Bullying Policy

At Sacred Heart Parish School, we are committed to providing a safe, inclusive and supportive environment which promotes open communication, respect, fairness and positive relationships. We believe that the partnership between home and school is a very important part of ensuring that children are happy, secure and open to learning. As a school community we are committed to working together to meet the various needs of our school community. Central to achieving this is trust and open, effective communication between all members of the school community. As a Catholic school the Gospel values form the basis for a proactive approach to communication and problem solving.

Rationale
Each Catholic community, organisation and individual collaboratively engaged in the educational ministry of the Church in the Archdiocese of Brisbane is called to:

Teach
We promote faith in Jesus Christ, teaching and learning about Jesus, the gospel and the faith of the Catholic Christian community. Learning is lifelong, life giving and engages the whole person.

Challenge
Inspired by the Holy Spirit, we challenge those we educate to live in communion with God, others and the whole of creation in prayerful, sacramental, just, peaceful, inclusive and reconciling communities.

Transform
We educate for a transformed world in communion, by nurturing the gifts and potential of each person, enacting shared leadership, and exercising a preferential option for the poor and the marginalised.

Sacred Heart Vision/Mission
To develop Spirit, Mind and Body in Our Catholic Community. We achieve this by:

- Living Catholic Faith, Values and Traditions that acknowledge our heritage;
- Delivering a holistic education that supports the development of the lifelong learner;
- Developing positive and inclusive relationships based in Christian Values.

The Vision Statements for Catholic Education and Sacred Heart, underpin and guide the development and implementation of this policy.
Policy Statement
Student wellbeing and behaviour management has to be based on clear rules, forgiveness, the need and opportunity to say sorry, the realisation that we make choices – good and bad and that there are consequences of, and for, those choices and that the student gets another chance.

Serious Issues
Physical behaviour against another, sexual harassment, bullying and racial slurs all require investigation and referral to Admin immediately.

Bullying
Our policy recognises the fact that bullying and harassment can undermine our school community and may have long term effects for individuals. We aim to provide a safe, inclusive, caring, supportive and ordered learning environment free from bullying, harassment and violence. Bullying, including cyber bullying, harassment and violence, is not acceptable in this school, and will be dealt with seriously and promptly.

Purpose
The purpose of this policy is to:

- Create an environment in which:
  - Teachers can exercise their right to teach;
  - Students can exercise their right to learn without interruption;
  - Where parents rights to expect a quality education for their children may be fulfilled.
- Assist students to make responsible choices about their behaviour and to accept the consequences of those choices.
- Implement an approach to behavioural problems which:
  - Is consistent throughout the school;
  - Understood by the total school community and is consistent with the school’s Mission and Vision statements.
- Create a positive, respectful climate where students, teachers and parents can work together to help students solve their problems in a manner which will enhance self-esteem and promote responsible behaviour choices.
- Provide guidelines to ensure appropriate and equitable treatment of students.

Scope
The parents/carers, students and school staff each have specific responsibilities to ensure student welfare remains a priority.
Definitions

Duty of Care
- Schools have a legal responsibility to provide a safe environment and adequate supervision.

Bullying
- Bullying is defined as anything that a person does or says repeatedly and purposefully because he or she knows it will upset or hurt another person. This may be by gesture, verbal or physical harassment. The feelings of the victim are the key indicator of the existence of bullying or harassment. The intentions of the bully do not determine whether bullying exists. Bullying is repeated behaviour; it can involve a power imbalance and can take many forms.

Definition of Harassment
- Harassment is behaviour that targets an individual or group due to their identity, race, culture or ethnic origin, religion, physical characteristics gender, sexual orientation, parenting or economic status, age, ability or disability and that offends, humiliates, intimidates or creates a hostile environment. Harassment may be an ongoing pattern of behaviour, or it may be a single act.

Definition of Discrimination
- Discrimination occurs when people are treated less favourably than others because of their race, culture or ethnic origin, religion, physical characteristics, gender sexual orientation, marital, parenting or economic status, age, ability or disability. Discrimination is often ongoing and commonly involves exclusion or rejection.

Definition of Violence
- Violence is the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against another person(s) that results in psychological harm, injury or in some cases death. Violence may involve provoked or unprovoked acts and can be a single incident, a random act or can occur over time.

Definition of Sexual Harassment
- Sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual conduct which makes a person (male or female, of the same or opposite gender, same-sex attracted, bisexual or transgender) feel offended, humiliated and/or intimidated, where that reaction to the conduct is reasonable in the circumstances. Sexual harassment can be a single incident, repeated or continuous, direct or indirect, and take various forms.

Example of Bullying and Harassment Include (but are not limited to):
- Physical – hitting, pushing, touching, grabbing, looks, stares, facial expressions, gestures, spitting, taking or damaging property.
- Verbal or Written – spoken or written insults, threats, suggestive comments, name calling, unfair criticism, spreading rumours.
- Indirect – excluding others from the game or group, spreading stories about others, spreading untrue stories about others.
- Cyber – using email, voice or text messaging, social networking sites, photographic and video images.
- Graffiti – using pictures, tags or words.
- Social – forming groups to leave out, ignore and disrespect, influencing, encouraging or organising someone else to be involved in any type of bullying or harassment.
- Sexual – unwanted sexual advances, other unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature; types of bullying and harassment such as that described above that is based on a person’s sexuality or sexual orientation, abuse, comments, including name calling that suggests something about a person’s sexuality or sexual orientation.

Suspension
- Withdrawal from classroom or playground and normally used, in extreme cases, as a precursor to expulsion.

Expulsion
- Withdrawal from school.