Sacred Heart School Preventing and Responding to Student Bullying and Harassment Procedure

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to describe Sacred Heart School's approach to preventing and responding to student bullying and harassment.

This procedure must be read in conjunction with: *Preventing and Responding to Student Bullying and Harassment Policy; Student Behaviour Support Policy and Procedure; Student, Parent and Guardian Complaints Management Policy and Procedure* and *Brisbane Catholic Education Code of Conduct*.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 General requirements

Sacred Heart School's processes for preventing and responding to student bullying and harassment are recorded in the school's Student Behaviour Support Plan (SBS Plan) in addtion to this procedure.

School employees record incidents of student bullying and harassment in the Engage Student Support System (Engage). Allegations of bullying or harassing behaviours that appear to involve illegal activities such as violence, threats, intimidation, and inciting violence must be reported to the Principal. Additionally, consideration must be given BCE Student Protection Processes and obligations to make reports to statutory agencies.

2.2 Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Principal	• document the school's responses to allegations of student bullying and harassment in the school's SBS Plan • ensure incidents are recorded in Engage • ensure that school employees are teaching students to identify, react, report, and respond to bullying and harassment at school and online • ensure allegations about student bullying and harassment are managed through the school's SBS Plan and not through the school's complaints processes • ensure students, parents and guardians are made aware of the school's process to report student bullying and harassment
School employees	• respond to incidents in accordance with the school's SBS Plan • report incidents to the Principal (or delegate) • record incidents in Engage • teach students to identify, react, report and respond to bullying and harassment at school and online
Parents, Carers and Guardians	• reporting incidents to the classroom teacher or other school employee • working respectfully with school employees to resolve issues • supporting their child/ren to become responsible citizens and to develop respectful relationship behaviours, including online
Students	• identify, react, report and respond to bullying and harassment at school and online • report incidents of bullying to the classroom teacher or other school employee

3. PROCEDURE

The purpose of this section of the procedure is to describe our approach to positive, proactive practices in support of student behaviour and wellbeing in relation to the prevention, intervention and responses to student bullying and harassment.

Sacred Heart School uses the PB4L (Positive Behaviour for Learning) Framework and the Australian Education Authorities resource Bullying NoWay! to assist our students, staff and school community to understand, teach, prevent and respond to bullying and harassment.

3.1 Understanding Bullying and Harassment

Each year all staff participate in professional learning about appropriate terminology, signs of bullying, types of bullying and research about bullying and harassment. The PB4L Effective Classroom Practices and Responses professional learning supports teachers with practical skills and strategies to improve planning for teaching and learning, classroom management and, building and sustaining positive relationships with students. Restorative approaches and collaborative problem solving are supportive ways to respond to student conflict, harassment and bullying in schools implemented by teachers in partnership with school leadership and families.

3.2 Teaching about Bullying and Harassment

Teachers use the approved curriculum (ACARA – including the personal and social capabilities and the BCE Religious Education Curriculum) to embed the teaching of healthy relationships and positive behaviours in relation to bullying and harassing behaviours.

3.3 Responding to Bullying and Harassment

3.3.1 Staff Procedures

All staff must take all reports of bullying and harassment seriously and respond with a school team process.

- **Listen** carefully and calmly, and document what the student tells you. Take the time to clarify with the student who has reported the incident that you have all the facts, including if there are immediate safety risks and let the student know how you will address these.
- **Collect** information, document and evaluate, including examples from the student/s, staff and bystanders involved.
- **Contact** appropriate school personnel – Assistant Principal Administration, Assistant Principal Religious Education or Principal. Contact parent/guardian to inform them of the incident, give details of the school's immediate response, and how the incident will be followed up. Always maintain confidentiality and privacy.
- **Determine** if this is an incident of bullying or harassment. If the incident does not meet the criteria for bullying or harassment, it can be recorded as a pastoral note in the Engage Student Support System.
- **Record** the incident either as Minor-Teasing or Major-Bullying/Harassment and complete the bullying record in the Engage Student Support System in a timely manner.
- **Respond** to the incident, following the school's student behaviour support plan. Where possible, schools should work towards a positive outcome and relationships are restored. Formal sanctions could be part of this response.
- **Plan** the response with the student/s and their families to provide support, teaching and strategies.
- **Follow-up** and gather any additional information, including data analysis on Engage Student Support System. Set a date for follow up review and monitoring.

3.3.2   Student Procedures

If someone is bullying you, be strong and assertive. These strategies will help you deal with someone who is bullying you.

- **Ignore the bully.** If you can, try your best to ignore the bully's threats. Pretend you don't hear them and walk away quickly to a place of safety. Bullies want a big reaction to their teasing and meanness. Acting as if you don't notice and don't care is like giving no reaction at all, and this might stop a bully's behaviour. Walk tall and straight in a confident way, rather than hunched over, looking scared or uncertain.

