inform someone
- Seek help. You can decide to do something about it and help to protect others
- Write a description of the event and place it in the class meeting box or give it to a teacher
- Talk it over with a teacher.

**Parents/caregivers can:**

- Encourage your child to talk with you
- Listen to your child sympathetically and take the situation seriously
- Try not to overreact; remember that the other children involved will have their own views of what happened
- Assure your child that it happens to most people at some time. We learn to avoid it, cope with it or confront it
- Reassure your child that it is not happening because there is something wrong with him or her
- Assist your child to discuss any incidence of bullying with a teacher
- Be willing to inform the school of any cases of suspected bullying
- Tell your child that physical or verbal retaliation on their part is not the answer
- Be aware of the signs of distress in your child (e.g. unexplained bruises/scratches, unwillingness to attend school, a pattern of illness, missing/damaged equipment or clothing, loss of confidence, declining academic performance)
- Refrain from talking directly to other children who may have been involved
- Set a good example when resolving your own conflicts
- Be positive about your child’s qualities and teach them to respect differences
- Take an active interest in your child’s social life and friends.

*Always try to work through the school, but talk with your child about what you are doing and why.*

‘We can always talk with someone we trust about anything, no matter what.’
Mel Maria Catholic Primary School respects the rights of all those in the school community to:

- Feel safe
- Be treated with respect
- Be free from all forms of bullying.
- Learn within a caring environment that lives the Gospel values.

The Bullying Response Plan is to be read in conjunction with the school's Pastoral Care and Behavioral Management Policies.