



St Clare's Catholic High School

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Student Anti-Bullying Policy

Person(s) Responsible	Assistant Principal/Pastoral Care Coordinators
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1. P R E A M B L E

Catholic schools have the responsibility to promote cultures of trust, cooperation and respect in the lived experience of the Catholic Christian setting. Bullying in a school mitigates such a culture and inhibits the development of positive relational outcomes for the common good of students, teachers and caregivers.

It is the goal of St Clare’s Catholic High School to promote a safe environment where every individual may grow and develop. Well-articulated, understood and implemented policies and procedures facilitate such a goal and minimise the risk of inappropriate behaviours becoming accepted, tolerated or even endemic.

“.....(Catholic) schools will have as their goal the formation of Christian disciples, with appropriate world view, character and behaviour.” (Catholic Schools at the Crossroads, p14)

The modelling of positive behaviours and anti-bullying strategies in schools has become an important aspect of student learning and parent reporting. It is also necessary for students to be involved in the evaluation of processes, for regular policy review and dialogue at staff level and for easy policy access for parents and the community.

“The goals of anti-bullying initiatives also align with the teaching in schools of socio-moral values such as respect, support/care, cooperation, acceptance or difference and inclusion” (McGrath & Noble, 2003).

2 . R A T I O N A L E

The role of St Clare’s Catholic High School, in partnership with parents and caregivers, is to nurture young people by providing optimum levels of support in learning, positive interpersonal relationship experiences and social support networks. The culture and atmosphere of our school plays a significant role in students developing a balanced approach to life and learning. With this in mind Bullying behaviour is in conflict with the core values and purpose of a Catholic school. Bullying needs to be recognised, named and addressed to ensure all schools work towards an authentic Christian school culture.

3. AIMS

Being committed to the care and welfare of all our students, St Clare's expects this policy to:

- 3.1. Counter any views that bullying is an inevitable part of school life.
- 3.2. Provide a safe, happy and positive learning environment for all our students and staff.
- 3.3. Create a supportive climate and to break down the code of secrecy that protects the bully.
- 3.4. Provide suitable counselling services for both the bully and the victim.
- 3.5. Provide a physical environment which engenders good behavioural patterns.
- 3.6. Move beyond a crisis management approach to the creation of an environment that is free of abuse.
- 3.7. Identify bullies within the school.

4. DEFINITIONS

Whilst there is no definitive and universally accepted definition of bullying, the most influential research in the area of what constitutes bullying has been proposed by Olweus (1993):

"...bullying may be defined as a student being exposed, repeatedly and over time, to intentional injury or discomfort inflicted by one or more other students. This may include physical contact, verbal assault, making obscene gestures or facial expressions, and intentionally excluding the student."

The National Safe Schools Framework (2011) defines bullying as 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.

"...Bullying is thus conceived largely in behavioural terms, that is, it involves negative actions on the part of the perpetrator." [Rigby (2006) from *Bullying Solutions* p.4]

It is important to note that cyber bullying has become a significant area of concern and action in recent years.

Cyber bullying may be defined as:

“..... any form of bullying that utilises technology such as instant messaging, online chat rooms, online bulletin boards and email. In many ways this is a more insidious form of bullying since it may reach into a victim’s home.” In other words, technology now allows the bully to inflict psychological harm on his or her victim anywhere and anytime without respite. (Schools and the Law - Des Butler and Ben Matthews p.46)

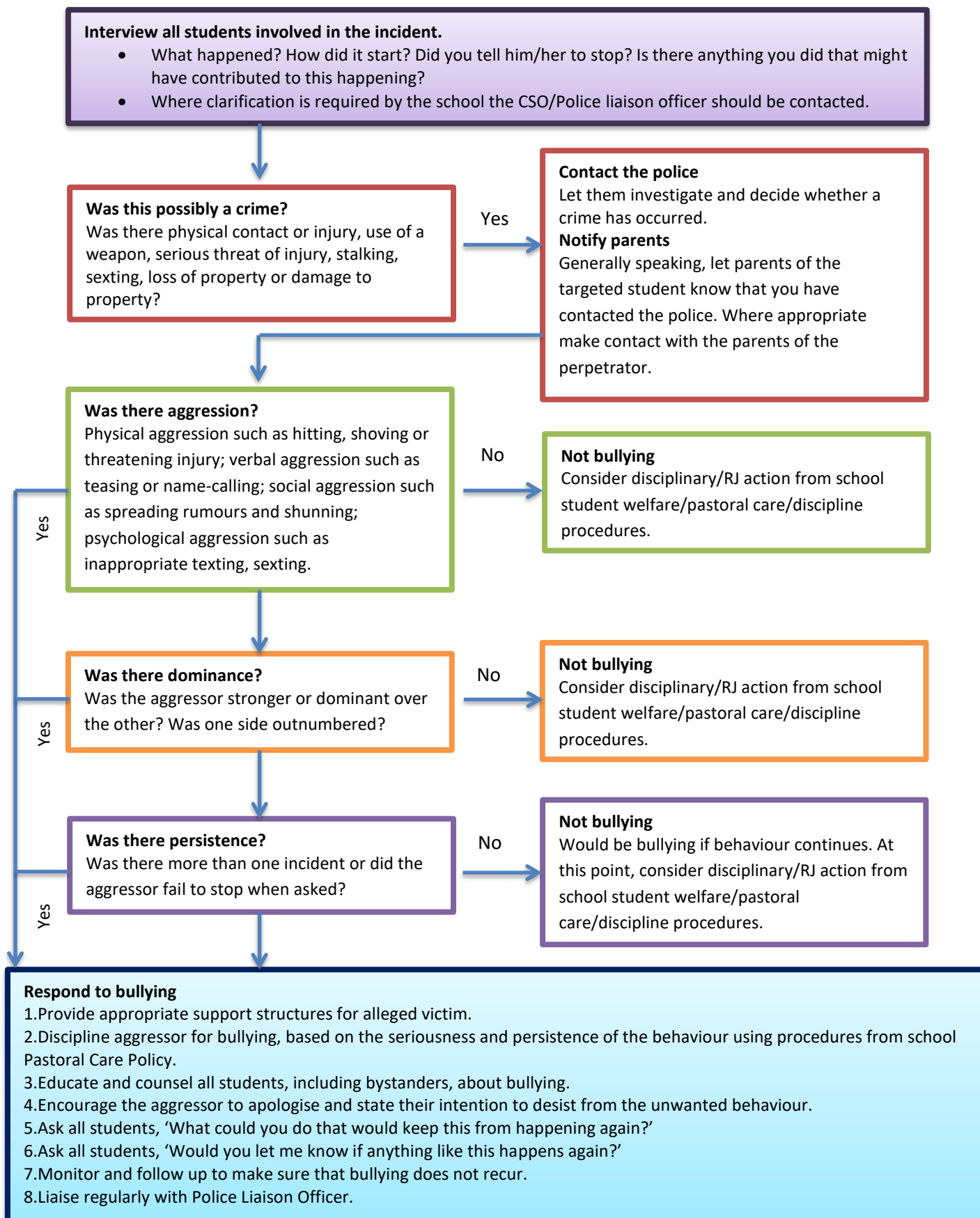
The Commonwealth Code sets as an offence the use of a carriage service (such as a mobile or internet) in a way that is menacing, harassing or offensive. The maximum penalty for committing the offence is 3 years imprisonment.

