<u>Anti-Bullying Policy</u>

Purpose

MCA is committed to providing a safe, secure environment for all our students. Our response to bullying is based on the pattern of relating to one another as is identified in the Bible. God intended us to live together in a way that acknowledges differences and accepts others because we are all made in His image. It is our intent to implement a restorative framework for dealing with bullying incidents. We want to protect our students and also help the bullies learn acceptable ways of relating in our school community.

Maranatha Christian Academy is committed to ensuring that procedures are in place for dealing with a range of bullying incidents that could affect the school environment. It is expected that these procedures will help to prevent recurrences.

Definitions of Bullying

Bullying can be defined as a persistent and ongoing use of aggression, intimidation, harmful behavior and/or cruelty with the result of hurting another person verbally, physically or emotionally, creating a negative environment at school for another individual. The behavior may also occur in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance between the student and the individual.

Examples may include, but are not limited to:

	Direct bullying	Indirect bullying
Verbal Bullying	Taunting, teasing, name calling, put downs, racist remarks, threats	Spreading rumors
Physical Bullying	Hitting, kicking, tripping, punching, using any sort of violence and any unwanted physical contact, theft of property	Enlisting a friend to assault someone
Nonverbal/Nonphysical Bullying	Threatening or obscene gestures	Being deliberately unkind, excluding others from a group, manipulation of friendships, threatening email, setting someone up to be humiliated.
Cyber Bullying	Cyber bullying (also referred to as electronic bullying) is a form of bullying, and occurs through the use of technology. This can include the use of a computer or other electronic devices, using social networks, text messaging, instant messaging, websites, e-mail or other electronic means. A person participates in bullying if he or she directly carries out the behavior.	Indirect cyber bullying is carried out by those that assist or encourage the behavior in any way. It is often the virtual bystanders who are responsible for the repeated humiliation felt by victims.

Any of the above that is written or electronic.

<center>**Responsibilities**</center>

Principal:
The principal will implement a successful bullying prevention program and provide training in identifying and responding to different kinds of bullying incidents. This training will help in the following areas:

- Setting and applying consistent consequences for students who bully (including learning opportunities to improve their behaviour) and establish effective mechanisms to support vulnerable students.
- Explaining bullying prevention strategies to students.
- Creating a safe atmosphere for reporting bullying incidents and eliminate the fear of retaliation for reporting.
- Gaging the climate of the school through surveys that highlight the importance of feedback through data from students, staff and parents.

Principals and Vice Principals will provide appropriate support when teachers and parents identify bullying issues and reinforce the message that bullying prevention action is being taken.

Teachers:
Teachers are on the front lines of bullying prevention. They are important in establishing a school climate of acceptance based on the fact that we are all created in God's image. They will need the following:

- On going training to give teachers the skills to identify, respond to, and prevent bullying incidents.
- The tools to improve the social and emotional skills of the bullies, the victims, and the bystanders.
- Procedures concerning how to enforce the school's bullying prevention policy and program, which includes responding to bullying incidents, and administering consequences.
- New staff to the school will be made familiar with the bullying policy

Students:

Students will take responsibility for their own actions and be willing to change their behavior if necessary. Each class from grade 2-12 will learn positive ways to deal with conflict, identify what bullying is, why it is unacceptable, learn strategies of how victims and bystanders can deal with situations where bullying is occurring and be aware of appropriate channels to report incidents of bullying.

Students who have a history of bullying will be taught how to use their power in a positive way. They will have clear expectations concerning what behavior is expected, and what the consequences will be for unacceptable behavior. They will also understand the impact of their actions on others.

Bullying victims will know that what is happening to them is unacceptable and that there is help available.

Bystanders must understand that spectators contribute to the bullying problem. They need to know how to intervene in a safe, secure, and positive way. They need to know that reporting bullying incidents to teachers, staff, and principals is the right thing to do. They need to know that they will be heard, and that reporting will lead to a resolution.

Student leaders can play an important role in demonstrating inclusive behavior and preventing bullying situations. These leadership qualities should be encouraged and supported by principals, teachers, and school staff.

Parents:

Because bullying takes place on and off school grounds, it is important for parents to understand how to identify potential bullying situations, and to know what course of action is available to them.

Parents need to recognize and address warning signs that could indicate bullying, such as loss of friends, changes in eating habits, and fear of going to school.

They should know the process of reporting when they suspect a bullying incident.

Education Committees:
To review the policy and process every 4 years.

Policy
- To teach students to deal with conflict in a positive way, and thereby build Christian community.
- To help the community to identify bullying when it happens.
- To identify and monitor the extent of bullying at MCA.
- To give students the tools to combat bullying.
- To give support to victims of bullying and give guidance to those who bully.
- To take a comprehensive approach by including roles for the whole school community.
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Procedures

1. All reports of bullying will be investigated and dealt with by staff members.
2. Teachers will contact the parents of the bullied and the bully in all incidents of bullying.
3. All reports of bullying will be recorded either on the Yard Duty Log (elementary), the Commons Room log (high school) or on the classroom log (both panels). These logs will be submitted to the vice principals' offices and reviewed by the administration. These logs will be kept in a confidential and safe place.
4. Discipline measures must aim at restoring relationships in a Christian community of learning. Bystanders, who are supporters of the bully, and the bullies themselves, must be made aware of why their actions are displeasing in the eyes of God, and how they can build positive relationships.
5. The following actions will be completed depending on the severity or recurrence of the bullying incident:

- Once a pattern of bullying behaviour is noted, the student will need his/her behaviour corrected by serving a detention with the teacher who was made aware of the event(s). During this detention the form for restorative discipline will be used and a discussion between the teacher and the student would focus on correcting the behaviour and restoring the relationship with the student who was bullied.
- If this session does not work and the bullying continues, then an incident report needs to be filled out. Another restorative discipline session is held with the vice-principal.
- If the bullying incident is severe, an incident report could be immediately issued or suspended.
- At the discretion of the teacher, the vice principal, and the principal the following corrective disciplinary methods can be used:
a. A series of detentions
b. In school suspension
c. Out of school suspension
d. Very serious cases – expulsion
e. Conference with parent, students, and any other stakeholders (including the "victim") to restore relationships
f. Repair or replace damaged property