



*Learning in the Light of Christ*

**Calvary Christian College  
Student Anti-Bullying Policy  
Supporting a safe, friendly and caring Christian Community**

**2011**

**(Updated August 2011)**

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## SECTION 1: POLICY

### 1. RATIONALE

#### 1.1 A Christian Basis:

Following are the core Christian beliefs that underpin our approach to our Bullying Policy.

We, as Christians, believe the Bible forms our beliefs, values and attitudes in terms of how we ought to treat other people. The Bible tells us that every person is created in the image of God. (Genesis 1:26) Therefore every person, no matter what age, gender, ethnic background or social class, is to be treated equally and with respect and honour.

We also believe that bullying is sin. The sin of bullying and violence cannot be effectively addressed without screening the organisational, social and cultural underpinnings that promote this sinful behaviour.

Last but not least, we believe in the importance of forgiveness. The Bible says: *“Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.”* (Ephesians 4:32 NIV) Every person makes mistakes and forgiveness is the key component of a safe, friendly and caring Christian community.

#### 1.2 Objectives:

**The main objective of our Anti-Bullying Policy is to support a safe, friendly and caring Christian Community.**

In any form, bullying is not acceptable behaviour and results in hurt, fear, loss of self-esteem, decreased social effectiveness for the victim and the increase of inappropriate behaviour of the students bullying. This policy seeks to:

- Raise awareness among staff, students and parents about bullying
- Actively counter bullying in the College
- Develop in students respect and concern for others, of all races, creeds and genders
- Develop in students an understanding that they must take responsibility for their own behaviour
- Develop in students effective thinking and life-skills related to leading a healthy Christian way of life such as conflict resolution skills and problem solving skills
- Create a climate where it is okay to talk about bullying and ask for help
- Develop a community environment that nurtures and promotes student self-esteem, self-confidence, resilience and spiritual wellbeing.

#### 1.3 Scope:

This policy covers students on College campus, transport organised by the College, excursions and camps. This policy will be read in conjunction with the Child Protection Policy. Any behaviours which are addressed as ‘harm’ will be reported to State Authorities.

## 1.4 Definitions:

*Bullying is unprovoked and unwelcome aggressive behaviour deliberately inflicted by an individual or group of greater power on an individual or group of lesser power. It is the overpowering and controlling of another person to intimidate, humiliate, undermine or dominate them. It can be physical, verbal, covert, psychological or even spiritual. It can be direct or indirect using various mediums including technology. It is systematic and repeated. Bullying is not Christian behaviour.*

*The bully will always say he/she did not mean to bully or did not bully. That is irrelevant. The “test” to be applied when trying to determine whether bullying is taking place is the “reasonable man” test: Would a reasonable person, knowing the circumstances, consider the behaviour to be intimidating, humiliating or undermining?*

### What behaviours are not bullying:

While the following behaviours are often upsetting to those involved, they do not constitute bullying as defined above:

- mutual arguments and disagreements (where there is no power imbalance)
- not liking someone or a single act of social rejection
- one-off acts of meanness or spite
- isolated incidents of aggression, intimidation or violence
- teasing or banter where there is no power imbalance

While these behaviours would not be considered bullying (because they do not involve deliberate and repeated harm and a power imbalance) they need to be addressed in the same way as other inappropriate student behaviours, by proper Behaviour Management.

## 1.5 Types of Bullying:

<b>Type</b>	<b>Direct</b>	<b>Indirect</b>
<b>Physical</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hitting, kicking or pushing</li> <li>• Spitting, biting, pinching or scratching</li> <li>• Throwing things at people</li> <li>• Damaging someone's belongings</li> <li>• Inappropriate sexual contact</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Getting another person to harm someone</li> </ul>
<b>Verbal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mean and hurtful name calling</li> <li>• Hurtful remarks</li> <li>• Demanding money or possessions</li> <li>• Forcing another to do homework</li> <li>• Teasing/taunting/belittling including sexual overtones</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spreading nasty rumours</li> <li>• Trying to get other students to dislike another student</li> </ul>
<b>Psychological</b> (Social and Emotional)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Threatening and/or obscene gestures</li> <li>• Racist or sexist remarks</li> <li>• Manipulating</li> <li>• Stalking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliberate exclusion from a group or activity</li> <li>• Removing or hiding another’s property</li> </ul>
<b>Covert</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lying about someone</li> <li>• Playing a nasty joke</li> <li>• Mimicking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spreading rumours</li> </ul>
<b>Cyber</b> (email, SMS, phone, social networking sites and internet mediums)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mean, belittling and hurtful name calling</li> <li>• Threatening and/or obscene language</li> <li>• Offensive images</li> <li>• Repeated messages</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Spreading nasty rumours</li> <li>• Trying to get other students to dislike another student</li> <li>• Using another student’s password or phone to communicate obscene language</li> </ul>

<b>Spiritual</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teasing/taunting/belittling because of their faith/lack of faith</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exclusion in friendship groups because of their faith/lack of faith</li> <li>• Spreading rumours</li> </ul>
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## 2. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### 2.1 Policy Statement:

**2.1.1.** *Every person has the right under the law and Christian Faith to feel safe.*

Any person who bullies another is denying them that right. This means we have to think about others in the classroom and in the playground. The right to feel safe means we have a responsibility to consider how we speak and act towards others. Bullying takes away a person's sense of security. The right to safety means that any bullying of any kind is unacceptable.

**2.1.2.** *Every person has the right under the law and Christian Faith to be treated with fairness and respect.*

This means we show respect to other people, and their property, in the class and in the playground. The right to receive respect and fair treatment requires from us the responsibility to show manners and courtesy towards each other.

**2.1.3.** *Every person has the right under the law and the enrolment contract to learn.*

This means we do not adversely affect the learning of another student.

**2.1.4.** *It is everyone's responsibility to take the necessary steps to stop bullying behaviour.*

The College will not tolerate any action that undermines a person's right to feel safe, respected and to learn.

**2.1.5.** *Behaviour amounting to harm will be reported to State Authorities.*

### 2.2. Responsibilities:

**Staff, students and parents have the following responsibilities:**

#### 2.2.1. Staff:

**a. The leadership of the College will aim to:**

- Support, promote, enact, maintain and review the Anti-Bullying Policy and procedures.

**b. All staff will aim to:**

- Be familiar with the College's Anti-Bullying Policy and procedures.

**c. Teachers and Teacher Aides will aim to:**

- Be models of caring and tolerant behaviour
- Listen and act upon reports of bullying
- Inform the Deputy Head of School or Head of School of bullying incidents
- Follow up
- Protect the person being bullied from further harm
- Act to stop the behaviour recurring

- Record identified bullying incidents
- Keep parents informed.

