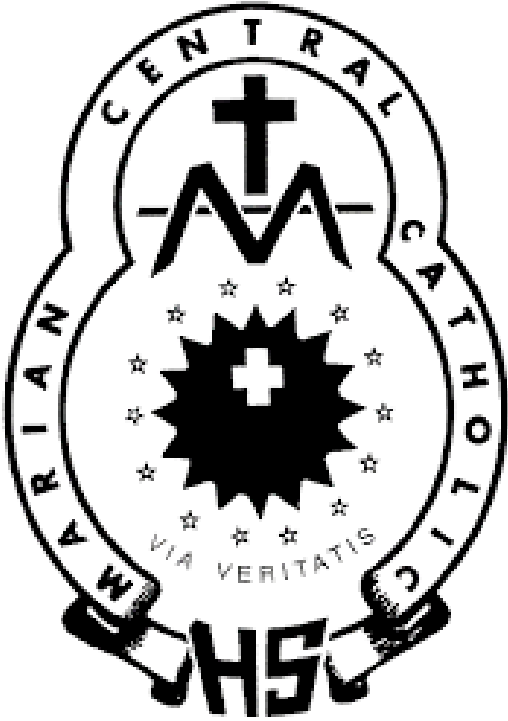


**Marian Central Catholic High School**  
**Bullying Policy**  
**2023-2024**



Dan Olweus, PhD is commonly referred to as the “founding father” of research on bullying and victimization. Dr. Olweus defines bullying as “**repeated negative, ill-intentioned behavior by one or more students directed against a student who has difficulty defending himself or herself. Most bullying occurs without any apparent provocation on the part of the student who is exposed.**”

Bullying is comprised of **direct behaviors** (typically more frequent in boys) such as: teasing, taunting, threatening, hitting, and stealing. Bullying also consists of **indirect behaviors** (typically more frequent in girls) such as: spreading rumors, enforcing social isolation, telling stories, and utilizing sexual comments. **Bullying occurs when** it is repeated behavior over time, targeting a student that is perceived as (physically or psychologically) weaker who is also unlikely to effectively self-defend.

Possible **signs of being a bully** include: teasing repeatedly in nasty ways, taunting, intimidating, threatening, and hitting. It is common for bullies to induce followers to do their dirty work for them. Bullies tend to exhibit the following characteristics:

- A strong need to dominate and get their own way
- Impulsive and easily angered
- Defiant, aggressive toward adults, including parents and teachers
- Shows little empathy toward victims
- If boys – they are physically stronger than the victims
- They have difficulty conforming to the rules
- They try to gain advantage by cheating
- They try very hard to talk themselves out of a difficult situation

Research shows quite clearly that bullies have a relatively positive view of themselves, they are average to above average in popularity, and they are usually more popular in the primary grades. They begin with normal academics in primary grades moving to low performance in Junior High and High School due in large part to their poor attitude.

The typical **passive or submissive victims**, according to Olweus’ research, generally have some of the following characteristics:

- Picked on, pushed around, punched, repeatedly laughed at, and teased
- They cannot defend themselves adequately
- They try to withdraw from fights, frequently crying
- They may have bruises and/or torn clothing that cannot be naturally explained

Dr. Olweus also reports some **secondary signs of being a victim**:

- They are alone – excluded from peer groups – they do not have a single good friend
- They are most often chosen last for games or competitions
- They prefer to stay close to teachers and other adults
- They do not speak-up in class
- They often appear unhappy, depressed, and tearful
- Their schoolwork will suffer

These characteristics are likely to be both a partial cause and consequence of the bullying. There is another, smaller group of victims, called **provocative victims** or bully-victims. Provocative victims have partly different characteristics including frequent reading and writing problems, and ADHD characteristics. The behavior of the bully-victims tends to elicit negative reactions from many students in the classroom.

**Signs of a provocative victim** include:

- They are hot-tempered and attempt to fight back
- They are hyperactive, restless and tension-creating
- They tend to be clumsy, immature and possess irritating habits
- They are disliked by many adults
- They often try to bully weaker students

It should be noted that bullies and victims do not necessarily enter the classroom with the destiny of becoming a bully or a victim. Once the bully/victim relationship is set in place, however, it becomes very hard to change. As time goes on, their interactions become more stable and harder to stop, especially if it is encouraged and supported by peers. **Parents, teachers, and administrators** can alter this dynamic by taking a stand against bullying behaviors. We all need to understand it is not just a part of growing up and we need to make sure the entire class knows what to do if they witness bullying.

