Context

Christian Brothers' College St Kilda (CBC St Kilda) is a Catholic school for girls and boys in the Edmund Rice tradition, established in 1878. CBC St Kilda is committed to providing a caring, supportive and safe environment where every student has a place, a voice and their story is known. As a Catholic school in the Edmund Rice tradition, our Christian values are those expressed in the Touchstones of our governing body, Edmund Rice Education Australia (EREA): Liberating Education, Gospel Spirituality, Inclusive Community, Justice and Solidarity. The charism of Blessed Edmund Rice expressed through these touchstones, underpins our continued commitment to a safe and inclusive environment for all, providing a preferential option to those at the margins, to grow in empathy and to respond in faith and action.

Rationale

At CBC St Kilda we hold the care, safety and wellbeing of our students as a central and fundamental responsibility of the College. The College recognises the importance of demonstrating respect for the dignity of each person. It is central to the wellbeing of individual students that they feel safe and respected. The College is therefore committed to building and nurturing a school environment that is free from bullying

Principles

- Every person has a right to be treated with respect and as a worthwhile individual.
- Every member of the College community has a right to a safe environment, free from bullying.
- Bullying behaviour seriously undermines the ethos of the College, is not acceptable, and will not be tolerated.
- If a student is bullied they have the right to be heard.
- All bullying matters will be taken seriously and will be investigated with discretion, confidentiality and sympathy.
- Positive action will be taken and where necessary disciplinary action will be put in place.

Definition – Bullying

Bullying is the repeated and intentional behaviour of causing fear, distress or harm towards another person that involves an imbalance of power. It can involve exclusion, humiliation, domination, intimidation, victimisation and harassment. In any bullying incident there are likely to be three parties involved: the bully, the person being bullied and bystanders.

Bullying can take many forms including:

- Physical bullying which involves physical actions such as hitting, pushing, obstructing or being used to hurt or intimidate someone. Damaging, stealing or hiding personal belongings is also a form of physical bullying.
- Psychological bullying is when words or actions are used to cause psychological harm. Examples of psychological bullying include name calling, teasing or making fun of someone because of their actions, appearance, physical characteristics or cultural background.
- Indirect bullying is when deliberate acts of exclusion or spreading of stories are used to hurt or intimidate someone.
- Cyber bullying is the ongoing abuse of power to threaten or harm another person using technology. Cyber bullying can occur in chat rooms, on social networking sites, through emails or the use of mobile phones.

<u>What Bullying is Not</u>
There are many negative situations which, whilst being potentially distressing for students, are not bullying. These include:
- Mutual conflict situations which arise where there is disagreement between students but not an imbalance of power. Mutual conflict situations need to be closely monitored as they may evolve into a bullying situation; or
- One Off Acts (of aggression or antagonism) including single incidents of loss of temper, shouting or swearing do not normally constitute bullying.

<u>Signs of Bullying</u>
Behaviour changes in a student might indicate that they are being bullied. Such behavioural changes include, but are not limited to:
- Crying at night and having nightmares;
- Refusing to talk when asked "What's wrong?";
- Having unexplained bruises, cuts or scratches;
- An unwillingness or refusal to go to school;
- Feeling ill in the mornings;
- A decline in the quality of school work;
- Becoming withdrawn and lacking confidence;
- Beginning to bully siblings, or other friends/peers; and
- Acting unreasonably

<u>Harassment</u> *(See also Harassment (Student Against Student) Policy)*

Sexual Harassment:

Sexual harassment occurs when a student is subjected to unwelcome and uninvited sexual conduct by another student which could be expected to make a student feel offended, humiliated, or intimidated.

Sexual harassment can also result when a sexually intimidating or offensive environment is created. Sexual harassment can be physical, verbal, written or pictorial, and can range from sexual comments to actual physical sexual abuse.
It is important to remember that it is the way the victim perceives the behaviour that determines whether or not harassment has taken place, not the intent of a particular

individual. Mutual attraction or consenting relationships do not constitute sexual harassment.

Examples of sexual harassment include, but are not limited to:
- unwanted physical contact, touching, brushing against another student, hugging;
- persistent jokes or innuendos of a sexual nature;
- repeated requests to go out;
- offensive gestures;
- persistent or intrusive enquiries into another student's private life, sexuality, or physical appearance;
- sexual propositions;
- sexually offensive phone calls, messages on email, voicemail or in writing;
- taking or sharing offensive photos or displaying offensive screen savers, photos, calendars or objects;
- sexually explicit emails, text messages, or posts on social networking sites;
- stalking; and
- sexual assault.

