

POLICY #5

Bullying and Harassment Policy

Purpose

Great Plains Christian School (GPCS) is committed to providing a safe, respectful, Christ-centered learning and working environment for all students, employees, volunteers, and visitors. Every individual is expected to treat others with dignity, kindness, and respect. Bullying, harassment, intimidation, retaliation, and other disruptive behaviors are inconsistent with the mission and values of GPCS and will not be tolerated.

"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you." — Ephesians 4:32

"Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs." — Ephesians 4:29

Oklahoma Compliance Statement

Great Plains Christian School is committed to maintaining a safe, orderly, and respectful learning environment that is free from bullying, harassment, intimidation, and threatening behavior. This policy is intended to comply with applicable Oklahoma laws and regulations regarding bullying prevention and student safety.

GPCS will:

- Investigate reports of bullying and harassment promptly and appropriately.
- Provide annual bullying prevention training for employees and volunteers who have direct contact with students.
- Provide age-appropriate instruction and guidance to students regarding bullying prevention, respectful relationships, digital citizenship, and conflict resolution.
- Encourage students, parents, employees, and community members to report concerns related to bullying or harassment.
- Maintain procedures for documenting, investigating, and addressing reported incidents.
- Prohibit retaliation against any person who reports bullying or participates in an investigation in good faith.

The Superintendent/Principal shall be responsible for implementing and enforcing this policy and ensuring that bullying prevention efforts support the mission of Great Plains Christian School and the safety and well-being of all students.

Student Bullying Policy

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is intentional, repeated behavior that involves a real or perceived imbalance of power and is intended to cause physical, emotional, social, or psychological harm.

Bullying may include, but is not limited to:

- Physical aggression, hitting, kicking, pushing, or damaging property
- Verbal abuse, teasing, name-calling, threats, or intimidation
- Social or relational bullying, including exclusion, spreading rumors, or humiliation
- Written or electronic communication intended to harm, intimidate, or embarrass another person
- Cyberbullying through text messages, email, social media, or other electronic means

A single serious incident may be treated as bullying if the administration determines the conduct is severe enough to threaten the safety or well-being of a student.

Reporting Bullying

Students, parents, employees, and volunteers are encouraged to report bullying immediately.

Reports may be made:

- Directly to a teacher, counselor, or administrator
- In writing to the school office
- Through an anonymous reporting form available in the school office

All reports will be taken seriously and investigated promptly.

Investigation Procedures

When bullying is reported or observed:

1. Immediate steps will be taken to ensure student safety.
2. The alleged victim and witnesses will be interviewed.
3. The alleged offender will be interviewed.
4. Documentation of the incident and investigation will be completed.
5. Parents of the students involved may be notified.
6. Appropriate disciplinary and restorative actions will be determined by school administration.

Consequences of Bullying

Disciplinary consequences may vary based on the severity, frequency, and circumstances of the offense.

First Offense

- Parent notification
- Conference with student
- One-hour anti-bullying education session during recess or another designated time
- Written documentation placed in the student's file

Second Offense

- Parent notification
- One day of in-school suspension
- Completion of anti-bullying educational activities
- Parent conference with administration

Third Offense

- Three-day out-of-school suspension
- Completion of assigned anti-bullying and restorative assignments before returning to school
- Behavior contract may be required

Fourth Offense

- Recommendation for expulsion subject to administrative review

Severe Incidents

Acts involving physical injury, threats of violence, extortion, harassment, sexual misconduct, hate-based conduct, or other serious misconduct may result in immediate suspension or expulsion, regardless of prior disciplinary history.

Retaliation Prohibited

Retaliation against any individual who reports bullying, participates in an investigation, or serves as a witness is strictly prohibited and may result in disciplinary action.

Employee Harassment Policy

Harassment Prohibited

GPCS is committed to maintaining a workplace free from harassment, intimidation, and discrimination.

Harassment based on race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, genetic information, or any other protected status prohibited by law is not permitted. Harassment that is inconsistent with biblical principles of respect, dignity, and Christian conduct is likewise prohibited.

Harassment may include:

- Offensive jokes or comments
- Slurs or derogatory remarks
- Threatening behavior
- Unwelcome verbal, visual, written, or physical conduct
- Sexual harassment
- Repeated conduct that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive work environment

Reporting Harassment

Any employee who believes they have experienced or witnessed harassment should immediately report the matter to the Superintendent/Principal.

Employees are encouraged, when appropriate and safe, to inform the offending individual that the behavior is unwelcome and must stop. However, employees are not required to confront the offender before reporting harassment.

Investigation

All complaints will be investigated promptly, thoroughly, and as confidentially as possible.

The investigation may include interviews, review of documentation, and consultation with appropriate parties.

If harassment is substantiated, corrective action will be taken, which may include:

- Verbal or written warning
- Corrective action plan
- Suspension
- Termination of employment

Administrative leave, with or without pay, may be imposed during an investigation when deemed necessary.

Protection from Retaliation

No employee shall be subjected to retaliation for making a good-faith complaint, reporting concerns, or participating in an investigation.

Any employee who engages in retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of employment.

Professional Conduct Among Staff

Employees are expected to model Christ-like behavior and professionalism at all times.

Arguments, verbal altercations, hostile exchanges, threats, or physical confrontations between employees are prohibited.

Employees shall not engage in verbal or physical conflicts in the presence of students, parents, visitors, or other staff members.

Any staff member involved in a physical altercation on school property or during a school-sponsored activity may be subject to immediate termination.

Serious verbal misconduct, insubordination, threats, or behavior that disrupts the educational environment may also result in disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

False Reports

Knowingly making false accusations of bullying or harassment is a serious violation of school policy and may result in disciplinary action.

However, no disciplinary action will be taken against an individual who makes a report in good faith, even if the investigation does not substantiate the complaint.

Policy Review

The Superintendent/Principal shall be responsible for implementing and enforcing this policy and may revise procedures as necessary to protect the safety, well-being, and Christian character of the school community.