Anti-Bullying Policy - Students

Rationale

St Gregory the Great Catholic Primary School commits to providing a safe and nurturing culture for all children and young people in Catholic schools and will comply with the Ministerial Order No. 870-*Child Safe Standards - Managing the risk of child abuse in schools*

St Gregory the Great Catholic Primary School recognises the importance of demonstrating respect for the dignity of each person and of creating an environment where a sense of belonging for all is experienced.

The school will provide a safe, inclusive, supportive and ordered 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 expediently. The school will work with the school community and other services and agencies to support its students in being responsible and productive members of this community.

DEFINITIONS:

BULLYING
Definition for teachers, Parents and Carers

Bullying is a repeated pattern of 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. Cyberbullying refers to bullying through information and communication technologies. Conflicts 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.

For use with younger students

Bullying is when someone keeps picking on 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 is not nice if someone says or does something mean to someone else, we do not necessarily call that bullying. It also is not bullying if children have a one-off argument.

For use with older students

Bullying is when one student (or a group) keeps picking on 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 is neither respectful nor acceptable if someone behaves in a mean or aggressive way on one occasion, it is not bullying. A fight or disagreement between students of equal power or status is not bullying.

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Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is a term used to describe bullying that is carried out through digital technologies. It is often combined with off-line bullying. It may include a combination of behaviours such as pranking (i.e. hang up calls) sending insulting text messages, publishing someone's private information, creating hate sites or implementing social exclusion campaigns in social networking site uses technology to run a multi-steps. It is also cyberbullying when a student(s), uses technology to run a multi-step campaign to bully another student, e.g. setting another student up to be assaulted, video-recording their humiliation, posting the video-recording online and then sending the website address to others.

Discrimination

Discrimination occurs when people are treated less favorably 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.

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(s). 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:
1. It occurred only once and was not part of a repeated pattern
2. It (genuinely) was not intended to offend, demean , annoy, alarm or abuse
3. It was not directed towards the same person(s) each time

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is any unwanted, unwelcome or uninvited behaviour of a sexual nature that makes a person feel humiliated, intimidated or offended. Sexual harassment can take many different forms and may include physical contact, verbal comments, jokes, propositions, the display of offensive material or other behaviour that creates a hostile environment. (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2010)

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Violence

Violence is the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against another person(s) that results in physical 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.

Reporting of a bullying incident

How is bullying reported?
Students are reluctant to report incidents of bullying so, when a student, parent, teacher or even a member of the public reports an incident, this should be taken seriously.

Who to report to?
Parents and students may choose to report incidents of bullying, including cyber bullying, to their class teacher in the first instance and, if the incident is serious or unresolved, to the school counsellor, principal or deputy/assistant principal, or to someone on the school's staff they have confidence in. It is difficult for the school to follow up on an incident if it is unaware of it and, therefore, reporting of incidents should be made easy and encouraged.

How to report?
Parents and students may find it helpful to write down the details of the incident as a first step. A face-to-face discussion is usually the best way of reporting an incident and, if they are dissatisfied with the outcome, they can follow up with a written statement with the request for a further meeting. If seriously concerned about the manner in which the school is dealing with an incident, a parent can contact his/her local Regional Office for support.

When to report?
Reporting of an incident should occur as soon after the incident as possible. This gives the school the best opportunity to follow up the incident and intervene.

Responsibilities of principals, staff, students and parents
The principal will decrease the likelihood of bullying and violence in the school if he/she:

- develops, implements and reviews regularly the school's anti-bullying policy (ie schools are encouraged to review annually and to involve staff, parents and students)
- surveys regularly all or a random selection of students, parents and teachers, in line with the review schedule for the school's policy
- provides to the Governing Council updates each term in relation to school bullying data and trends and any anti-bullying programs/initiatives in place or being considered and includes the topic of bullying behaviour as a council meeting agenda item at least once per term