- **Stand up for yourself.** Pretend to feel really brave and confident. Tell the bully "No! Stop it!" in a loud voice. Then walk away. Students also can stand up for each other by telling a bully to stop teasing or scaring someone else and then walking away together. If a bully wants you to do something you don't want to do, say "no!" and walk away. If you do what a bully says to do, the mean student is more likely to keep bullying you. Bullies tend to pick on people who don't stick up for themselves. Practise looking in a mirror and saying in a loud voice, "No" or "Leave me alone", or "I do not like what you are saying or doing". Look the bully straight in the eye. Don't cower. A firm rebuff often deters a bully looking for signs of weakness.

- **Don't bully back.** Don't hit, kick, or push back to deal with someone bullying you or your friends. Fighting back just satisfies a bully, and it's dangerous, too, because someone could get hurt. You're also likely to get in trouble. It's best to stay with others, stay safe, and get help from an adult. Walk away from bullying quickly and confidently. Don't fight to keep possession of anything, e.g. toys, sporting equipment.

- **Tell an adult.** If you are being bullied, it's very important to tell an adult. Find someone you trust and talk about what is happening to you. Teachers, the principal, parents, and office staff at school can all help to stop bullying. Sometimes bullies stop as soon as a teacher finds out because they're afraid that parents will punish them. This is not "telling on" or "dobbing on" someone who has done something small — bullying is wrong, and it helps if everyone who gets bullied or sees someone being bullied speaks up.

3.3.3   Parents, Carers and Guardian Procedures

- **Watch out** for signs which might suggest that your child is being bullied i.e.
    - sudden reluctance to go to school
    - truancy – skipping school
    - taking a longer route home from or to school
    - falling behind in class
    - nightmares, bed-wetting, crying themselves to sleep
    - money or toys going missing at home
- **Report incidents** to the classroom teacher or other school employee.
- **Work respectfully** with school employees to resolve issues.
- **Support your child/ren** to become responsible citizens and to develop respectful relationship behaviours, including online.

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3

3.4 Preventing Bullying and Harassment

Sacred Heart School plans for a safe, supportive and inclusive school to prevent bullying and harassment through several ways:

- Student assemblies: Student bullying and student behaviour expectations will be discussed and information presented to promote a positive school culture where bullying is not accepted.
- Staff communication and professional learning: Staff will be supported with professional learning that provides evidence-based ways to encourage and teach positive social and emotional wellbeing and discourage, prevent, identify, and respond effectively to student bullying behaviour.
- School staff have access to foundational training about recognising and effectively responding to bullying, including cyberbullying.
- New and casual staff will be informed about our school's approaches and strategies to prevent and respond to student bullying behavior.
- Communication with parents: Our school will provide information to parents to help promote a positive school culture where bullying is unacceptable and increase parents and carers' understanding of how our school addresses all forms of bullying behaviour.
- Whole school programs to prevent and address bullying.

3.5 Bystander Behaviour

Bullying is a difficult problem that only gets worse when it is ignored. Research has demonstrated that bystanders play a significant role in reducing bullying. Students should be educated on the impact of 'Bystander Behaviour' in the contributions to bullying.

- Bystanders are present most of the time (85%), where adults are rarely present.
- Most young people feel uncomfortable, but very few know what to do to stop it from happening.
- Bullying behaviour is reinforced where people watch but do nothing.
- When bystanders do intervene, the bullying is more likely to stop most of the time quickly.

3.6 Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is treated at Sacred Heart School with the same level of seriousness as direct bullying.

It is important for students, parents and staff to know that BCE principals have the authority to take disciplinary action to address student behaviours that occur outside of school hours or school grounds. This includes cyberbullying. In addition, parents and students who have concerns about cyberbullying incidents occurring outside of school hours should immediately seek assistance through the Office of the e-Safety Commissioner or the Queensland Police Service.

4. PERFORMANCE

A detailed review of the procedure is required every two years, with a high-level check performed annually.

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5. REFERENCES AND DEFINITIONS

5.1 References
- Anti-Discrimination Act 1991
- BCE Student Protection Processes
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (C'th)
- Education (General Provisions) Act 2006
- Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Act 2001
- Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2017
- Preventing and Responding to Student Bullying and Harassment policy
- Student Behaviour Support policy and procedure
- Student Diversity and Inclusion policy
- Student, Parent and Guardian Complaints Management policy and procedure
- Student Protection policy
- Student Wellbeing policy
- Students with Disability policy
- Telecommunications Act 1997 (C'th).