#### **2.2.2. Students:**

- a. Students who are being bullied need to report the incident to a teacher or another staff member.**
- b. Student bystanders to bullying should:**
  - Intervene by speaking firmly to the bullying student if they are able to
  - Seek teacher assistance
  - Document the incident if requested.
- c. Any images taken on a mobile phone must immediately be handed to a teacher otherwise the taking of the picture could be a criminal offence.**

#### **2.2.3 Parents**

- a. Parents should:**
  - Listen sympathetically to reports of bullying
  - Speak to relevant College personnel (**not** the alleged student/s or parent/s concerned)
  - Work with the College in seeking a permanent solution.
- b. Parent witnesses should:**
  - Be limited to constructive verbal intervention
  - Seek teacher assistance
  - Document the incident if requested by the College staff.

### **3 Review**

This policy will be reviewed every three years except as necessitated by law.

## SECTION 2: MANAGEMENT OF BULLYING INCIDENTS

**To prevent or minimise bullying, both a proactive and reactive approach is necessary.**

### 1 Proactive Approach:

Our College seeks to ensure that we foster an environment where bullying is minimised and prevented. A positive and proactive whole-college approach is to be part of our College policy by incorporating processes where:

- 1.1 All staff members are made aware of bullying issues, the need to take action, of their role in implementing the policy and the need to provide careful supervision.
- 1.2 Staff members are trained to recognise the nature of bullying behaviour and its effects. Staff members who regularly deal with the direct effects of bullying are to access regular professional development.
- 1.3 The Student Anti-Bullying Policy is clearly articulated to staff, students and parents.
- 1.4 The broader College community is informed about the Student Anti-Bullying Policy by providing information through the College newsletter, the Parent Manual, parent pamphlets, and the College website.  
Students are taught how to respond to bullying when it is noticed. Students are taught that there are never any innocent spectators.
- 1.5 Students are taught preventative strategies to build resilience. The Junior School students are taught the 'High Five' strategy and Middle and Senior School students are taught the 'Seven Straight Up Strategies'. The 'Seven Straight Up Strategies' are to be included in the Middle and Senior School student diaries. These preventative strategies and lessons about the nature of bullying are to be taught in the Junior School curriculum and in the Middle and Senior School Foundations curriculum and Pastoral Care classes. Bullying awareness will also be included in Junior School assemblies, year level assemblies and Middle and Senior School assemblies.
- 1.6 Preventative support systems are put in place such as 'safe places', lunchtime friendship clubs and the Pastoral Care class mentoring programs.
- 1.7 Support is available for victims and perpetrators of bullying. Intensive small groups are facilitated for students who regularly bully (anger management, conflict resolution) and for students who are regularly bullied (assertiveness training and self-protective behaviours).
- 1.8 Teachers are to be supported in difficult cases by an appropriate member of the Executive Leadership Team.
- 1.9 There are reporting and recording systems in place for bullying incidents.
- 1.10 Serious incidents of bullying are reported to parents of the students involved.
- 1.11 The policy, training and reporting procedures are reviewed regularly.
- 1.12 The bullying procedures are compatible with the policies contained in the Student Welfare Policy (incorporating the Child Protection Policy), the Acceptable Use Policy and in the Staff Manual.

**1.13 The following playground strategies are enforced:**

- i. There is to be some informal playground segregation into group areas (Prep – Year 3, Years 4 – 6, Middle and Senior students).
- ii. Playground duty teachers are to be visible and carry ‘Incident Report Forms’ in colourful hip bags (provided by the College) at all times. Incident reports are to be filled out no matter how minor the bullying and returned to the relevant Deputy Head of School or Head of School. Grievances are to be listened to and appropriate action taken.
- iii. Teachers are to return to class before the students line up to counter any bullying which commonly occurs in class lines.
- iv. Lunchtime clubs and activities are to be facilitated during the week.

1.14 Class teachers and Pastoral Care teachers are to introduce new students to the class’s bullying strategies and prevention programs.

1.15 The Student Anti-Bullying Policy is to be introduced and explained to new teaching staff.

## **2 Reactive Approach:**

The following reactive steps are a guide to dealing with reports of bullying:

- 2.1 If bullying is suspected or reported, the incident should be dealt with immediately by the member of staff who has been approached, to ensure the student’s safety. It is never acceptable to turn a blind eye to bullying. An incident may be reported by a student, parent or volunteer worker. An incident may have occurred on campus or off campus such as on a bus or excursion.
- 2.2 A clear account of the incident is to be recorded on an ‘**Incident Report Form**’ and handed to the Deputy Head of School or Head of School. The Deputy Head of School or Head of School will ensure that all Incident Report Forms are tagged and filed for further reference and recorded.
- 2.3 The Deputy Head of School or Head of School will then investigate the incident and work through the College’s ‘Constructive Discipline Policy’ or ‘Guidelines for Incidents of Bullying’ if the incident involves bullying. The Constructive Discipline Policy classifies Bullying and Harassment as a major breach. The possible strategies and consequences of managing this major breach is in or out of school suspension or exclusion.
- 2.4 The College reserves the right to investigate alleged reports of bullying to the level (low, medium and high) they judge appropriate. In addition, the College has discretion to address bullying incidents.

## **3 Guidelines for Dealing with Incidents of Bullying:**

**3.1 It is imperative that:**

- i. The student/s being bullied is/are protected from further harm.
- ii. The bullying is stopped to ensure the safety and well-being of those bullied.
- iii. All staff and students know to whom they can report incidents of bullying.
- iv. There is a commitment amongst the staff to handle issues immediately and consistently.



- v. The Deputy Head of School or Head of School ensures that all investigations are dealt with fairly and impartially.
- vi. All staff members are vigilant in supervision.
- vii. An 'Incident Report Form' is officially recorded.

**3.2 The response (normally the Deputy Head of School or Head of School) to students who *have bullied another* is to proceed through the following guidelines:**