Part of Marian Central Catholic School’s successful **preventative measures** will be to clearly explain different bullying behaviors and state that it will not be tolerated in the classroom. It will also be important to tell the students what to do if they are bullied, if they see other children being bullied, or if they realize that they are bullying others. It will help greatly if all the teachers explain to their students the importance of telling teachers about something important a teacher should know. **This is not the same as tattling.**

If a student **suspects an incident of bullying or is a victim of bullying**, please consider the following courses of action:

- DON’T SUFFER IN SILENCE
- Report the incident as soon as possible, begin by speaking with the teacher
- Be assertive but not aggressive
- Tell the perpetrator to stop and say you don’t like the behavior; if the behavior continues, don’t let the perpetrator see you upset

- Join school activities, clubs, extra/co curriculars and/or athletic functions to develop healthy peer relationships
- Take pride in your personal appearance and hygiene
- Be proud of yourself—you have qualities and strengths that ought to be recognized and celebrated
- Don't be tempted to stay away from school—come to school and report the situation
- Avoid common spaces with the bully, including hallways, cafeteria seating and social media exchanges
- Marian Central faculty/staff will support victims of bullying
- Be a defender—bullies feed on the energy of bystanders and passive contributors

To **report an incident of bullying**, consider the following:

- Students and parents are encouraged to begin all reports with the classroom teacher, who may then alert administration
- There is a *Report a Concern Google Form* on the school website to communicate an assortment of alarming behaviors, including bullying
- It is essential that victims **DO NOT SUFFER IN SILENCE**—please report bullying behavior

When allegations of bullying are reported, an **investigation** will occur that includes the following elements:

- School administration is responsible for investigating allegations of bullying
- Teachers, administrators, and counselors should listen to the victim with sincerity, acknowledge the importance of the reporting and regard the matter as serious
- The nature and duration of the investigation depends on the circumstances, including the type, severity, and frequency of alleged conduct
- The goal of an investigation is to obtain accurate and complete accounts of all incidents and relevant circumstances—this process may take days
- Investigations typically includes personal interviews with involved parties
- Listen to both sides of the story separately and make a judgement; if appropriate, connect both parties for reconciliation
- Once a determination has been made, the Superintendent will be notified
- Sanctions and discipline should be appropriate to the offence
- To the extent possible, staff members will take steps to protect all parties from incidents of retaliation; these steps may include disciplinary action, appropriate adult supervision, reassigning classroom seating, and/or instructing those involved to avoid contact
- Monitor the situation over time—speak to the victim to ensure the situation has not arisen at a future date and offer support for the bullying victim
- Information regarding any student may not be disclosed to a parent unless the information is about the parent's own child
- Disciplinary action will only be shared with parents/guardians of the student receiving such action

In our very important task of working together, we must try to understand: **who are these students that become bullies?** Temperament, personal variables, and behavior modeled at home combined with other factors, such as a lack of a school bullying policy or a teacher who looks the other way, can mean that conditions are right for a student to become a bully.

- Aggression that is reinforced at home increases the likelihood of being a bully
- **However, many more bullies come from homes in which parents are more permissive**
- Studies show students with aggressive tendencies are less likely to demonstrate empathy
- Bullies are likely to believe that the victim “brought it on” themselves
- Aggressive students are more likely to find aggressive friends who reinforce their behavior and take on the role of “henchman”

It is just as important that we all know **how students can become victims.** Often victims have not learned certain skills that one must have to stand-up for oneself such as:

- Making appropriate eye-contact
- A knack for understanding and fending off teasing
- Interpret ambiguous signals as threats, reacting with fear and avoidance which bullies perceive as weakness and “easy targets”

As a Marian Central Catholic High School community, it is important that we discourage the conditions contributing to incidences of bullying and victimization. To that end, **teachers should consider the following:**

