Anti-Bullying Guidelines

1. **<u>Clearly Define Dominance Behaviors:</u>**

"Harassment, intimidation or bullying" means any gesture or written, electronic communication (social media), verbal or physical act that takes place at school, on school property, at any school sponsored function or on a school bus and that:

1. is motivated by any actual or perceived characteristic, such as race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression or a mental, physical, or sensory disability; or,

2. by any other distinguishing characteristic; and

3. a reasonable person should know, under the circumstances, that the act(s) will have the effect of harming a student or damaging the student's property, or placing a student in reasonable fear of harm to his person or damage to his property; or

4. has the effect of insulting or demeaning any student or group of students in such a way as to cause substantial disruption in, or substantial interference with, the orderly operation of the school.

Not all acts of bullying, however, are motivated by characteristics such as the targets race, color, religion, gender, or sexual orientation. **Some acts of bullying are simply one child exercising power and control over another in isolated incidents (e.g., intimidation, harassment) or <u>patterns of harassing or intimidating behavior</u> (e.g., bullying).**

It is the responsibility all staff, students, and community members of Holy Childhood to ensure our school is a safe, caring place where everyone is respected and no one is bullied.
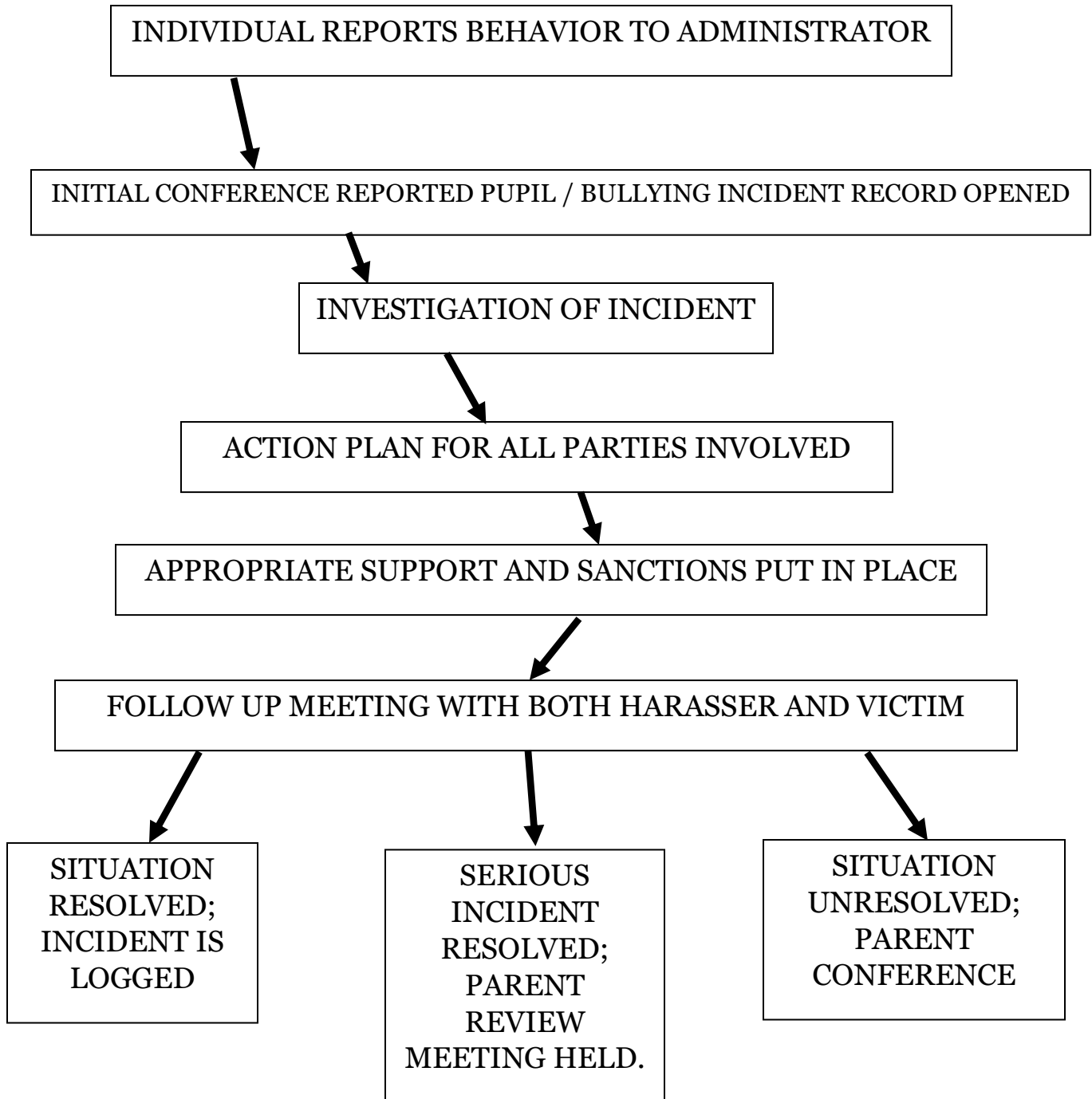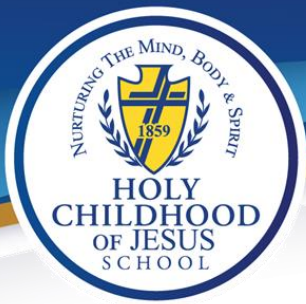
2. Clearly Outline Reporting of Incidents