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- ensures that new staff and new students and their families are aware of the school community's negotiated anti-bullying policy and the decision-making procedures open to them if they wish to influence school practice
- ensures the inclusion, as part of the school's enrolment process, a requirement for parents and/or students to annually acknowledge/agree to the school's Student Code of Conduct
- behavioural expectations, with follow up at least in Years 6 and 10
- manages the incidents of bullying in a way that is consistent with the DECD School Discipline Policy, Child Safety Standards and Respectful Relationship Program
- provides in-service training and development to counsellors and other key staff in effective strategies in managing bullying, such as in the Six Methods of Intervention as described in 'Bullying in schools: Six methods of intervention'
- ensures ongoing training and development of teachers, induction of students and the provision of information to parents
- manages a whole-school-change approach to ensure the Keeping Safe child protection Daniel Morcombe curriculum is implemented in all year levels
- ensures that all parents have access to the school's anti-bullying policy, the DECD *Bullying and harassment at school: Advice for parents and caregivers* leaflet, and information about the Keeping Safe child protection curriculum and related documents, including providing them on the school's website need to relate to Child Safety Standards and Respectful Relationships
- have access to the reports to Governing Council each term, via the newsletter and on the school's website
- are aware of their rights to advocacy and of avenues open to them should they have grievances relating to the school's management of an incident of bullying.
- enforces a universal whole school approach to bullying
- creates awareness through assemblies, focus days, student voice, and student owned plans and activities (SRC)
- encourages the use of effective classroom management and classroom rules (positive tense)
- supports and provides parenting workshops/sessions

School staff members will decrease the likelihood of bullying and violence in the school if they:

- develop and foster positive relationships with students and families
- communicate and interact effectively with students and engage in cooperative problem-solving relationships to address issues of bullying
- participate in developing, implementing and reviewing the school's anti-bullying policy, curriculum and in-service offerings, and the procedures for managing incidents of bullying
- critically reflect on practice and develop the knowledge and skills needed to manage incidents of bullying successfully
- establish, maintain, make explicit and model the school's expectations relating to bullying
- participate in training and development related to decreasing bullying in schools
- support students to be effective bystanders.

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Parents will support the school in maintaining a safe and supportive environment if they:
- keep the school informed of concerns about behaviour, their children's health issues or other matters of relevance
- communicate in a respectful manner with the school staff about issues of concern soon after these concerns arise

Students will support the school in maintaining a safe and supportive environment if they:
- are respectful towards other students, staff and members of the school community
- participate in sessions regarding the school's anti-bullying policy, the Keeping Safe child protection and Daniel Morcombe curriculums, Child Safety Standards, Resilience Rights and Respectful Relationships, being an effective bystander, and other sessions regarding behavioural expectations
- communicate with an appropriate adult if bullied or harassed or if they are aware that someone else is being bullied or harassed
- learn to be an effective bystander, so that bullying and harassment are discouraged through peer influence.

HOW TO RECOGNISE A STUDENT BEING BULLIED:

Students who are being bullied or harassed may not talk about it with their teachers, friends or with the school's counsellors. They may be afraid that it will only make things worse or they may feel that it is wrong to 'tell tales' or when previous reporting has resulted in inadequate action.

This is why parents and teachers have an important part to play in helping the school and the students deal with bullying. A change in behaviour in students may be a signal that they are being bullied or they have some other concerns.

Signs
Some signs that a student is being bullied may be:

- unexplained cuts, bruises or scratches
- damaged or ripped clothing
- vague headaches or stomach aches
- refusal to go to school
- asking for extra pocket money or food
- tearfulness, anxiety or difficulty sleeping
- 'hiding' information on mobile phones, emails or in comments on their social networking pages.
- Socially isolated with no friends/few friends
- Angry outbursts
- Over sensitivity

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- Lack of trust in others
- Lack of assertiveness
- Distressed
- Anxious
- Depressed
- Inability to concentrate
- Grades falling
- Not optimistic/hopeful

ACTIONS:

Some flexibility is needed in how incidents are tackled, depending on, for example, the nature, severity and extent of the bullying. When sanctions are applied, they should be appropriate to the severity of the offence. In extreme cases, under the Regulations pursuant to the Education Act, principals can suspend or exclude students from attendance at school if they:

> … *act in a manner that threatens the safety or wellbeing of a student or member of staff of, or other person associated with the school (including by sexually harassing, racially vilifying, verbally abusing or bullying that person).*

Principals can use these Regulations for incidents that occur off-site and/or out of school hours if another student's safety or wellbeing has been threatened. Therefore, these Regulations can be used for incidents of cyber bullying or violence (see Circular to Principals May 2009).

