

LITTLE ROCK CHRISTIAN ACADEMY
"NO BULLYING" POLICY

Jesus tells us that the greatest commandments are to love God and love others (Matthew 22:36-40, Mark 12:29-31, Luke 10:25-28). Jesus also reminds us that people will know we are his disciples by our love for one another (John 13:34-35). Our primary task is to challenge students to love. There is no room for bullying or similar actions at Little Rock Christian, but rather devotion to love each other. This compels us to protect and support victims, strongly discipline abuse of power, and help all students and parents be a part of creating an atmosphere of care which is free from intimidation, harassment, harm or threat.

Definition

"Bullying" means the intentional harassment, intimidation, humiliation, ridicule, defamation, or threat or incitement of violence by a student against another student or school employee by a written, verbal, electronic, or physical act that causes or creates a clear and present danger of (a) physical harm to a school employee or student or damage to the school employee's or student's property; (b) substantial interference with a student's education or with a school employee's role in education; (c) a hostile educational environment for one or more students or school employees due to the severity, persistence or pervasiveness of the act; or (d) substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school or educational environment. (Arkansas code 6-18-514)

"Electronic Act" means without limitation a communication or image transmitted by means of an electronic device, including without limitation a telephone, wireless phone or other wireless communication device, or computer.

"Harassment" means a pattern of unwelcome verbal or physical conduct relating to another person's constitutionally or statutorily protected status that causes, or reasonably should be expected to cause, substantial interference with the other's performance in the school environment.

"Substantial disruption" means without limitation that any one or more of the following occur as a result of bullying:

- a. Necessary cessation of instruction or educational activities;
- b. Inability of students or educational staff to focus on learning or function as an educational unit because of a hostile environment;
- c. Exhibition of other behaviors by students or educational staff that substantially interfere with the learning environment; or
- d. An electronic act that results in the cessation or interference of the orderly operation of the school environment.

Examples of “bullying” may include but are not limited to a pattern of behavior involving one or more of the following:

1. Sarcastic “compliments” about another student’s personal appearance;
2. Pointed questions intended to embarrass or humiliate;
3. Mocking, taunting or belittling;
4. Non-verbal threats and/or intimidation such as “fronting” or “chesting” a person;
5. Demeaning humor relating to a student’s race, gender, ethnicity or personal characteristics;
6. Blackmail, extortion, demands for protection money or other involuntary donations or loans;
7. Blocking access to school property or facilities;
8. Deliberate physical contact or injury to person or property;
9. Stealing or hiding books or belongings; and/or
10. Threats of harm to student(s), possessions, or others.

Policy

We do not tolerate bullying in our school community.

Procedure

Students who engage in bullying while (a) at school, on school property, on school trips, in school vehicles, at any school function, in connection to or with any school sponsored activity or event, or while en route to or from school, or (b) by an electronic act that results in the substantial disruption of the orderly operation of the school or educational environment are subject to disciplinary action, up to and including suspension or expulsion.

School employees who witness bullying or have reliable information that a pupil has been the victim of bullying, as defined in this policy and including a single action which if allowed to continue would constitute bullying, shall immediately report the incident to the building principal or designee. The person or persons who file a complaint will not be subject to retaliation or reprisal in any form.

Students or parents who witness bullying or have reliable information that a pupil has been the victim of bullying, as defined in this policy and including a single action which if allowed to continue would constitute bullying, shall report the incident to the building principal or designee as soon as possible, and never later than twenty-four hours after the incident; while later reports are welcome, follow up and discipline are hampered by longer time periods. Any student who is a victim of bullying or who witnesses bullying or has reliable information about a bullying incident will be afforded as much care and protection as reasonably possible with severe consequences for a student or parent who retaliates to the student providing the information. Intentional false reports intended to harm will be treated as a major offense for discipline.

The building principal or designee will be responsible to follow up on reports to determine the need for disciplinary action. If the bullying incident is substantiated, the building principal or designee will require a meeting between the principal or designee, alleged victim and family, and the alleged bully

and family within twenty-four hours, with the goal of using partnership to change behavior and encourage reconciliation.

Consequence

The most likely consequence for verified bullying will be suspension and/or expulsion depending on the severity and circumstances surrounding the incident. Repeated instances of bullying or retaliation will result in expulsion. Other compensation or consequences may also be applied. Bullying falls under the category of “major offenses” in the Little Rock Christian Academy Handbook.

Plan

The following actions to train, create understanding, and institute these policies will be implemented:

1. Staff will be trained, at least on an annual basis, including these policies and the importance of modeling behavior that encourages genuine care for all and discourages bullying.
2. Age appropriate curriculum input on bullying will be woven into curriculum annually for students.
3. A public reminder to students will be made at least annually.
4. Parents will have the policy presented at least annually through email, website, mail, and/or public forum as deemed appropriate by administration.
5. Building principals or designees will regularly review discipline and information to determine if a student exhibits potential bullying characteristics for the purpose of working with that student to prevent bullying.

**Endorsed by the LRCA Board of Trust
August 17, 2010**