Racial Harassment

Racial harassment is when a person is subjected to discriminatory acts or omissions based on their racial background. Examples include, but are not limited to:
- abusive, threatening or insulting words and behaviour;
- deliberate exclusion from conversations;
- displaying abusive writing and pictures;
- insensitive jokes related to race

Disability Harassment

Examples of disability harassment include:
- humiliating comments or insults about a student's disability;
- disparaging remarks to students who have received learning adjustments;
- comments or actions which create a hostile environment for a student with a
- disability; and
- deliberately excluding a student where the disability is not an issue.

Cyber Bullying *(see also Cyber Safety Policy)*

Cyber Bullying includes, but is not limited to:

- Online bullying – the ongoing abuse of power to threaten or harm another person through the use of technology.
- Sexting – the sending or posting of provocative or sexual photos, messages or videos online.
- Identity theft – the fraudulent assumption of a person's private information for their personal gain. Students are exposed to these risks as they are often unaware of the safety issues surrounding their digital footprint.
- Predatory behaviour where a student is targeted online by a stranger who attempts to arrange a face to face meeting, in an attempt to engage in inappropriate behaviour.

Victimisation

Action will be taken against anyone who victimises a student who makes a complaint of harassment in good faith.

Policy Statement

CBC St Kilda recognises its duty to students to provide a safe and positive learning environment where individual differences and diversity within the College is respected and valued.

Bullying is not tolerated at CBC St Kilda.

It is our policy that:
- Bullying be managed through a 'whole of College community' approach involving students, staff and parents/guardians;
- Bullying prevention strategies be implemented within the College on a continuous basis with a focus on teaching age appropriate skills and strategies to empower staff, students and parents/guardians to recognise bullying and respond appropriately;
- Bullying response strategies be tailored to the circumstances of each incident and in accordance with other College policies including the Student Behaviour Management Policy and Pastoral Care Policy;
- Staff establish positive role model behaviour, and emphasise our no-bullying culture; and
- Bullying prevention and intervention strategies are reviewed on an annual basis against best practice.

Procedures

Bullying Prevention Strategies

CBC St Kilda recognises that the implementation of whole of College community prevention strategies is the most effective way of eliminating or minimising incidents of bullying within our community.

The following initiatives form part of our overall bullying prevention strategy and our strategy to create a 'no bullying' culture within the College:
- A structured curriculum and peer group support system, that provides age appropriate information and skills relating to bullying (including cyber bullying) and bullying prevention, to students over the course of the academic year;
- Education, training and professional development of staff in bullying prevention and response strategies;
- Regular provision of information to parents/guardians, to raise awareness of bullying as a College community issue to equip them to recognise signs of bullying, as well as to provide them with clear paths for raising any concerns they may have relating to bullying directly with the College;
- Promotion of a supportive environment that encourages the development of positive relationships and communication between staff, students and parents/guardians;
- Promotion of responsible bystander behaviour amongst students, staff and parents/guardians;

- Reporting of incidents of alleged bullying by students, bystanders, parents/guardians and staff are encouraged, and made easy through the establishment of multiple reporting channels (as specified below);
- Regular assessment of bullying within the College through student surveys;
- Records of reported bullying incidents are maintained and analysed, in order to identify persistent bullies and/or victims and to implement targeted prevention strategies where appropriate;
- Statements supporting bullying prevention are included in students' College diaries;
- This policy, together with the College Cyber Safety Policy and Harassment (Student Against Student) Policy are available on the College public website;
- Anti-bullying posters are displayed strategically within the College; and
- Promotion of student awareness and a 'no bullying' environment by participating in events such as the National Day of Action Against Bullying and Violence.

Reporting Bullying

Students and their parents/guardians are sometimes reluctant to pursue bullying incidents, for fear that it will only make matters worse.

A key part of College's bullying prevention and intervention strategy is to encourage reporting of bullying incidents as well as providing assurance to students who experience bullying (and parents/guardians) that:
- Bullying is not tolerated within the College;
- Their concerns will be taken seriously; and
- The College has a clear strategy for dealing with bullying issues.
- The processes used by the College are comprehensive, and are designed to ensure that raising the issue will not lead to further bullying.

Bullying incidents can be advised to the College verbally (or in writing) through any of the following avenues:
- Sending an email to the College dedicated bullying notification email address: bullyingcontact@cbcstkilda.com
- Informing a trusted teacher;
- Informing the Student Counsellor;
- Informing a student's Homeroom Teacher or Program Leader; or
- Informing the Director of Students, Deputy Principal or the Principal.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to recognise signs of bullying, harassment and cyber bullying, and to notify the College immediately if they suspect their child is a victim of bullying.

