PROCEDURE: Preventing and Responding to Student Bullying and Harassment

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this procedure is to describe Brisbane Catholic Education's (BCE) 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 Catholic Education Archdiocese of Brisbane Code of Conduct.

2. RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 General requirements

Principals must document their school's processes for preventing and responding to student bullying and harassment in the school's Student Behaviour Support Plan (SBS Plan).

School staff must 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, recorded in Engage. Additionally, consideration must be given BCE Student Protection Processes and obligations to make reports to statutory agencies.

Schools must manage allegations about student bullying and harassment using the processes outlined in the school SBS Plan and informed by data collected in Engage. The school's formal complaints procedure is not to be used when managing allegations about student bullying and harassment.

2.2 Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Principal (or delegate)	• 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 and parents or guardians are made aware of the school's process to report student bullying and harassment • review of the school's SBS Plan every two (2) years with a high-level check performed annually • create and complete records on the Bullying/Harassment Register • monitor and analyse the Bullying/Harassment Register.

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Role	Responsibilities
School employee	• respond to incidents in accordance with the school's SBS Plan • report incidents to the Principal • record incidents in Engage • teach students to identify, react, report and respond to bullying and harassment at school and online.
BCEO employees	• re-direct allegations about student bullying and harassment to the school.

3. PROCEDURE

3.1 Document processes

School SBS Plans must include:

- preventative strategies and approaches: how the school will cultivate safe and supportive school environment; the school's proactive and preventative strategies for staff, students, parents and guardians to learn about bullying and harassment, and to develop productive behaviours including identifying, reporting and prevention

- responses to bullying and harassment: an outline of suggested interventions and responses for staff, students, parents and guardians

- resources: lists of resources and support available in the school to implement preventative approaches, early intervention strategies and responses to student bullying and harassment

- curriculum: support the aims of Religious Education, ACARA General Capabilities, Health and Physical Education and Technologies curricula

- goals: how staff, students, parents and guardians can model and promote appropriate positive relationships and behaviours and why the school will not tolerate student bullying and harassment

- school processes: that the school manages allegations of student bullying and harassment through the processes outlined in the school SBS Plan, and not through the school's complaints process; how a student, family or guardian can report an incident.

3.2 Engage Student Support System

Schools must ensure that all reported incidents of student bullying and harassment are recorded in Engage. This includes incidents identified in complaints from students, families and guardians.

Engage data is one source of evidence schools can use to plan and monitor the school's responses. The school SBS Plan must be updated whenever evidence suggests a change is required to ensure that the school's responses to student bullying and harassment are working effectively to reduce bullying and harassment incidents in the school.

For each incident of bullying and harassment, a record must be created and completed by the Principal (or delegate) and entered into the Bullying/Harassment Register in Engage.

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3.3 Professional learning

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.

3.4 Complaints

School must manage incidents of student bullying and harassment using the processes outlined in the school SBS Plan.

Schools are not required to use the school's complaints processes for student bullying and harassment allegations. Schools are not required to record bullying and harassment allegations in the school complaints register.

3.5 Student, parent and guardian responsibilities

Schools must ensure that students, families and guardians understand their roles and responsibilities in preventing, intervening, and responding to student bullying and harassment, including:

- reporting incidents to the classroom teacher or other school staff
- working respectfully with school staff to resolve issues
- supporting their child/ren to become responsible citizens and to develop respectful relationship behaviours, including online.

3.6 Harassment and victimisation of students with disability

Under the Disability Standards for Education 2005, BCE schools must prevent harassment and victimisation of students with disability and respond appropriately to complaints submitted by a student with disability or their associate.

School employees must proactively prevent harassment and victimisation of students with disability or a student with an associate with a disability by following the school's Student Behaviour Support Plan and by implementing this procedure.

Instances of reported harassment and/or victimisation must be managed in the same way as a record of student bullying i.e., the instance is recorded in the Bullying and Harassment Register in Engage by a relevant, approved school employee.

Complaints about school processes related to the handling of an instance of harassment and/or victimisation must be managed under the Student, Parent, and Guardian Complaints Management policy and procedure.

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4. PERFORMANCE

Compliance monitoring roles and responsibilities are as follows:

Role	Compliance responsibilities
Senior Manager – Inclusive Education and Student Wellbeing	• record and report frequent and serious non-compliance with this procedure to the Head of Education for remedial action.

5. REFERENCES AND DEFINITIONS

5.1 References

- Anti-Discrimination Act 1991
- BCE Student Protection Processes
- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (C'th)
- Disability Standards for Education 2005
- 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
- Student with Disability policy
- Telecomunications 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 staff, 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.

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Bullying	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 using 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.

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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 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 practices	Strategies which focus on restoring relationships, repairing harm and 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.
Victimisation	Victimisation occurs when the student with disability (or their associate) is treated less favourably because they complained, or indicated they may complain, about the treatment they receive due to their disability.

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