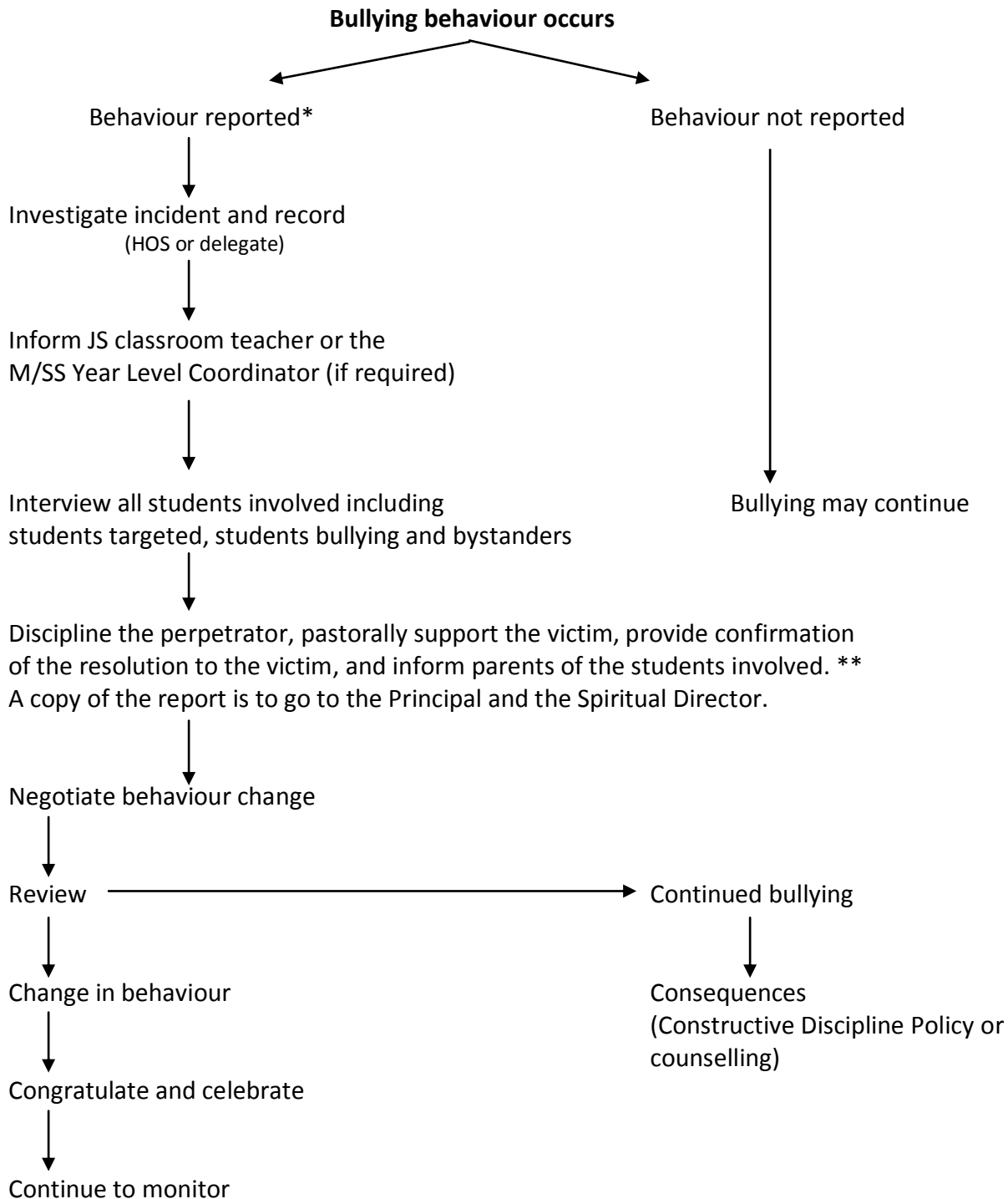
- i. Investigate what happened using the information recorded on the Incident Report Form and from any discussion with the person who recorded the incident.
- ii. Interview the student who was bullied and record information using an appropriate approach such as the 'No-Blame' approach.
- iii. Determine the appropriate level of bullying. If the bullying is determined to be in the medium or high level, continue the following steps. If the bullying is determined to be low level, use appropriate directions and assure the student of your support.
- iv. Inform the Junior School class teacher or the Middle School or Senior School Year Level Coordinator.
- v. Interview the bystanders and discuss strategies these students might use to prevent bullying in the future.
- vi. Discover why the student bullying became involved.
- vii. Establish the wrong doing and the need to change.
- viii. Inform the class teacher or Middle School or Senior School Year Level Coordinator.
- ix. Outline the disciplinary consequences imposed and the consequences that will be imposed if the bullying continues. Use the 'Shared Concern' or the 'No Blame Approach' processes where necessary.
- x. Enlist the support of parents/caregivers to help change the behaviour and attitude of the student, where appropriate.
- xi. Where necessary conduct a 'Restorative Justice' meeting between all stakeholders.
- xii. Where appropriate speak to the Junior School class or the year level without using any names.
- xiii. Instances of serious or ongoing bullying may be appropriately dealt with by the College through external consultation and advice from the College's solicitors, the College Council, the Queensland Police Service and the Department of Child Safety. High level bullying behaviour may result in criminal sanctions. The College will fully assist with any criminal investigation or prosecution against a perpetrator. The College does not have capacity to make a criminal complaint on behalf of a student, but encourages students and parents to make a criminal complaint for serious, ongoing bullying.
- xiv. A copy of any serious report of bullying is to be given to Spiritual Director.

**3.3 Challenging Students:**

- i. Refer to the Constructive Discipline Policy and the Behaviour Code document.
- ii. The Junior Student Welfare Teams and Middle and Senior School Year Level Coordinator Teams will set up collaborative case management strategies for students causing persistent problems.

- 3.4 **The response to students who *have been bullied* is to proceed through the following guidelines:**
- i. Offer an immediate opportunity to discuss the experience with a member of staff of their choice.
  - ii. Be aware that probing questions may increase stress. In addition, be aware that victims will often deny that there is a problem.
  - iii. Reassure the student by offering continuous support and assurance that a determined effort will be made to stop the bullying.
  - iv. Discuss strategies the student might use to avoid being bullied in the future.
  - v. Provide encouragement to form and maintain friendships with non-bullying students.
  - vi. If deemed necessary, the student is to be referred to the Middle and Senior School Student Counsellor or to the Spiritual Director for counselling.

## 4 A Summary of How Bullying Might be Dealt with



\* If bullying is reported outside the College grounds (such as on a bus or via cyber means) and/or outside of school hours, the College should investigate all claims in a timely and reasonable manner. The College must take appropriate action to protect the wellbeing of all members of the community. In investigating bullying matters which occur outside of the College's parameters, the College does not consequentially extend its duty of care towards the student involved. The College's involvement is limited to the matters contained in this policy.

If an incident involving our students occurs outside the College and is reported to the Police, the Police will normally advise the College to cease any investigations.

\*\* if the investigation shows that the matter involves criminal liability, the College will advise the victim and his/her parents of their capacity to make a formal complaint to the Queensland Police Service. The College will fully assist in any Police investigation.

## SECTION 3: APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1: Understanding Bullying Background Information

#### A Christian Basis (expanded form):

##### The Bible

The Bible says *“Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.” (Matthew 7:12 NIV); “Love your neighbour as yourself” (Matthew 22:39 NIV); “Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.” (Eph 5:21 NIV) and “Serve one another in love.” (Gal 5:3 NIV)* These are some of the Bible verses that form the beliefs, values and ideals of Christians in terms of how we ought to relate to other people. Christians are followers of Jesus Christ and are therefore personally and corporately committed to modelling a life demonstrated by Jesus Christ as witnessed in the Bible. Christians believe that Jesus Christ came from God and took on the nature and lifestyle of a servant, even to the point of dying on a cross for all humanity. (Phil 2:7-8 NIV)

The Bible also tells us that every person is created in the image of God. (Genesis 1:26) Therefore every person, no matter what age, gender, ethnic background or social class, is to be treated equally and with respect and honour.