Procedure
- Circle time
- Restorative Practices – discussion with those involved
- Depending on the nature/severity of incident inform/meet with parents
- Consequences to be put in place depending on the nature of the incident
- Safety of all students paramount
- If necessary shadowing of student by staff during recess and lunch times
- Removal of student from playground are if necessary agreement in conjunction with parents for safety/consequence
- follow up with victim/s and perpetrator/s on regular intervals
- inform principal – staff if necessary
- all incidents /discussions/ meetings to be recorded on appropriate templates
- collaboration with parents in addressing the issue of bullying
- collaboration with parents of action to be taken
- offer counselling to victim/s or/and perpetrator/s
- social skills sessions

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PREVENTION, COPING AND INTERVENTION STRATEGIES:
- *Trust* - *that the world is safe and that there are caring people to help them.*
- *Belief* - *in their ability to do things for themselves and achieve their goals.*
- *Feeling good* - *about themselves and feeling valued for who they are by their parents and carers.*
- *Optimism* - *that things generally turn out well.*
- *Regulation* - *Ability to manage their feelings, thoughts and behaviours. (Kidsmatter)*

Use of resources and tools:
- Values through RE
- Vision Statement
- Mission Statement
- Values for Australian Schooling
- Restorative Practices
- Problem Solving Wheel
- Circle Time
- Social Skills Groups
- Counsellor

Resilience is the ability to cope with life's ups and downs. Children's resilience is enhanced when they:

- *are loved by someone unconditionally*
- *have an older person outside the home they can talk to about problems and feelings*
- *are praised for doing things on their own and striving to achieve*
- *can count on their family being there when needed*
- *know someone they want to be like*
- *believe things will turn out all right*
- *have a sense of a power greater than themselves*
- *are willing to try new things*
- *feel that what they do makes a difference in how things turn out*
- *like themselves*
- *can focus on a task and stay with it*
- *have a sense of humour*
- *make goals and plans, both short and longer term. (Kidsmatter)*

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT:

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The following will be available to teachers, parents and students:

- New teachers to attend Restorative Practices professional learning training sessions at CEM
- RP team to meet to discuss ongoing steps to update and keep RP ongoing
- Teachers to use RP language with students - explicit teaching
- Teachers to receive RP updates and training via staff meetings on a regular basis
- Cyberbullying information sessions for teachers – staff meetings and PLTs
  - Sessions for parents – information evening
  - Sessions for students – ICT and classroom
- ACMA – cyberbullying activities online
- Circle Time
- Alannah and Madeline Foundation - Better Buddy program
- Alannah and Madeline Foundation - eSmart school

DISTRIBUTION LIST:

Parents/community/students will be notified via newsletter, information nights and the school website that this policy is available from the school office upon request.

Teachers will be given a copy of the policy to read and with which to become familiar. The policy can also be accessed on the school's server via the Resources folder. Staff will go through the policy during an allocated staff meeting. New staff will go through the policy with their mentor teacher. Emergency teachers will be given a copy of the policy to read when registering with the school.

The policy will be presented to the Parish Board for review and discussion. It will also be presented to any external providers working within the school e.g. Camp Australia (Out of School Hours); Metro Music; Hot Shots Tennis; Wise Ones

REVIEW DATE:

Evaluation:

This policy will be reviewed annually as part of the school's four-year review cycle.

Date of review	Term 4 2019
Developed by	St. Gregory the Great Catholic Primary Staff and Education Board
Date of next review	Term 4 2020

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DOCUMENTED PROCESSES*:*
- Parent contact form
- PLP – Behaviour Management on needs basis
- Student Incident Form
- Restorative Practices reflection sheet
- Acceptable Use Agreement – internet – students; staff
- Mandatory Reporting eModule
- Records kept in files in Principal's Office

FURTHER INFORMATION:

http://www.curriculum.edu.au/values/val_national_framework_nine_values,14515.html

http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers/Pages/prinprevent.aspx

http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/safety/Pages/bullying.aspx

https://www.kidsmatter.edu.au/mental-health-matters/bullying

http://resilienceresearch.org/research/projects/international-resilience

http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers/Pages/what.aspx

http//docs.education.gov.au/system/files/doc/other/national_safe_schools_framework.pdf

State of Victoria, Department of Education and Training 2016, Child Safe Standards – Managing the Risk of Child Abuse in Schools Ministerial Order No. 870,