5.2 Definitions

Aggression	Words or actions (both overt and covert) that are directed towards another and intended to harm, distress, coerce or cause fear.
Bullying	**Definition for employees, parents and guardians:** Bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons. Cyber bullying refers to bullying through information and communication technologies. Conflict or fights between equals and single incidents are not defined as bullying. Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved including bystanders. **Definition for younger students:** Bullying is when someone targets another child again and again and tries to make them feel bad. They say or do many mean and hurtful things, make fun of them a lot, try to stop them from joining in or make others not like them. Although it isn't nice if someone says or does something mean to someone else, we don't necessarily call that bullying. It also isn't bullying if children of the same age have a one-off argument. **Definition for older students:** Bullying is when one student (or a group) targets another student again and again to upset or hurt them. They might hurt them physically, try to socially isolate them or say and do many mean or humiliating things to them. Although it's neither respectful nor acceptable if someone behaves in a mean or aggressive way on one occasion, it isn't considered bullying. A fight or disagreement between students of equal power or status isn't considered bullying. What bullying is not:

	There are also some behaviours, which, although they might be unpleasant or distressing, are not bullying: • mutual conflict, which involves a disagreement, but not an imbalance of power. Unresolved mutual conflict can develop into bullying if one of the parties targets the other repeatedly in retaliation • single episode acts of nastiness or physical aggression, or aggression directed towards many different people, is not bullying unless it becomes a pattern of behaviours • social rejection or dislike is not bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.
Bystander	A person who sees, or knows about, bullying or harassment or that is happening to another person.
Conflict	Mutual disagreement, argument or dispute between people where no one has a significant power advantage, and both feel equally aggrieved. Conflict is different to bullying because there is always an imbalance of power in bullying. However, poorly resolved conflict situations, especially those involving friendship break-ups or romantic break-ups sometimes lead to either aggression or bullying. Conflict can be a precursor to bullying where there are instances of repeated conflict and where the balance of power changes.
Covert bullying	A subtle type of non-physical bullying which usually isn't easily seen by others and is conducted out of sight of, and often unacknowledged by, adults. Covert bullying behaviours mostly inflict harm by damaging another's social reputation, peer relationships and self-esteem. Covert bullying can be carried out in a range of ways (e.g. spreading rumours, encouraging a third party to engage in bullying behaviour, conducting a malicious social exclusion campaign and/or through the use of internet or mobile phone technologies).
Cyberbullying	Bullying carried out through the internet and mobile devices.
Cybersafety	Cybersafety refers to online behaviours that are safe, respectful, and responsible, and to strategies to reduce risks online, e.g. using high privacy settings.
Cyber exploitation	Use of the internet or mobile phone technologies to take advantage of another. Examples include asking others to send sexually explicit photographs of themselves or publishing such images; stealing someone's identity and impersonating them e.g. to subscribe to services or purchase goods and services in their name, using unscrupulous sales tactics e.g. pop-ups.
Cyber harassment	A single episode of aggression e.g. an insult, threat, nasty denigrating comment, against a specific student carried out through the internet or mobile phone technologies.
Digital citizenship	There are 9 elements in digital citizenship: Access; Commerce; Communication; Literacy; Etiquette; Law; Rights and Responsibilities; Health and Wellness and Security (refer to the Australian Curriculum ICT Capability at ACARA).
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.
E-Crimes	Illegal actions that are carried out using the internet or mobile phone technology, including child exploitation material, fraud, impersonation or identity theft, or sending words or images that cause offence, distress, menace or threaten. Most of these are crimes under Australian federal law but some are also (or only) crimes under some Australian state laws. It is important that students understand

	that the production or distribution (including texting and posting) of lewd images of themselves or others may constitute child exploitation material with a potential criminal penalty and that some of these activities can be construed as bullying.
Engage Student Support System	BCE's central repository of student behaviour support data, including bullying, drug-related incidents and weapons in school.
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; marital, 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. It may be directed randomly or towards the same person. It may be intentional or unintentional i.e. words or actions that offend and distress one person may be genuinely regarded by the person doing them as minor or harmless. Harassment is unacceptable and needs to be addressed as part of creating a safe school, but it would not be considered bullying if any one or more of the following three features were present: • it occurred only once and was not part of a repeated pattern • it (genuinely) was not intended to offend, demean, annoy, alarm or abuse • it was not directed towards the same person/s each time.
Method of shared concern	The method of shared concern is a response to bullying involving structured interviews of those who are suspected of bullying other students to resolve the situation.
Online hate websites/Bash boards	Online sites used to bully another student that contain insulting and contemptuous remarks or images and encourage others to sign on and indicate their hatred of a nominated person and add more disparaging comments.
Restorative Strategies	Strategies which focus on restoring relationships, repairing harm and practices learning perspective-taking and social responsibility.
Sexting	Sending of sexually explicit messages or photographs of oneself or others, using mobile phone technology either by request or spontaneously. It can also include posting of this material online. A student's current, or potential romantic partner, may be the source of a request to engage in sexting. Such photos may be sent (without permission) to many other people or used to coerce or blackmail after a relationship break-up.
Supportive bystander behaviour	Actions and/or words that are intended to support someone who is being attacked, abused or bullied.