In the New Testament the Christian Church is described as spreading rapidly across cultures and countries. This new faith grew partly because of its inclusive nature and dependence on grace rather than exclusive religious laws. Galatians 3:28 says that *“There is neither Jew or Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ.” (NIV)*

##### Community Values

Jesus Christ’s mission was to preach about the *‘Kingdom of God’*. This Kingdom of God is the ideal community where all people, no matter what role or position they have, act responsibly and out of service to each other. The Kingdom of God is where people live in an attitude of worship, work in peace and harmony, and is where all people are treated with dignity and equality even to the point where possessions are shared. The Kingdom of God is the basis of the Christian Church.

According to the Christian Faith, bullying and violence is regarded as sin. Christians regard the inclination to sin as being part of our human nature. All human beings have the potential to bully, harass or discriminate against others to a greater or lesser extent. Sin is something we need to suppress and exercise control over. If students are bullying others and behaving violently, Christians believe the behaviour needs to be corrected by loving discipline, consistent consequences to misbehaviour and counselling if deemed necessary.

The sin of bullying and violence cannot be effectively addressed without screening the organisational, social and cultural underpinnings that promote this sinful behaviour. In addition, bullying cannot be addressed without looking at power imbalances and power abuse in the social context. When a social system constructs, supports and promotes one group’s rights over another it is regarded as systemic sin. Once a person or group attains a position of power, beliefs and ideas can develop that justify their actions. This leads to an abuse of power. This social sin can underpin all instances of verbal, physical, emotional and spiritual abuse and bullying, as well as sexist and racist violence and harassment.

Our College believes that the life and action of Jesus Christ, together with his preaching about the 'Kingdom of God', radically broke down the structures which promoted the sins of power abuse, bullying, discrimination, violence and hatred. Instead the Christian Church, which Jesus Christ initiated by the power of the Holy Spirit, promotes a community based on the opposite values of servanthood, social responsibility, mutual respect, equality, peace and love.

Lastly the Bible says: *"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."* (Ephesians 4:32 NIV) A very important value in the Christian Faith is forgiveness. Christians believe that negative behaviour can be changed and forgiveness is an important component of the process. If a person genuinely asks for forgiveness, the other person being violated against should forgive that person. It is expected that the perpetrator will still take responsibility for their action.

## **A Definition for Children**

### **What is Bullying:**

Bullying is when someone feels hurt or upset because of the things another person or group is doing to them over and over again. Bullying is not when one person calls another person a name once, or hits a person once. It is when that behaviour happens a number of times.

Bullying can happen anywhere and can involve both teachers and students. It can happen at school, in your family, in the community and online.

Bullying can be:

- Being ignored, left out on purpose, or not allowed to join in
- Being made fun of in a mean and hurtful way
- Lies or nasty stories told about someone to make other children not like them
- Being made afraid of getting hurt
- Forcing someone to do things they don't want to
- Being hit, kicked or pushed around

Bullying is used by a more powerful person against a less powerful person unable to stop the bullying from happening. Bullying is not Christian behaviour.

### **How is bullying different to other forms of aggression?**

Like other forms of aggressive behaviour, bullying involves the intention of an individual or group to cause harm to one or more others. However, bullying has the following unique characteristics:

- A power imbalance is present
- The aggressive act is unprovoked by the victim or perceived as unjustified by others
- The action is repeated between the same individuals

### **Is fighting bullying?**

While fighting between two students of equal power is of concern, it is not bullying. It is the presence of a power imbalance that distinguishes bullying from fighting, conflict, violence and disagreement. It is this imbalance that makes mistreatment of the victim possible.

### **Is teasing bullying?**

Teasing, done in mutual fun and humorous context, where all individuals are involved and feel capable of responding, is not bullying. However, teasing that is done (or progresses) in a mean and hurtful way, whereby one individual feels powerless to respond or to stop what is happening, is bullying.

### **The importance of language**

It is important that bullying is seen as a behaviour and not personalised in the form of a 'bully'. The message students receive should be that bullying is an unacceptable behaviour. A school-based program should not focus on 'busting' the bullies. This focus promotes force and exclusion as a means of getting one's way, in other words, exactly what bullying is. It also labels students who engage in bullying as 'bullies' and may marginalise and exclude them from behaviour change activities, because the message they receive is that they, as a 'bully', are not wanted or valued.

Activities to reduce and prevent bullying should promote the message that all students are valued, but engaging in bullying behaviour is unacceptable. Written information and policy should reflect this by referring to 'students who engage in bullying' or 'students who bully others' and 'students who are bullied' or 'students who are the target of bullying'.

## **Types of Bullying Used By Students**

Bullying can take many forms. The *National Centre Against Bullying* identifies four kinds of bullying:

### **Physical**

This type of bullying uses physical actions to bully and includes hitting, kicking, poking, tripping or pushing. It also includes taking or damaging a person's property. This is the least sophisticated type of bullying because it is easy to identify. These students are soon known to the College and as they get older, their attacks usually become more aggressive. These aggressive characteristics can continue into adulthood.

### **Verbal**

This bullying behaviour involves the use of words to hurt or humiliate another person. Verbal bullying includes name-calling, insults, mimicking, making racist comments and constant teasing. This type of bullying is the easiest and quickest to inflict on other students. Its effects can be more devastating because there are no visible 'scars'.

### **Psychological bullying**

The bullying behaviour includes threatening, manipulating or stalking someone. It can also involve leaving out or convincing peers to exclude or reject a certain person or group of people from their social connections. This type of bullying is linked to verbal bullying and usually occurs when children spread nasty rumours about others or exclude a student from the peer group. The most serious effect of this type of bullying is rejection by the peer group at a time when children most need their social connections.

### **Cyber**

Cyber bullying is the term used when bullying is inflicted upon an individual student or a group of students using electronic means of communication such as email, mobile phones, chat rooms, social networking sites. Cyber bullying can occur inside and outside school hours. Cyber bullying can be verbal, social or psychological intimidation which can be inflicted directly or indirectly.

## Cyber Bullying

Cyber Bullying can take many forms. They include:

- Sending cruel messages. These may contain threats.
- Posting pictures of classmates online with derogatory comments. Alternatively, appropriate photos can be doctored or associated with messages that can hurt or defame.
- Using Instant Messaging (IM) to harass or frighten a student.
- Using another student's email account to send inappropriate material in that student's name.
- Using mobile phone pictures taken in private areas of the College to embarrass a student.
- Creating a website with stories, pictures, jokes and general ridicule of another student.
- Cascading messages to a student's email account with subject tags that are unavoidable to read.
- The use of hyperlinked sites to suggest actions to another. These may include: suicide, self-harm and sex act sites.
- The misuse of social network sites.