- Make clear classroom expectations regarding the role of respect and social interactions in the classroom; follow up on the expectations with consistency and fairness
- Effectively discouraging and reporting the behavior of bullies requires a strong teacher presence in the classroom, hallways, and common areas
- Teachers should address instances of bullying immediately, alert administration, document the event, and issue detentions if appropriate
- Create an environment that has sanctions against, rather than ignores or condones, the kinds of continuing hurtful actions that occur in bully/victim relationships
- Many factors help to maintain the bully/victim relationship; therefore **the most successful interventions take place simultaneously at the individual, peer, classroom, school and family levels**

Our anti-bullying school policy will include:

- Consultation between teachers, students, parents and other school personnel
- Increase adult supervision at key times (lunch, before/after school, hallways, etc.)
- Ascertain the level and nature of bully/victim problems in school

- Discuss bullying at staff meetings and with students and parents

Explore possible social skills training programs that will help:

- Develop empathy among all students
- Develop anger management skills for bullies
- Develop effective conflict-resolution skills for bullies
- Develop assertiveness training for victims

In the classroom, our teachers will utilize:

- Classroom discussion – agree on classroom rules regarding bullying
- Role play exercises – how to assist victims, etc.
- Give clear message that bullying is not acceptable at school
- Consistently use agreed upon rules and punishment
- Encouraged reporting of bullying
- Praise for avoidance of bullying

All teachers will teach this creed against bullying in their classroom (Olweus, 1993)

- We shall not bully other students
- We shall try to help students who are bullied
- We shall make a point to include students who are easily left out
- We shall be defenders

## **Marian Central Catholic High School's Bullying Prevention Program**

Marian Central Catholic High School is a college preparatory institution with approximately 320 students. This Bullying Prevention Program is based on the research of Norway's Daniel Olweus, PH.D. Olweus and his colleagues wrote:

*“(A bullying prevention program) strives to develop a school (and ideally a home) environment characterized by:*

- Warmth, positive interest, and involvement by adults
- Firm limits to unacceptable behavior
- Non-hostile, nonphysical negative consequences consistently applied in cases of ...unacceptable behaviors...“where adults act as authorities and positive role models.” (Olweus, Limber, Mihalic 1999)

### **Mission Statement**

Marian Central will attempt to develop, among staff and parents, a consensus so together we enforce the same expectations consistently. Together we will make a commitment to change bullying behavior. This includes physical bullying, verbal bullying, and social exclusion. This also will include consistent enforcement of effective consequences for verbal and physical aggression, which are predictable, immediate, and escalating while also based on uniform expectations for all. Consequences will begin small (so they can be used consistently) and escalate with repeated acts of aggression. They typically will involve issuing detentions and/or loss of unstructured times.

Our main goal will always be to build positive connections between staff and students, and to set a positive tone in all staff-student interactions. As always, we will monitor to make sure that consequences and education are effective. We will be diligent in our effort to show support for targets, including protection from repeat victimization. Also, we will empower bystanders to tell adults, support targets, discourage bullying and be defenders.

This school year Marian Central will work toward:

- Building a discipline system that helps young people solve problems without hurting each other
- Give consequences for hurting that are predictable, fair, and immediate
- Encourage staff-student involvement and positive staff-student interaction
- Staff as always, will model positive interactions, and protect targets of harassment

- We will help young people who do hurt each other to think about what they have done, what was wrong with their behavior, what they were trying to accomplish by their actions
- We will help young people with continuing behavior problems through school-parent teamwork and counseling
- Work with families
- Support targets of bullying
- We will teach classroom lessons in consideration of others, how to express feelings without hurting, solving problems respectfully, and supporting peers as an active bystander
- We will build peer support through encouraging students to speak up to bullies, tell adults, and make isolated students a focus for friendship

**THESE ARE THE GOALS WE HAVE SET FOR EVERY SCHOOL YEAR.**

**WE WANT EVERYONE TO HAVE FRIENDS**

**How we will make this happen:**

- We will look and make sure no one is left out
- We can smile and say hello to people
- We can encourage participation in clubs and activities

**WE WANT NO NAME CALLING OR TEASING HERE AT MARIAN CENTRAL**

**How we will make this happen:**

- If your friend is calling people names, ask the friend nicely to stop
- If someone is being called names, help them get away
- If people call you names, get away from them or ask for help
- If you are thinking about calling someone a name, count to 10 or take a breath and think about what you say before you say it

