



Sacred Heart School, Petone

## **Procedure for Dealing with Incidents of Bullying**

Sacred Heart is a Catholic school and therefore all incidents of Bullying will be dealt with in keeping with our school's Special Character and the school values. The dignity of each person involved must be respected at all times. Where appropriate assistance from outside agencies will be sought from Catholic agencies.

### **Detecting Bullying**

This procedure will be reviewed by the staff at the beginning of each year on the Teacher Only day.

The classroom teacher in the first instance, will be vigilant of any children who seem withdrawn, upset or isolated. In the event of ongoing behaviour of this nature parents will be notified.

Duty teachers will look out for any children who are isolated in the playground and report this behaviour to the classroom teacher and other staff.

All members of the school community will be vigilant in watching out for any potential bullying behaviour and report this to the appropriate member of staff, when it happens.

Teachers will carry out playground supervision in a professional manner following the guidelines of Sacred Heart School's Organisation folder. (This is an operational document for Staff and is reviewed at the beginning of each year).

The school is committed to providing an environment where bullying does not occur and is not tolerated, dealing with incidents as soon as they arise and providing a safe place for all. We have the following systems in place to aid this commitment: buddy classes, Friendly Bus Stop, constant reinforcement of school values, class treaties, RE programme, Life Education Programme, Keeping Ourselves Safe, Cool Schools Peer Mediation, DARE and a consistently followed Behaviour Management Programme.

### **Cyber Bullying**

- Each year there will be a focus on digital safety including the use of digital technologies at home and school (the particular content will be age specific).
- A Cyber Safety Information sheet is attached to these procedures and will be given out and discussed with students and parents each year, particularly at Year 7 /8 level.

### **Reporting Bullying**

## **Students**

At the beginning of each year or upon the commencement of their schooling students will be made aware that if they feel bullied or see bullying they should immediately:

- Tell any teacher or the Principal; or
- Tell their parents/caregivers

A copy of these procedures will be placed on the website and will be mentioned in the Parent Information booklet. At the beginning of the year a class treaty will be written and signed by all students and the teacher. At the beginning of each term the teacher and the class will revisit the class treaty to reinforce the appropriate behaviour we expect.

## **Staff**

In the case of a staff member feeling bullied, he or she should:

- Report the bullying behaviour to either a Syndicate Leader, a tutor teacher, or the Principal; and
- Follow the school's Complaints Process.
- Refer to Governance Manual

## **Dealing with Bullying**

- It is important to determine that what is happening is actually bullying.
- Individual teachers will be expected to document behaviour incidents which occur involving children in their class in the school SMS. The school SMS will be used to track patterns of behaviour.
- If the problem appears to be a random behaviour issue then the class teacher will inform either the Syndicate Leader or the Principal and a decision will be made about whether or not to inform the parents. Random behaviour identified as a serious issue will result in parents/caregivers of both parties to the behaviour being informed immediately.
- If the problem is decided to be 'Bullying', it will be dealt with promptly. In the event of bullying, both the Senior Management team and the parents will need to be informed immediately.

## **School response to Bullying**

All behavioural issues will be dealt with according to the classroom/school procedures and cases which are identified as bullying will be dealt with using the following process:

- Determine that the issue is actually bullying
- Class teacher to gather information from both parties involved and ensure that this information is documented and dated.
- Meeting will be held with both parties, the Principal and the class teacher. From this meeting a decision will be made about what the consequences will be for the individual children involved.
- Meeting with/ or informing the parents of both the bully and the victim to explain what has happened and what the consequences will be for each child. The format of the meeting will be decided at the time and communicated to both parties before the meeting. If appropriate both sets of parents will be at the same meeting.

- If appropriate all children involved may be present.
- Inform the parents of the victim of all decisions and consequences and if necessary meet with them.
- Consequences will differ depending on the seriousness of the issue and whether or not this is the first offence of the bully.

**Consequences for bullying may include the following:**

- **Removal of privileges**
- Detention
- In-school suspension
- Suspension from school
- Exclusion
- Expulsion
- Requirement for the child to have counselling e.g. anger management
- Requirement for the bully to apologise to the victim. This may be done orally and/or in writing. If done in writing parents of both students may be required to sign the apology to indicate they have seen it.

**Support for victims of bullying may include the following:**

- Counselling
- Teacher to be aware of issues during class activities e.g. grouping
- Systems put in place to enable child to have time out if needed
- Teacher to be aware of issues when class placement is being considered
- Teacher, Syndicate Leader or Principal to speak to the class and remind them of class treaty and school values if necessary

**Support for bully may include:**

- Counselling to help prevent future incidents of bullying and to enable the bully to be reconciled with the victim and himself or herself
- Where the bullying involves students, discussion by the class teacher with other classmates to ensure the child who has been bullying is not ostracized and is given the opportunity to put the incident of bullying behind him or her. At all times the teacher needs to emphasise the concept of forgiveness and reconciliation. The victim may or may not be present at this time.