All of these methods can harass or denigrate a student. They can also be used to stalk, impersonate, identity steal, trick and/or socially exclude an individual student or a groups of students.

### College options to deal with cyber bullying

- Where there is no school involvement determined, the College might still feel justified in contacting parents. Discussing solutions can be a great help to parents who will probably be considering these issues for the first time.
- All relevant staff should be informed whether the matter has a college connection or not.
- The College counsellors (SD, M/SS Student Counsellor and JS Chaplain) should be briefed on the situation whether there is a College connection or not. Staff members can establish college connections.
- Formal discipline would be possible if there was a college connection to the matter.
- Where web sites, ISPs, mobile networks have been used consider notifying these companies as the cyber bullying will have violated the "Terms of Use" policies.
- Use [www.whois.net](http://www.whois.net) to find owners of domain names. Use the host "contact us" to complain.

### Parent options to deal with cyber bullying

If your child is being bullied via electronic communication, encourage your child:

- not to respond to the message or image
- to save the evidence
- to block and delete the sender
- to report the situation to the Internet Service Provider or phone service provider; they can help you block messages or calls
- to tell trusted people – teachers and police if necessary.

Despite the concern and distress you may feel, avoid getting personally involved and taking matters into your own hands. You may also wish to contact the College if the person doing the bullying is another student.

The issue of cyber bullying has received a great deal of interest recently and has been the focus of a number of research and review processes, such as the *Australian Covert Bullying Prevalence Study*



(Cross, D., Shaw, T., Hearn, L., Epstein, M., Monks, H., Lester, L., & Thomas, L., 2009) and the *Review of the National Safe Schools Framework* (McGrath, 2005).

Refer to the 'Working Together – A Toolkit for Parents to Address Bullying' (Qld Education: [www.education.qld.gov.au/student-services/behaviour/qaav/](http://www.education.qld.gov.au/student-services/behaviour/qaav/) page 27-28) for useful websites to further help understand and address cyber bullying. Also refer to Additional Resources on Page 25 (<http://www.cybersmart.gov.au/Parents.aspx> is highly recommended).

## **Reactive responses to bullying**

An individual student can both bully or be bullied. This type of behaviour in students is often the most difficult to identify because at first glance they seem to be targets for bullying. However, these students can often taunt other students who may bully them, and bully other people themselves. Most of the incidents are physical in nature. These students are often impulsive and react quickly to intentional and unintentional physical encounters. In some cases, these students begin as the person being bullied and begin to bully as they attempt to retaliate.

## **Levels of Severity of Bullying Situations**

The severity of the situation can be judged based on a few factors:

- The duration of behaviour
- The frequency of behaviour
- The type of bullying behaviour
- The physical and emotional impact on the child

It needs to be empathised that all bullying behaviour, no matter how minor, needs to be reported, recorded and responded to. The levels of severity listed below are presented as guidelines only and are designed to assist staff members to effectively deal with incidents of bullying behaviour.

### **Least severe - low level**

This behaviour generally involves thoughtless acts that happen occasionally. According to research, teachers reported that these were the most difficult for them to respond to because they had to make decisions about whether to act or not. Bullying behaviour of low severity needs to be dealt with by informal discussion as it can escalate to become more serious. These discussions should address:

- Teaching of Christian values and beliefs
- Awareness of College rules
- Empathy for feelings of the person being bullied
- Examples of appropriate ways to behave, and
- Strategies to deal with difficult situations

Students need to be monitored to maintain positive behaviour change.

### **Serious – medium level**

The behaviour is considered serious when it has been going on for some time and has become systematic and hurtful to the person being bullied. Bullying behaviours at this level need to be dealt with by behaviour support strategies. The College's Constructive Discipline Policy should be utilised for serious cases and the stages or steps followed. This process should include consequences for actions and behaviour support to assist the child with behaviour change. The Head of Schools are usually involved at this level.

### **Severe – high level**

When the behaviours are extended over a period of time and are intensely cruel and threatening, it is considered severe. These behaviours are constant, threatening and can cause the person being bullied to be severely distressed. Severe cases are usually referred to the relevant Head of School who need to ensure the safety of all involved. Interviews need to be conducted with all individuals involved including the person bullying, the person being bullied and bystanders. Parents need to be involved in the process of discussion and decision-making. The M/SS School Counsellor/Spiritual Director should also be involved in individual case management. It is possible for a student who continues to be involved in high level bullying to be excluded from the College in accordance with the Constructive Discipline Policy.

## **Differences between Boys and Girls**

### **Types of bullying**

- Boys are most likely to experience direct physical bullying
- Girls are more often the victim of indirect non-physical forms of bullying, such as exclusion and having rumours spread about them
- Direct verbal bullying, such as cruel teasing and name calling, is experienced between the two genders in equal amounts

### **Prevalence of bullying**

- In general, girls are bullied about as often as boys
- Boys report bullying others more often than girls

### **Who bullies whom?**

- Bullying is most often done by one boy or a group of boys
- Girls are bullied by boys about as much as they are bullied by girls
- Very few boys report being bullied by girls

## **Should we be concerned about Bullying?**

To meet the academic goals of education, students must perceive their learning environment to be a safe and secure place.

### **Students who are bullied:**

- Feel unhappier at school
- Dislike school
- View school as not a nice place to be
- View school as an unsafe place
- Feel lonelier
- Want to avoid the school environment
- Demonstrate lower academic competence
- Have higher rates of absenteeism
- Often demonstrate less-developed social skills

Furthermore, students who are bullied are more likely to suffer from a number of physical and mental health problems. **Students who are bullied have:**

- More physical complaints
- Lower self-esteem
- Greater feelings of ineffectiveness and more interpersonal difficulties
- Higher levels of depression and thoughts of self-harm
- Higher levels of anxiety and worry

Of further concern is research that suggests that these effects can be long lasting.

**Of further concern is the finding that:**

- Students who bullied at age fourteen tended to also bully others at age eighteen and at age thirty-two
- Students who engaged in bullying at age fourteen tended, at age thirty-two, to have children who engaged in bullying

**Possible signs of bullying**

The following symptoms have been associated with students experiencing bullying behaviour.

