Positive Relationships Policy
(Bullying and Harassment)

Definition
Bullying is a repeated intentional intimidation, over time, of another person, physically, verbally, socially or emotionally, by a person or group of persons. Bullying is a clear form of harassment.

Rationale
At St. Damian’s we foster a positive culture where bullying is not accepted. We believe that everyone in the school community deserves to be treated with respect and that all members have the right to feel safe and secure in their school environment. We recognise that all students have the right to learn and play, to be listened to, treated fairly and with respect by their peers and adults. Similarly all adults have the right to be respected and have a responsibility to interact with others in a respectful manner at all times.

Principles
At St. Damian’s we aim to:

- reinforce that bullying is unacceptable
- educate the students to identify instances of bullying or harassment
- encourage reporting of bullying or cyberbullying
- follow-up all reported incidents of bullying with support given to all parties involved
- develop positive and respectful relationships
- empower the ‘onlookers’ of an incident to be proactive in speaking up and seeking help
- seek school community support and co-operation at all times

Implementation
- At the beginning of each year classroom teachers will clarify the school policy on maintaining a bully free environment and remind students that reporting is not ‘dobbing’.
- Parents, teachers, students and the community will be aware of the school’s position on bullying and harassment
- Teachers will be regularly reminded of their duty of care regarding protection of students from all forms of bullying and harassment
- The school will adopt a four-phase approach to reported instances of bullying
- Build a positive relationships culture through educating students in the core competencies of SEL
1. **Primary Prevention:**
   - Staff will be briefed annually on procedures related to bullying, harassment and the schools response to these instances.
   - Raise community awareness of the impact relating to bullying (including cyber-bullying), its characteristics, its effects on victims and the school’s response.
   - Utilising a variety of programs that promote social and emotional learnings such as resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving.
   - Each classroom teacher to clarify with students at the start of each year the school policy on bullying, including cyber-bullying.
   - All senior students (Years Three to Six) to be provided with individual and confidential computer and network log ins and passwords. Processes in place ensure tracking of student activity on the school’s computer equipment and network. Firewalls eliminate outside traffic into the school’s network and intranet.
   - Structured activities available to students at lunch breaks.

2. **Early Intervention:**
   - Encourage children and staff to report bullying incidents involving themselves or others.
   - All staff encourage the reporting of incidents of bullying.
   - Parents are encouraged to report instances of bullying or harassment to the school.
   - Students involved in incidents of bullying harassment complete a Positive Behaviour Reflection Sheet.

3. **Intervention:**
   - Once identified all parties will be spoken with and all incidents or allegations of bullying will be fully investigated and documented and appropriate action taken.
   - Parents of students will be contacted.
   - All parties involved will be offered support in line with Restorative Justice Mediation.
   - If student bullying persists parents will be re-contacted and consequences implemented consistent with the school’s Behaviour Management policy.

4. **Post Incident:**
   - Consequences for students will be individually based and may involve:-
     - exclusion from class
     - exclusion from yard
     - withdrawal of privileges in direct relation to the incident
     - ongoing support from staff and appropriate agency if required for all parties
     - school suspension.
   - positive behaviours will be reinforcement by:
     - Circle Time
     - Rewards to acknowledge/reinforce positive behaviour

Consequences for staff and other adults within the community will be individually based and may involve disciplinary action and/or reporting to appropriate authorities.