**Discussing bullying with parents:**

- Parents will be informed when bullying issues arise.
- Parents will be encouraged to discuss any incidents which may be identified as bullying with the class teacher in the first instance and then with a member of the Management team or the Principal if the issue is not resolved satisfactorily.
- Parents will be encouraged to uphold the dignity of all pupils (and our school values) by not discussing individual children (that may or may not have been involved in bullying incidents) negatively in the playground and at school events.
- In line with the Safe School Policy, parents who are not happy with the outcome of these procedures can use the school complaints policy and take the matter to the Board of Trustees.

## Cyber Bullying – Information Sheet

**Cyber bullying can create severe harm and should always be treated seriously.**

### **Many students who cyber bully:**

- Don't think it is a big deal
- Don't think about the consequences
- Are encouraged by friends
- Think everybody does cyber bullying
- Think that they won't get caught

### **Those who are cyber bullied often react by:**

- Blocking communications with the cyber bully
- Deleting messages without reading them
- Talk to a friend about the bullying
- Report the problem to a parent, teacher, Internet Service Provider or Website Moderator

### **Advice for parents:**

- The natural response is to 'pull the plug', to remove kids from the source of bullying. **This may mean that the child will not then tell the parent when they are bullied, for fear of losing their computer, mobile phone etc.**
- Keep the computer in a common area.
- Learn how computers and the internet work.

### **Ten steps to stop cyber bullying:**

1. Students should tell an adult if they have been cyber bullied or know of any other students who have been cyber bullied. They should report it to their parents, teachers or the police
2. Parents of children that have been bullied should send only positive texts and emails to their children on a regular basis.
3. Parents should look for signs their child might be a victim of cyber bullying- including nightmares, avoiding school, acting sad or withdrawn, suddenly showing disinterest in computers or rapidly switching screens.
4. Parents should keep computers used by children in common areas of the home and **NOT** in bedrooms.
5. Parents should discuss bullying with their children and encourage them to report incidents.
6. Any bullying emails, texts etc should always be saved as evidence.
7. Parents should not respond directly to the source of the bullying. That only broadens the problem and can trigger an escalation from a problem affecting students to one affecting two sets of parents.
8. Parents should instruct their children
  - a. Don't respond to bully's messages
  - b. If messages continue, take a break then reply strongly telling the sender to stop
  - c. Block /filter all future messages (see advice below)
  - d. If necessary, change their email address, account, username or phone number
9. Students should be told **NEVER** give out any private information or say anything in an online forum they would not want made public. They should not post any compromising image of

themselves onto any electronic medium.

10. Families should file complaints both with your internet service providers and mobile phone companies- misuse is a clear violation of their 'terms of use'

There are a number of very good websites offering advice and information regarding cyber bullying.

[www.netsafe.org.nz](http://www.netsafe.org.nz)

[www.netbasics.org.nz](http://www.netbasics.org.nz)

[www.cyberbullying.co.nz](http://www.cyberbullying.co.nz)

[www.dcsf.gov.uk/byronreview/](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/byronreview/)

### **Advice to Students**

If you receive threats to hurt you on your networking page you can make a police complaint. Take a screen shot of the abuse (press "Prnt Scrn" or "prt sc" button top right of keyboard/Command, Shift, 4 on a Mac), open a blank word document and then paste (Ctrl V) into the blank document. Save the page somewhere safe, for it is evidence of the offence.

### **Facebook**

Has a "reporting function" that any user can use to report any user, group, page or comment. Facebook will monitor this and remove the offending element where necessary. If the threat involves violence it should be removed straight away. They can be emailed directly on [abuse@facebook.com](mailto:abuse@facebook.com). You should receive a response within 72 hours.

### **Twitter**

The Twitter Trust & Safety team responds to potential violations of the Twitter Rules and Terms of Service. Here's what is required when you file a report:

- Your Twitter Username 'handle'
- A detailed description of your issue
- Direct links to any Tweets you'd like reviewed (to find the direct status links to individual Tweets, see the help page.)

For more detailed information on how to make a complaint go to [www.twitter.com](http://www.twitter.com)

If you want to lay a complaint about somebody it may be useful to include exactly which terms of use have been breached, and include your evidence.

### **Email abuse**

If you are harassed by email then the first thing you can do is block the sender's emails from coming into your address. Use your emails "Help" section for this. If you want to go further you can report the sender to their email provider. Forward the email to the abuse team at their email provider.