These students may:

- Have a decreased interest in school
- Feel reluctant to go to school, and have higher absenteeism from school
- Perform below their ability at school
- Frequently complain of headaches or stomach aches
- Want to be taken to and from school or to go a new route
- Have frequent damage to or a loss of items such as clothing, property or school work
- Have frequent injuries such as bruises or cuts
- Be withdrawn and seem reluctant to say why
- Have difficulty sleeping, wet the bed or have nightmares
- Frequently come home hungry
- Ask for extra lunch or pocket money and/or have money going missing from the house
- Appear generally unhappy, miserable, moody and/or irritable
- Be reluctant to eat or play properly
- Threaten or attempt to harm themselves
- Have no friends to share free time with
- Be rarely invited to parties or other social activities with peers

**Why do Children Bully?**

**Children bully:**

- To get what they want
- To solve their problems
- To feel better about themselves
- To be popular and admired
- To cope with the fear of being the one left out
- Because of jealousy of others
- Because it seems like fun / boredom
- Because it has worked for them before
- Because they enjoy the power
- Because they see it as their role, e.g. leader
- Because their significant role models bully

### **Some of the factors contributing to the development of bullying include:**

- 1. Aggressive behaviour at home and elsewhere**
  - Children who have significant role models who bully are more likely to imitate this behaviour
- 2. Harsh physical punishment at home**
  - Children can bully smaller, weaker children to re-enact what happens to them at home
- 3. Peers that bully**
  - Children may follow the lead of their peers if they bully or they feel they have to bully as well to fit in
- 4. Not enough supervision**
  - Children who do not have enough supervision may get the idea that it is all right to use bullying behaviour to get what you want. Children need to be taught that bullying is never acceptable behaviour
- 5. The behaviour works for them**
  - When adults give in to children who use their power, aggression or bad behaviour to get what they want, the child learns to use this type of behaviour to get what they want
- 6. Pre-emptive behaviour**
  - Some children feel that they need to strike first for fear of being bullied. They feel that if they use their power and assume a hostile stance it will discourage other children from bullying them
- 7. Getting attention**
  - These children feel that they need to use negative behaviour to attract attention. This behaviour makes them feel powerful and noticed by adults and their peers

### **What do we know about students who bully?**

The research shows that students who bully are not necessarily the physically dominant student with self-esteem issues. Research identifies students who bully as often:

- being popular
- having good leadership skills
- not malicious in their intent
- thoughtless in their actions.

Professor Michael Bernard (author of the 'You Can Do It' program) states that students who bully can most often be categorised into two groups. The first being those who are socially and emotionally delayed and the second being those who are popular and domineering.

In the 'Action Against Bullying' Education Series, Dr Michael Carr-Gregg identified other characteristics of bullies, for example they often have:

- high energy
- good verbal skills and an ability to talk themselves out of trouble
- a high estimation of their own ability
- an ability to manipulate individuals or groups
- an enjoyment of conflict and aggression
- a delight in getting their own way
- the appearance of being popular but often disliked.

## **Bystanders to Bullying**

### **Bullying as a social relationship**

Bullying is more than a relationship between students who bully and students who are bullied. It is a social relationship involving group values and group standards of behaviour that requires consistent action across the College community to achieve positive change. Not all students play a clear role as either the student who is bullying or the student who is being bullied. Students may take on different roles in different circumstances. Most students are not directly involved in bullying although many may be affected as bystanders. Bystanders can play a vital role in the prevention of bullying by supporting students who are bullied, telling someone to seek help for that person and influencing their peer group to refrain from bullying others.

### **How students respond to bullying**

Peers perceive that the most likely way to stop bullying is to respond to bullying by staying calm and behaving in a way that suggests the bullying has no effect. Students who respond to bullying in ways that suggests a sense of helplessness, like crying or who respond with aggression, are perceived by peers as encouraging the bullying behaviour to continue.

Student attitudes toward bullying can be grouped into three areas:

- A desire to support victims
- A tendency to reject students who are bullied for being weak
- A readiness to justify bullying and support the bully

Other research findings are as follows:

- Most students are in favour of supporting students who are bullied and seeing action taken to stop bullying
- Boys are less supportive of children who are bullied than girls
- Support for students who are bullied decreases with age, with students under twelve being most supportive

Classroom learning and whole-college responses to bullying should build upon the student's pro-social desires for bullying to stop and their inclinations to help victims.

### **An important group: Bystanders**

The role of the bystander is crucial to the prevention of bullying. The bystander is more often than not a peer of the student bullying or a peer of the victim of bullying. The attitudes and stance of the peer group have a powerful impact on the outcome of the incident. In the classroom, peers have been observed to be involved in 85% of bullying episodes, with this involvement ranging from actively participating to passively onlooking. Peers have also been observed to be present during most bullying incidents in the playground.

As bystanders, peers can either reinforce the bullying behaviour through their own behaviour or disdainfully move away or intervene to stop bullying. A bystander's influence can be utilised in a positive way to protect the person being bullied and to motivate students who bully to change their behaviour.

By mobilising positive peer influence against bullying behaviour, students who are bullied will feel supported and more confident in applying the skills they have learnt to the wider setting of the College environment.

Training in assertive responses can also help to provide the skills necessary for bystanders to respond in a way that does not promote bullying by helping them to resist group pressure to join in or do nothing.

Different types of bullying and bullying situations require different responses. All behaviours should be linked with the consequences for action in the Constructive Discipline Policy.

### **What can bystanders do?**

#### **If a child sees another child being bullied he or she could:**

1. Refuse to join in with his or her bullying and walk away
2. Make a stance and firmly tell the person doing the bullying that what they are doing is bullying and against the rules
3. Ask a teacher or support person for help
4. Support the student who is being bullied
5. Support their friends and protect them from bullying in the future (children who are alone are more likely to be the target of bullying)

**All students of the College will be taught about the dynamics of bystanders.**

**Bystanders can be identified in the following categories** (adapted from 'The Bystander' Against Bullying DVD Series #2, Classroom Video, Australia, 2009):

*For Middle and Senior School Students:*

1. **Assistants:** students who actively join in the bullying (sometimes because they are afraid of the ring-leader).
2. **Reinforcers:** students who give positive feedback to the student doing the bullying, for example through comments, by smiling or laughing.
3. **Outsiders:** students remain silent or watch and therefore appear to condone the bullying behaviour or who want to keep themselves safe by not drawing attention to themselves out of fear of the bully.
4. **Defenders:** students who try to intervene to stop the bullying or comfort students who experience bullying.

### **There are no innocent spectators!**

*For Junior School Students:*

1. **Sharks:** students who actively join in the bullying or reinforce the bullying
2. **Dolphins:** students who try to stop the bullying and seek help from a staff member



## **Bullying Reduction and Prevention**

### **Students are the key to a successful Anti-Bullying Campaign**

Students have proven to be the key to a successful anti-bullying campaign because they usually know what is going on among the students long before the adults do. Students are most likely to support an anti-bullying campaign when they have been directly involved in determining the need for such a program and deciding on its implementation. This includes developing bullying policies and college-wide or classroom strategies.