**WE WILL UNDERSTAND THE ROLE THAT PEER PRESSURE AND CLIQUES PLAY IN BULLYING**

**How we will make this happen:**

- Through role play we will learn to help those in need
- Skills will be developed in finding supportive friends
- Through role play we will learn to ignore certain situations
- And we will learn to change a situation that currently exists

**OUR FOCUS WILL BE ON LEARNING ANGER MANAGEMENT SKILLS**

**How we will make this happen:**

- Students will learn to recognize anger triggers



- Become familiar with their anger cues
- Identify the ways they express their own angry feelings
- We will learn to consider the consequences of angry behavior
- And we will learn constructive ways of handling our feelings

## **WE WILL HAVE AN EXCELLENT UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORD HARASSMENT**

### **How we will make this happen:**

- Straightforward discussions about issues related to harassment
- Know the difference between teasing and harassment
- Introduce legal issues related to harassing behavior
- Bring an understanding of the school policy governing harassment

### **Marian Central Catholic High School's Bully Discipline Outline**

Our strength as a school will be the ability to maintain positive relationships with students and not to take their behavior personally. We will maintain good behavior best when we greet students, tell them specifically what they do right, and have clear, specific expectations in our classrooms and in other situations. We will maintain good relationships with parents. Our focus will be to discipline with a positive feeling, tone, and without anger.

Student misbehavior will **fall into six categories. Each type of behavior requires a different response** from the school staff.

1. **Low-Level peer problems not on our list of rules** (low-level, mutual friendship conflicts not involving name-calling, systematic exclusion, rumors, threats, or hitting). We can best respond to these behaviors with a suggestion of a few ways to resolve the problem.
2. **Quiet, non-disruptive refusal to do schoolwork:** Notify parents. Set up a conference between teacher, parent, and administration to develop a plan and/or screen for learning difficulties.
3. **Inappropriate but not aggressive or unsafe actions:** (rough play or swearing **not** directed at another child). These behaviors are best dealt with by staff-created consequences such as removal from activity, detention or a call to parents.
4. **Bullying:** (Name-calling, systematic exclusion, rumors, threats, or hitting) Use immediate consequences. Document the incident. Be a defender. Listen to the victim. Issue a detention if appropriate. Report the incident to administration. The staff will investigate reports. Aggressive students should only be sent directly to the office if they represent a continuing threat to others. We will use our best judgment in reporting rumors, exclusion, and "fighting". It is asked that our staff lean toward reporting if the behavior

seems one-sided and likely to hurt. A conference with parents will be scheduled to plan a strategy if appropriate.

5. **Class disruption:** (Disrespect to teacher or disrupting others' learning)  
Suggested interventions include a warning or asking the student to sit away from other students in the classroom. If the behavior continues, write a detention, and administer appropriate consequences. We will inform parents of events.
6. **Severe Behavior:** (Putting self or others' safety at risk; continued disruption of teaching; refusal to leave the room; continued or severe aggression; threats)  
The staff must call or take the student to the office immediately.

### **Classroom teacher responsibilities:**

- Have clear classroom behavior expectations
- Use consequences for classroom disruption and disrespect to you
- Communicate with parents about this behavior

### **Administration responsibilities:**

- Investigate all reports of aggression to peers, **with reasonable efforts to complete the investigation within 10 school days of the date the report was received by the school**
- **School administrator will provide to the parents/guardians of those involved information about the investigation, findings, and actions or interventions taken to address the bullying, adhering to privacy rules & laws.**
- Determine consequences from the rubric
- Contact parents **of each of the students involved within 24 hours of the school being aware of the issue**
- Assist teachers in developing interventions for students habitually defiant or disruptive
- With teachers and parents, develop and find ways to implement individual plans for students who are repeatedly aggressive to peers
- Assist teachers in setting up and trouble-shooting classroom behavior systems

### Marian Central Aggressive Behavior Rubric

<b>Behavior</b>	<b>First time</b>	<b>Second time</b>	<b>Third time</b>	
Teasing (name-calling, insulting, or other behavior that would hurt others' feelings or make them feel bad about themselves) Systematic exclusion (including telling others to exclude someone and starting rumors)	Meet with administration, call parents	Detention, call parents	Saturday detention, call parents	After the third time a student shows this behavior in a year, school staff and parents meet to develop an individual plan
Hitting (pushing, slapping, grabbing)	Detention, call parents	Saturday detention, call parents	In school suspension, call parents	
Severe hitting (punching, kicking, and similar behavior that may injure others) Harassment (racial, ethnic, or sexual name calling or other severe harassment)	Saturday detention, call parents	In school suspension, call parents	Three-day out of school detention	

**Consequences may be more severe depending on severity of actual behavior.**

## **HELPFUL INFORMATION FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS**

The National Mental Health Information Center has reported that much research on family conditions and the upbringing of children has led to this important conclusion: A lot of love and involvement from the people bringing up children, clear limits for what behavior is allowed and not allowed, as well as the use of nonviolent methods of upbringing, creates non-aggressive, harmonious, and independent children.

