

Fall 2017

Dear Parent/Guardian,

October was **Bullying Prevention Month** which provides us here at Nottingham with an opportunity to renew our efforts to meet this ongoing challenge. We know that children learn best when they feel safe, respected, and cared for. In our continuing effort to create a safe and positive learning environment, Nottingham implements a school wide bullying prevention and intervention program based primarily on materials from the Committee for Children. We invite you to go online to

<http://www.secondstep.org/bullying-prevention#resources-for-families-section>

During October administrators and the school librarian read books about bullying to all students. As the year unfolds classroom teachers will also read books on this important topic, especially about how to be a helpful bystander or “upstander.” The skill-based Second Step Bullying Unit is taught to all students by Dr. McCormac. The children are sent home with a Home Link handout that explains the lesson.

Nottingham staff are trained to take reports of bullying seriously as well as how to respond. Parents/Guardians can make a report to Dr. McCormac by using a confidential online form in the Counseling section of the Nottingham web page. In addition, classroom teachers, the school counselors and social worker, Mr. Koutsouftikis and I are trained to coach students involved in bullying incidents. Knights who bully and the child who is bullied are always coached separately. Parents/Guardians of both children are notified when this occurs.

Nottingham developed its own anti-bullying policy that is on the back of this letter. The policy contains our definition of bullying and the responsibilities staff, students, and families have in implementing a united front against bullying.

Our program uses children’s literature to present lessons about making and keeping friends and handling bullying. Friendship skills that reduce the risk of being bullied, including how to make friends, join group activities, and manage conflicts will be taught at an appropriate developmental level. Knights will gradually learn how to recognize, refuse, and report bullying when it happens to them or someone else. This program complements our CARES Code of Conduct that is part of the Responsive Classroom approach.

Family involvement is an important part of creating and maintaining a safe and positive school environment. Information about the *Steps to Respect* program will again be shared by teachers and Dr. McCormac throughout the year.

If you have any questions or concerns about our bullying prevention program, please contact us. Together, we can work to keep Nottingham a school that is safe, caring and respectful for all students.

Sincerely,

Mary Beth Pelosky
Bisbee
Principal

John Koutsouftikis
Assistant Principal

Mary Beth McCormac & Kelynn
Professional School Counselors