When it comes to discipline or punishment issues, most students strongly believe in fairness and therefore, welcome anti-bullying campaigns that encourage treating others with care and respect. It is necessary for students to promote the concept that caring for others is a valued quality, one that they accept and encourage.

### **When is a good time to begin bullying prevention?**

Research suggests that interventions at the Junior School level are particularly important because:

- In general, younger children are bullied more often than older children
- Children are more supportive of victims at this age
- Children are most amenable to discussing bullying at ages ten and eleven

### **Assertive skills training**

An important aspect of bullying interventions is to aid the person being bullied in developing alternative responses to aggression, such as assertion. Students who are active in responding positively to bullying report lower levels of stress and less negative effects of being bullied than those who are passive. Assertive skills training has been shown to increase a bullied student's self-esteem increase a bullied student's confidence in the face of being bullied and reduce the amount of bullying experienced.

Helping students increase their social skills is likely to be most effective when it is done as part of a whole-college approach to address bullying. By implementing assertiveness training as part of a whole-college approach, the philosophy promoted is one in which bullying is not seen as just the bullied student's problem and something that they should manage on their own. By mobilising positive peer pressure against bullying behaviour at the same time, students who are bullied will feel supported and more confident in applying the skills they have learnt to the wider setting of the College environment.

### **Open Communication about Bullying**

*It is 'Okay' to talk about problems*

Student awareness that they have the right to seek help to resolve any bullying problems should be raised and regularly encouraged.

### **Dealing with 'Dobbing'**

'Dobbing' is when a person tries to get attention or to get someone else into trouble.

'Asking for help' is when someone feels the situation is out of their control and he or she is unable to deal with it alone and needs help.

### **Asking for help is always 'okay'**

If anyone sees someone else in this situation they should also ask for help.

### **Coping responses to being bullied**

All students, parents and staff need to work together and be provided with consistent information on how to deal with a bullying situation. Useful strategies, processes and information should be promoted through the:

- The Bullying Policy
- Classroom curriculum
- 'Connections' newsletter items
- Classroom posters

## **Prep to Year 6 (or Year 7) Student Action Plan using the 'High Five Strategy' (see Appendix 2)**

When I have a problem with another student I can:

1. **Ignore** the bullying by continuing working or playing, looking the other way or walking away
2. **Talk friendly** to the student bullying and asking them politely to stop
3. **Talk firmly** to the student bullying and warn them they will ask the teacher for help
4. **Tell the teacher** and ask for help in dealing with their problem
5. **Remember that I am 'Okay'** even if I am being bullied and that God loves me no matter what!  
*If anyone hurts you on purpose tell a teacher straight away without doing the High 5.*

## **Year 7 (or Year 8) - 12 Student Action Plan using the 'Seven Straight Up Strategies' (see Appendix 2)**

When I have a problem with another student I can:

1. Ignore the situation and keep playing or working
2. Walk away and ignore the person completely
3. Try to talk with the person you are having a problem with in a friendly way
4. Try making an agreement with the person you are having a problem with
5. Talk to a friend to get some ideas to make a decision
6. Try to stand up for yourself by speaking firmly in a positive way
7. Get help from a staff member you know and trust

### **Friendship and social support**

A child with a solid group of friends is less likely to be bullied than a child who is often alone or who just has one friend. Children who bully are careful to avoid those children who stand up for themselves and have supportive friends.

### **A Cooperative Culture**

Low levels of cooperative behaviour have been shown to be characteristic of both boys and girls who engage in bullying and, to a lesser extent, of children who are bullied.

This suggests that increasing both the capacity and motivation of children to cooperate would be beneficial as a means of reducing bullying. Indeed, research with pre-schoolers has demonstrated that during cooperative games, cooperative behaviour increased and aggressive behaviour decreased; conversely, competitive games were characterised by an increase in aggressive behaviour and decreases in cooperative behaviour. But it must be also understood that competitive games can help build resilience in children by teaching them 'how to lose gracefully'.

Not only do schools vary with regard to the level of bullying reported, but there is also significant variation between classes. A major contributing factor to this variation is class ethos, that is, the atmosphere that is generated within the classroom that either supports and colludes with bullying and aggressive behaviour or challenges these behaviours.

A cooperative Christian curriculum can provide a positive means of preventing bullying and fostering a culture in which bullying is less likely to occur in the first place. A cooperative Christian curriculum encourages commitment to values of trust and respect and a shared understanding of social rules and procedures. It increases the amount of positive social interaction experienced, promotes honest communication and the opportunity to learn to tolerate differing perspectives, and encourages both a positive sense of self and concern for one's own community. A Christian community is focussed on the ideal of what a loving and caring God would want.



Within such a cooperative classroom, peer approval is received for non-aggressive behaviour, but unacceptable behaviours, such as bullying, are met with rejection or challenge. Such a culture empowers students as they experience a sense of control over bullying behaviour. Students who are bullied are more likely to seek the support of others as they will expect to receive this support. Students who bully are likely to feel uncomfortable because they are breaking group norms and unlikely to receive a fearful or satisfactory response from their chosen victim.

## APPENDIX 2: The 'Incident Report Form' (Example of Carbrook Campus)

<b>BULLYING INCIDENT REPORT FORM</b>	
(to be forwarded to the relevant HoS of the complainant)	
Date: _____ Time: _____ Staff code: _____	
Complainant(s) name: _____ Yr level: ____	
Perpetrator(s) name: _____ Yr level: ____	
Bystander name(s):	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporter(s) of bullying: _____ Yr level ____</li> <li>• Witness(es): _____ Yr level ____</li> </ul>	
Level of Bullying: Low <input type="checkbox"/> Med <input type="checkbox"/> High <input type="checkbox"/>	
Type of Bullying	Details
<input type="checkbox"/> Physical <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal <input type="checkbox"/> Social <input type="checkbox"/> Other	
Was there any discipline given out? No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Verbal correction <input type="checkbox"/> Time-out <input type="checkbox"/> Demerit <input type="checkbox"/> Pick up litter <input type="checkbox"/>	
Other: _____	
Location	Closest feature
<input type="checkbox"/> Pre School <input type="checkbox"/> Ann Doyle <input type="checkbox"/> Gotfredsen <input type="checkbox"/> Old Oval <input type="checkbox"/> Oval (lower) <input type="checkbox"/> Oval (MPC) <input type="checkbox"/> Oval (JS) <input type="checkbox"/> Bus Area <input type="checkbox"/> Tuckshop <input type="checkbox"/> Buildings <input type="checkbox"/> PATC	