Responding to Bullying

Bullying behaviours vary enormously, therefore each incident needs to be addressed on a case by case basis.

In all circumstances the College:
- Takes bullying incidents seriously;

- Provides assurance to the victim that they are not at fault and their confidentiality will be respected;
- Takes time to properly investigate the facts including discussing the incident with the victim, the bully and any bystanders;
- Takes time to understand any concerns of individuals involved;
- Maintains records of reported bullying incidents; and
- Will escalate its response when dealing with persistent bullying and/or severe incidents.

Actions that may be taken when responding to bullying include:
- The "Method of Shared Concern" Approach (Pikas);
- The "No Blame" Approach (Maines & Robinson);
These approaches may be used to intervene in group or relational bullying situations. They are only appropriate during the initial stages. They are not appropriate for persistent or severe bullying incidents.

- Notification of, and consultation with, parents/guardians;
- Offering counselling to students who persist in their bullying/victimisation of others;
- Implementing effective follow up strategies; and
- Disciplinary action at the Principal's discretion including suspension and expulsion of students who persist in their bullying/victimisation of others, or in cases of severe incidents.

Response Procedure

- As per the College Behaviour Formation Procedures, bullying is initially addressed as a high-end Level 3 misdemeanor. The student who has bullied is externally suspended. The student may only return if they are deemed to have undertaken the steps outlined below and are, therefore, not likely to cause further harm to the victim or another student. If they are unable to do this, the situation will be escalated to the Principal and the student may be expelled from the College.

- Prior to their return to the College, the student who has bullied, accompanied by their parents or guardian, must meet with the Director of Students and/or Deputy Principal. During this meeting, the student must outline their understanding of the harm their actions have caused and put in place steps to ensure they do not bully again during their time at the College. They must demonstrate that they are ready to offer an authentic and unreserved apology to the victim.

- The student who has bullied is placed on a conditional enrolment. The student is provided with the clear understanding that the breach of the enrolment conditions is a Level 4 offence, as per the Behaviour Formation Procedures. Specifically, any bullying to the victim or another student(s), will result in a meeting with the Principal, where the student may be expelled from the College.

- If the victim is comfortable to communicate with the bully regarding the incident, a restorative meeting between the two parties will be arranged. This is an opportunity for the student who has bullied to hear of the impact of their actions, apologise for

their behaviour and clearly articulate their commitment that it will not take place again.

- The Student Counsellor is also available to speak to both the student who has bullied, and the victim. These sessions take place individually. These sessions are designed to produce better, more considered behaviour from the student who has bullied. For the victim, these sessions are designed to provide support and highlight coping strategies so that they can feel safe and connected at the College.

Staff Responsibility

It is important that all staff share a responsibility for upholding standards of conduct and for building and nurturing a school environment where bullying does not occur.

All staff are responsible to:
- Model appropriate behaviour at all times;
- Deal with all reported and observed incidents of bullying in accordance with this policy;
- Ensure that any incident of bullying that they observe or is reported to them, is recorded and reported appropriately;
- Be vigilant in monitoring students that have been identified as either persistent bullies or victims; and
- Acknowledge the right of parents/guardians to speak with the College if they believe their child is being bullied.

Signage

Anti–bullying posters will be posted in strategic locations in the College to promote appropriate behaviour and encourage students to respect individual differences and diversity.

Record Keeping

All notes related to bullying incidents are recorded via the College Student Management System (SIMON).

Implementation

This policy is implemented through a combination of:
- Staff training;
- Student and parent/carer education and information;
- Effective incident reporting procedures;
- Effective management of bullying incidents when reported;
- The creation of a 'no bullying' culture within the College community;
- Effective record keeping procedures; and
- Initiation of corrective actions where necessary.

Discipline for Breach of Policy

Where a staff member breaches this policy, CBC St Kilda will take disciplinary action, including in the case of serious breaches, summary dismissal.

Student breaches of this policy will result in disciplinary action in accordance with College Student Behaviour Management Policy and procedures.

References
- Cyber Safety Policy
- Harassment Policy (Student Against Student) Policy
- Pastoral Care Policy
- Student Code of Conduct
- Vision for Student Wellbeing
- Student Behaviour Management Policy
- Behaviour Formation Procedures

Resources
- <u>Bullying No Way! – Method of Shared Concern</u>
- <u>Reach Out</u>
- <u>The Intersection</u>

Review
This policy will be reviewed December 2021.