Rationale
The foundation of Catholic teaching about life and relationships is respect for the human person. "The equality of men rests essentially on their dignity as persons and the rights that flow from" (CCC 1935). For this reason a person who self-identifies as lesbian, homosexual, "bi-sexual", "transgendered" or "queer" is to be respected as a person* (CCC 2358).
The CISVA is committed to addressing all issues of bullying.

Policy
All CISVA schools will have a local policy to specifically address bullying in terms of definition and the roles, responsibilities and procedures for staff, students and other adults including parents.

Procedures

1. Develop an anti-bullying policy in consultation with key stakeholders in the school community which must include the following:
- reporting steps for students and staff dealing with incidents of bullying.
- student involvement in an anti-bullying strategy and in the development of the Student Code of Conduct.
- parent involvement through education on bullying at school assemblies and discussion of anti-bullying strategies at parent meetings.
- response protocols to address and correct behaviour as follows:
    a) develop a system to track bullying incidents at school, including "cyber-bullying".
    b) deal directly and promptly with bullying behaviour.
    c) stop the hurtful behaviours.
    d) support students who seek help.
    e) recognize the pattern and characteristics of bullying.
    f) inform and obtain parental collaboration and support in responding to the bullying behaviour.
    g) create a written disciplinary philosophy and practice.
    h) teach age appropriate social skills to develop healthy interpersonal relationships.
    i) determine consequences by age and maturity of individuals involved, the degree of harm done, incidences of past or continuing pattern(s) of behaviour, relationship between parties involved and context in which incident(s) occurred.
    j) ensure that a follow-up occurs, and assess whether the response to the bullying incident has led to the desired outcome.
    k) educate students on their responsibility to report, and take an active stand against bullying acts.
    l) increase supervision in identified high risk areas in the school building.

2. Create positive classroom environments thereby lowering psychological and physical aggression leading to prevention and control of bullying behavior. Such classrooms would have (Roland and Galloway 2002):
   a) student oriented methods of teaching;
   b) opportunities for achievement and success;
   c) positive teacher/student relationships;
   d) social commitment;
   e) clear expectations of behavior and personal responsibility;
   f) specific classroom lessons devoted to teaching acceptance and tolerance;
   g) positive teacher role models who display consistently appropriate behaviours and attitudes favoring a culture of respect.

3. Periodically review the Anti-bullying Policy and response protocols of the school based on staff, parent and student input.

Definition
Bullying is a pattern of repeated actions targeted at a person in a deliberate manner, intended to reduce the perceived power that person has over the situation or to harm that person. All acts of bullying have the characteristics of being dehumanizing, intimidating, humiliating, threatening, and evokes fear of physical harm or emotional distress in the person being targeted.

Bullying encompasses a wide range of behaviours within a relationship between a dominant and a less dominant person or group where:
- an imbalance of the perceived power is manifest through aggressive actions.
- physical or psychological (verbal and social) abuse occurs.
- negative interactions occur directly (face-to-face) or indirectly (gossip, exclusion).
- negative actions occur with intent to harm, which can include some or all of the following:
  i. physical actions such as punching, kicking, biting and initiating unwanted sexual touching can hurt the person's body, damage belongings or make the person feel badly about himself or herself;
  ii. verbal actions such as threats, name calling, insults, racial and cultural slurs or inappropriate jokes and/or comments. Also includes sexual harassment that is when a person or group hurts another person by taunting or discussing sensitive sexual issues, creating sexual rumours or messages, and making derogatory comments on a person's perceived sexual identity;
  iii. social exclusion such as spreading rumours, ignoring, gossiping, excluding.
- negative actions are repeated and/or the intensity or the duration of the actions

establishes the bully's dominance over the person. The person thus becomes a victim of injustice.

- information and communication technologies are used to physically threaten, verbally harass or socially exclude an individual or group.

* The Church's belief in the dignity of persons teaches us to discard labels and address true human needs – to be free from hatred, to be loved, to be supported by the Catholic school community in living the gospel life all are called to live (CISVA *Persons with Same-sex Attraction: Pastoral and Educational Considerations* 2008).

Reference: Safe, Caring and Orderly Schools – A Guide - BC Ministry of Education Focus on Bullying – A prevention program for Elementary School Communities – BC Ministry of Education BC Justice Institute Church's Teachings on Social Justice and Dignity of Persons Public Safety Canada – Bullying Prevention in Schools CISVA Persons with Same-sex Attraction: Pastoral and Educational Considerations (May 2008)	Approved: CISVA Board of Directors
	Date Approved: September 4, 2012
Cross-reference: Suspensions and Expulsions 426 Family Statement of Commitment 411	Date(s) Revised: December, 2012