# High Five

## Ignore:

1. Keep playing
2. Look away
3. Walk away

## Talk Friendly:

1. Think first
2. Stay calm
3. Talk politely

## Talk Firmly:

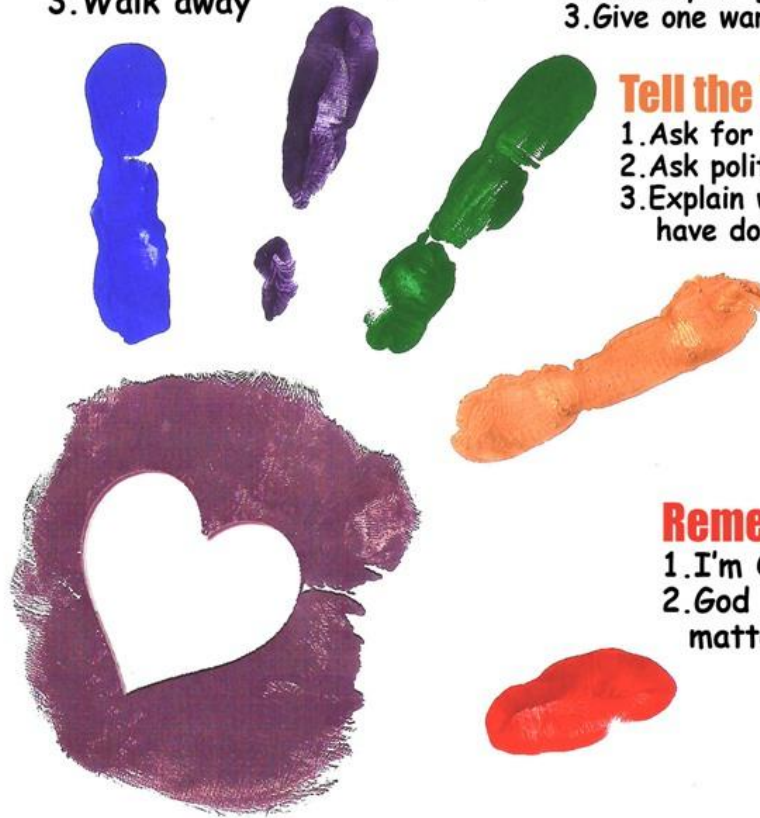
1. Think first
2. Stand your ground
3. Give one warning

## Tell the Teacher:

1. Ask for 'help'
2. Ask politely
3. Explain what you have done

## Remember:

1. I'm OK!
2. God loves me no matter what!



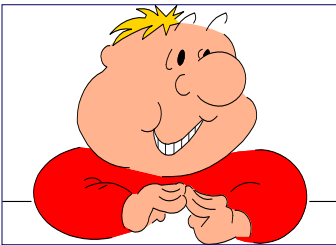
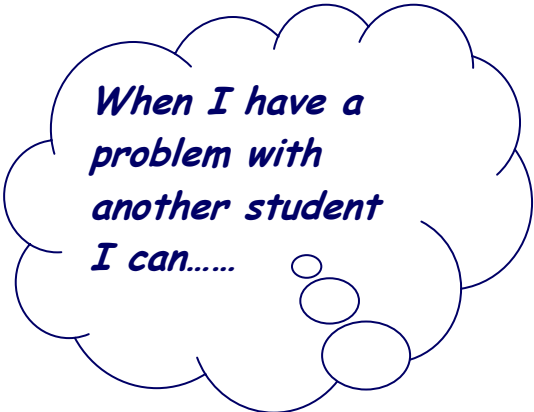
If anyone hurts you on purpose tell a teacher straight away without doing the High 5!

**APPENDIX 4: The 'Seven Straight Up Strategies' for Middle and Senior School Students (based on Matthew 18:15 - 20)**

**1. Ignore the situation and keep playing or working.**

**2. Walk away and ignore the person completely.**

**3. Try to talk with the person you are having a problem with in a friendly way.**



**4. Try making an agreement with the person you are having a problem with.**

**7. Get help from a staff member you know and trust.**

**6. Try to stand up for yourself by speaking firmly in a positive way.**

**5. Talk to a friend to get some ideas to make a decision.**

**If someone is abusing you (physical, racial, emotional or sexual), you are to bypass the 'Seven Straight Up Strategies' and report to a teacher straight away.**

## References:

*'Friendly Schools & Families Whole School Pack'* produced by Prof Donna Cross for the Child Health Promotion Research Unit, Edith Cowan University W.A. 2004

*'National Safe Schools Framework'* prepared by the Student Learning and Support Services Taskforce of the MCEETYA, 2003.

*'Bullying Solutions, evidence-based approaches to bullying in Australian schools'* edited by H Mc Grath & T Noble. Pearson Ed Aust, 2006

*'Bullying Among Young Children'* by Prof Ken Rigby, produced by the Australia Government Attorney-General's Department, 2003.

Rigby, K. (2010). *Addressing Bulling in Queensland Schools*: Consultancy for the Department of Education and Training, Brisbane.

*'Restorative Practices in Schools'* by Margaret Thorsborne, 2003.

*'Crying for Help, the No Blame approach to bullying.'* By G Robinson and B Maines. Inyahead Press,1997.

Bullying DVD series *'Not in My Class', 'Girl's Business' & 'No Bullying in our Community'* produced by M McAuliffe, Video Education Australasia Pty Ltd, 2005

*'Why Schools Continue to Drop the Ball in Dealing with Bullying'* by J Hamilton, McInnes Wilson Lawyers, 2007

*'Teenagers and Technology: A Contemporary Threat Confronting our Schools'* by L Oldham, McInnes Wilson Lawyers, 2010

## **Additional Resources:**

### ***Alannah and Madeline Foundation***

<http://www.amf.org.au/AboutUs/>

### ***BOUNCE BACK!***

<http://www.bounceback.com.au/>

### ***Cybersmart (ACMA)***

<http://www.cybersmart.gov.au/en.aspx>

<http://www.cybersmart.gov.au/Parents.aspx>

### ***FRIENDS for Life***

[www.friendsinfo.net/index.html](http://www.friendsinfo.net/index.html)

### ***Friendly Schools and Families Program***

<http://www.friendlyschools.com.au/about.php>

### ***Hector's World***

<http://www.hectorsworld.com/island/index.html>

### ***KidsMatter***

<http://www.kidsmatter.edu.au>

### ***MindMatters***

<http://www.mindmatters.edu.au/default.asp>

### ***National Centre Against Bullying***

<http://www.ncab.org.au/about/>

### ***National Safe Schools Framework***

[http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/school\\_education/publications\\_resources/profiles/national\\_safe\\_schools\\_framework.htm](http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/school_education/publications_resources/profiles/national_safe_schools_framework.htm)

### ***The Queensland Schools Alliance Against Violence***

<http://education.qld.gov.au/student-services/behaviour/qsaaav/index.html>

### ***You Can Do It!***

[www.youcandoit.com.au](http://www.youcandoit.com.au)