All school employees are required to report alleged violations of the school policy to the principal.   All other members of the school community, including students, parents, volunteers, and visitors, are encouraged to report any act that may be a violation of this policy.

The goal of a reporting procedure is to encourage reports of alleged violations by making the reporting process simple and non-threatening. The districts should consider every mechanism available to them to facilitate reporting in a manner where reports can be submitted with fear of being observed.

A Bullying-Reporting Form will be made available on-line and placed on our website (google form). We will have a tab located on our website clearly defined as "Behavior".

A "drop box" will be located in the school cafeteria in a location where students can report bullying behavior. (Coming soon)

Students will also have forms available to them outside of the school office and can give them directly to the school secretary or Principal.

INDIVIDUAL REPORTS BEHAVIOR TO ADMINISTRATOR

INITIAL CONFERENCE REPORTED PUPIL / BULLYING INCIDENT RECORD OPENED

INVESTIGATION OF INCIDENT

ACTION PLAN FOR ALL PARTIES INVOLVED

APPROPRIATE SUPPORT AND SANCTIONS PUT IN PLACE

FOLLOW UP MEETING WITH BOTH HARASSER AND VICTIM

SITUATION RESOLVED; INCIDENT IS LOGGED

SERIOUS INCIDENT RESOLVED; PARENT REVIEW MEETING HELD.

SITUATION UNRESOLVED; PARENT CONFERENCE

3. Clarify Investigation and Disciplinary Actions

Investigation of bullying accusations will be conducted at the discretion of the administration. All efforts will be made to communicate to all parties involved when applicable but note there is no set timetable for this to occur.

When parents are presented with the information, all efforts will be made to address the issue at hand and will only address the actions, results, and solutions for his/her child.

Consequences may range from positive behavioral interventions up to and including warnings, detentions, suspensions, expulsions, and or reports to law enforcement.

Research shows that punishment-based strategies may not be the most effective strategy (i.e. zero tolerance, expulsion, suspension). The American Psychologists Association discourages punitive approaches to discipline Therefore, it is apparent that zero-tolerance strategies should be reserved only for the most severe aggressive and disruptive behaviors. Students involved in bullying need to be taught relationship enhancement skills instead of being ostracized and punished for their lack of skills.

Therefore education of parents is vital for them to understand and accept that "what did you do to the other kid" is not necessarily the right strategy in all situations.

4. Include Assistance for Victims of Bullying

Working in collaboration with families, administration will be in communication to determine support of victims of bullying. Support can range between a multitude of options. Examples include quiet time, weekly meeting with an adult that the student trusts to share time with, counseling support if available. These are merely suggestions and, with discussions with the family and child, a plan will be put in place to help.

In fact the APA and other top educational experts say one of the best ways to thwart bullying behaviors is to embolden the "victims" and give them the tools to deal with bullying and aggressive behaviors.

One effective way is to help support victims is through role-playing in difficult situations. Using a role-playing type of communication, it makes the experience more emotional and not cognitive. Role-playing is far more effective and fun than simply trying to explain something. If we tell kids they should stop getting upset by their bullies, they feel we are asking them to lose, to let the bullies get away with that they are doing to them.

Role-playing allows students to actively practice using emotional tools in difficult every-day situations.

**Please note: NO ANTI-BULLYING POLICY IS 100% EFFECTIVE. THE ABOVE ACTIONS ARE GUIDELINES IN DEALING WITH BEHAVIORS THAT HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED AS NEEDING INTERVENTION.

This policy will be "fluid" as changes and edits to the policy can change over time. Regardless the "spirit" of the policy is to provide students an opportunity to be heard by adults if they are feeling threatened or bullied.

As always, if you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to administration.