

**Creek Christian Academy bullying policy and response document:**

Bullying is unwanted, aggressive behavior among school aged children that involves a real or perceived power imbalance. The behavior is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time. Both kids who are bullied and who bully others may have serious, lasting problems.

In order to be considered bullying, the behavior must be aggressive and include:

- **An Imbalance of Power:** Kids who bully use their power—such as physical strength, access to embarrassing information, or popularity—to control or harm others. Power imbalances can change over time and in different situations, even if they involve the same people.
- **Repetition:** Bullying behaviors happen more than once or have the potential to happen more than once. (Please make sure to note and date any instances of bullying to reference with conversations with admin and/or parents.)

Bullying includes actions such as making threats, spreading rumors, attacking someone physically or verbally, and excluding someone from a group on purpose.

**Types of Bullying**

There are three types of bullying:

- **Verbal bullying** is saying or writing mean things. Verbal bullying includes:
  - Teasing
  - Name-calling
  - Inappropriate sexual comments
  - Taunting
  - Threatening to cause harm
- **Social bullying**, sometimes referred to as relational bullying, involves hurting someone's reputation or relationships. Social bullying includes:
  - Leaving someone out on purpose
  - Telling other children not to be friends with someone
  - Spreading rumors about someone
  - Embarrassing someone in public
- **Physical bullying** involves hurting a person's body or possessions. Physical bullying includes:

- o Hitting/kicking/pinching
- o Spitting
- o Tripping/pushing
- o Taking or breaking someone's things
- o Making mean or rude hand gestures
- o Invading another student's personal space

### **Where and When Bullying Happens**

Bullying can occur during or after school hours. While most reported bullying happens in the school building, a significant percentage also happens in places like on the playground or the bus. It can also happen traveling to or from school, in the youth's neighborhood, or through the use of social media platforms.

The [National Center for Educational Statistics](#) is a great teacher resource for understanding issues concerning student safety and bullying. [StopBullying.gov](#) is also offers helpful information for parents and educators.

### **The Parental Response to Relational Conflict or Bullying Behavior:**

Matthew 18:15 must be adhered to in regard to all relational conflict and response to relational conflict. The goal is to move our own behavior from conflictive (Proverbs 16:28) to loving (Proverbs 10:12).

1. Use the word *bullying* effectively and cautiously to ensure appropriate actions can be taken to address the behavior.
2. Follow the precepts of Matthew 18:15-17 and, first, go directly to the student's parent first—not in a combative or accusatory manner—just the two of you; the parent of the other student in order to discuss solutions for the relational conflict between the students. This *should* be done *after* informing and communicating with the teacher. An administrator can be consulted at this time. The school administrators need only to be brought into the solution process if the process arrives at a significant stalemate and stalls completely.
3. In every situation, avoid gossiping about the student, parents, teachers and administrators involved with you in attempting to find a solution to the relational conflict (Proverbs 16:28).

### **Student Response to Relational Conflict:**

Remember that children will ultimately imitate the behaviors they observe. So, all parents and adults involved in the solution process for a student relational conflict must model loving, positive behavior.

At BCCA the student involved in a relational conflict should be open to receiving and implementing the full benefit of being a child (Proverbs 22:6) and a student (Luke 6:40). So, every student involved in a relational conflict should:

1. Pray for guidance from Jesus in order to re-direct their behavior toward love (1 Corinthians 16:14).
2. Accept and put into action the correction and discipline from teachers and parents (Proverbs 15:31).
3. Seek forgiveness and apologize to the other person within the relational conflict (Matthew 5:7).
4. Never gossip (talk to peers about) during/before/after the solution to the relational conflict (Proverbs 16:28).
5. Receive God's Mercy given to you at every new day (Zephaniah 3:5b).
6. Exhibit true repentance meaning never returning to the relational conflict (Matthew 3:8).

### **The BCCA Response to Relational Conflict:**

As inferred above, the BCCA response to relational conflict will always include:

1. Prayer for guidance.
2. Use the word "bullying" cautiously and effectively.
3. Using instead the phrase "relational conflict" (all bullying, at its root, is a breakdown of relationship).
4. Strict adherence to the precepts of Matthew 18:15-17.
5. Always responding in love; never with a conflictive spirit.
6. Always going to the parents of both students first; following conversations with the students.
7. Communicating consistently with the teachers of the students.
8. Involving administrators only if the solution process among the teachers, parents and students completely stalls for a significant period of time.
9. Model loving, caring, merciful behavior to the students to positively imitate.
10. Biblical correction, discipline and re-direction.
11. Apologies resulting in forgiveness, mercy and reparation.
12. Never gossiping.
13. God's Mercy.
14. Seek true repentance and not returning to the relational conflict. \*
15. Acknowledge positive peer interactions after the incident as reinforcement and to support relationship healing.

*\*A return to relational conflict behavior* could result in more severe correction and discipline including, but not limited to: parent meetings, loss of privileges, suspensions or expulsion.