### **What Can Parents/Guardians Do If Your Child is Bullied at School – by the School District of Philadelphia Bullying Prevention Program**

- Take a breath, relax – it's important that you approach the situation with an open mind
- Ask questions, gain information from your child, listen to and support your child
- Begin communication with the school – talk to your student's teacher
- Take action – be a healthy advocate
- Offer your child strategies to deal with the person doing the bullying
- Continue communication with the school – talk with the administration
- Seek professional assistance, if necessary

### **What DOESN'T WORK**

- Encouraging your child to fight back
- Blaming the school/teacher
- Encouraging your child to ignore it
- Approaching the child who is bullying

If you are reasonably sure that your child is being bullied, a good starting point for taking up the situation with the school can be to ask your child (along with you, if it seems appropriate) to keep a concise logbook describing the incidents of harassment or bullying – when they occurred, who took part, and what was said and done. This way you can make a concrete presentation when you contact the school.

**It is important to note** that many students who become victims of bullying would probably develop quite normally if they did not have to face aggressive fellow students. An essential part of counter-acting bullying in school is to stop or change bullies' and their accomplices' behavior. The parents of students who are victims of bullying should not view bullying as an unavoidable part of growing up.

At the same time, it is also clear that many victims of bullying are unsure of themselves and somewhat anxious by nature, with relatively low self-confidence and few or no friends. So, in some cases, it may be sensible for you to try to help your child adapt better to school life and other environments – maybe regardless of the actual bullying situation.

## **Steps You Can Take**

Help your student strengthen his or her self-confidence, for example, by stimulating the development of any talents or positive qualities.

Help your student join other groups in sports, music, or other leisure time activities. Physical training in particular, if your student has the interest or ability, results in the student “giving out different signals” to those around him or her.

Encourage your student to make contact with a friendly student. As socially excluded students often lack relationship – making skills, it is important that you, or perhaps a counselor, help your student with concrete advice on how to go about making friends with peers.

Sometimes a student (especially the provocative victim of bullying) behaves in a way that irritates and provokes those around him or her. In such cases, you have the task of carefully, but firmly and consistently, helping your student find more suitable ways of reacting and interacting in friendship groups.

## **How To Find Out If Your Child Is A Bully**

It can be difficult to discover and to acknowledge that your own child is a bully. Bullying other students is obviously not something a child will talk about at home. But if several of the points described under “Who bullies?” fit your child, you should take this seriously and look more closely into the matter.

Bullying can be seen as a part of a general pattern of anti-social and rule-breaking behavior. Children who are bullies during their school years are at a much higher risk of later becoming involved in crime, misuse of alcohol, tobacco, and illegal drugs. If your child is bullying others, it is important to break this pattern, not just for the sake of the victim, but also for your own child’s sake.

## **Who Bullies?**

### **Your Child –**

- Has a marked need to dominate or manipulate others
- Is aggressive, nasty, spiteful, and generally in opposition
- Seems to like to insult, push around, or tease other students

It is time for Marian Central Catholic High School to make a commitment. How much bullying takes place in our school and other youth environments depends on the role that committed adults will play in our school, in our families, and in our community.

2023-24  
MARIAN CENTRAL CATHOLIC SCHOOL'S  
BULLYING POLICY

**SIGNATURE REQUIRED!!!**

Please complete the information below and return to the school. (If child(ren) do not live with both birth parents, only the signature of the custodial parent is needed.)

I have received and read the Marian Central Catholic High School's Bullying Policy. As parent/guardian of a child that attends Marian Central, I will see that my children are informed and also agree to follow the rules and regulations set forth in this very important policy.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Name – Please Print

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Name – Please Print

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent Signature