‘Sexting’ is an occurrence that may be considered bullying. Under present legislation perpetrators place themselves in the serious position of making, viewing and or sending inappropriate and unlawful material.

Conflict or fights between students or single incidents are not usually defined as bullying.

5 . BULLYING ASSESSMENT

5.1. Identification of Bullying and what it is NOT.



6 RESPONSIBILITIES

6.1 The Principal will:

- Develop a shared understanding with staff and community members of bullying behaviour that involves all forms of bullying including cyber bullying.
- Ensure the development, implementation and evaluation of preventative strategies and programs to promote student safety and wellbeing.
- Provide support to any student who has been affected by, engaged in or witnessed bullying behaviour.
- Be responsible for the implementation of the school's anti-bullying policy and procedures.
- Initiate police support (Police liaison officers) and/or intervention when required.
- Provide regular updates to parents, or caregivers, regarding the management of specific incidents.
- Ensure that an annual communication of the contents of the policy be made to the school community.
- Maintain an ongoing and annual evaluation process of the policy with students, staff and caregivers.
- Monitor student understanding and satisfaction of school processes.
- Identify patterns of bullying behaviour and initiate school action to address them.
- Engage students in the evaluation of anti-bullying processes within the school.

6.2 School staff

All staff members must:-

- Be alert for early signs of stress in students.
- Report all incidents or suspected incidents in writing to the relevant Pastoral Care Coordinator.
- Offer the victim immediate support and help.
- Use all of their students as a positive resource in countering bullying and take the time to discuss the problem in classroom situations and/or assemblies.
- Empower students with the use of consistent behaviour management techniques, positive reinforcement for appropriate behaviour and classroom specific unified language.
- Conduct at least once a semester an 'identify a bully' survey during Pastoral Care.
- Ensure that students in Pastoral Care are encouraged to co-operate fully in identifying incidents of bullying of their classmates.
- Enforce the Schools "Hands off Policy".
- Use of a variety of educational and supportive efforts (e.g., restorative questioning) in response to bullying and the use of, when necessary, negative consequences.

6.3 Students:

By constant instruction and affirmation, students are encouraged to become aware that:-

- All incidents of bullying must be reported to a trusted teacher or to the student's Pastoral Coordinator.
- They must support the bully identification initiatives of the St Clare's community.
- Under no circumstances should bullying be allowed to occur; they should never provide an audience by standing by.
- It is a responsibility to encourage victims of bullying to seek assistance.
- Reducing bullying enhances the educational climate and the ability of individuals to perform at their best.
- Playground games and 'mucking' around can conceal bullying.
- They can assist friends and other members of their Year group in being safe at school by reporting bullying or intimidation.

6.3 Parents:

Parents can make a significant contribution to the achievement of this policy by:

- Watching for signs of distress in their child. There could be an unwillingness to attend school, a pattern of headaches or stomach aches, a loss of equipment, requests for extra pocket money, damaged clothing or bruising, loss of self confidence and self-esteem.
- Taking an active interest in their child's social life.
- Informing their child's Pastoral Care Coordinator, Assistant Principal or Principal, immediately they think their child is a victim of bullying.
- Advising their child to contact a trusted teacher.
- Encouraging their child NOT to hit back or respond verbally.
- Actively listening to their child as they discuss the situation of their friends.
- Spend time listening and provide physical signs of love and affection.
- Attend Parent information nights on the topic of bullying and other well-being issues, when provided.

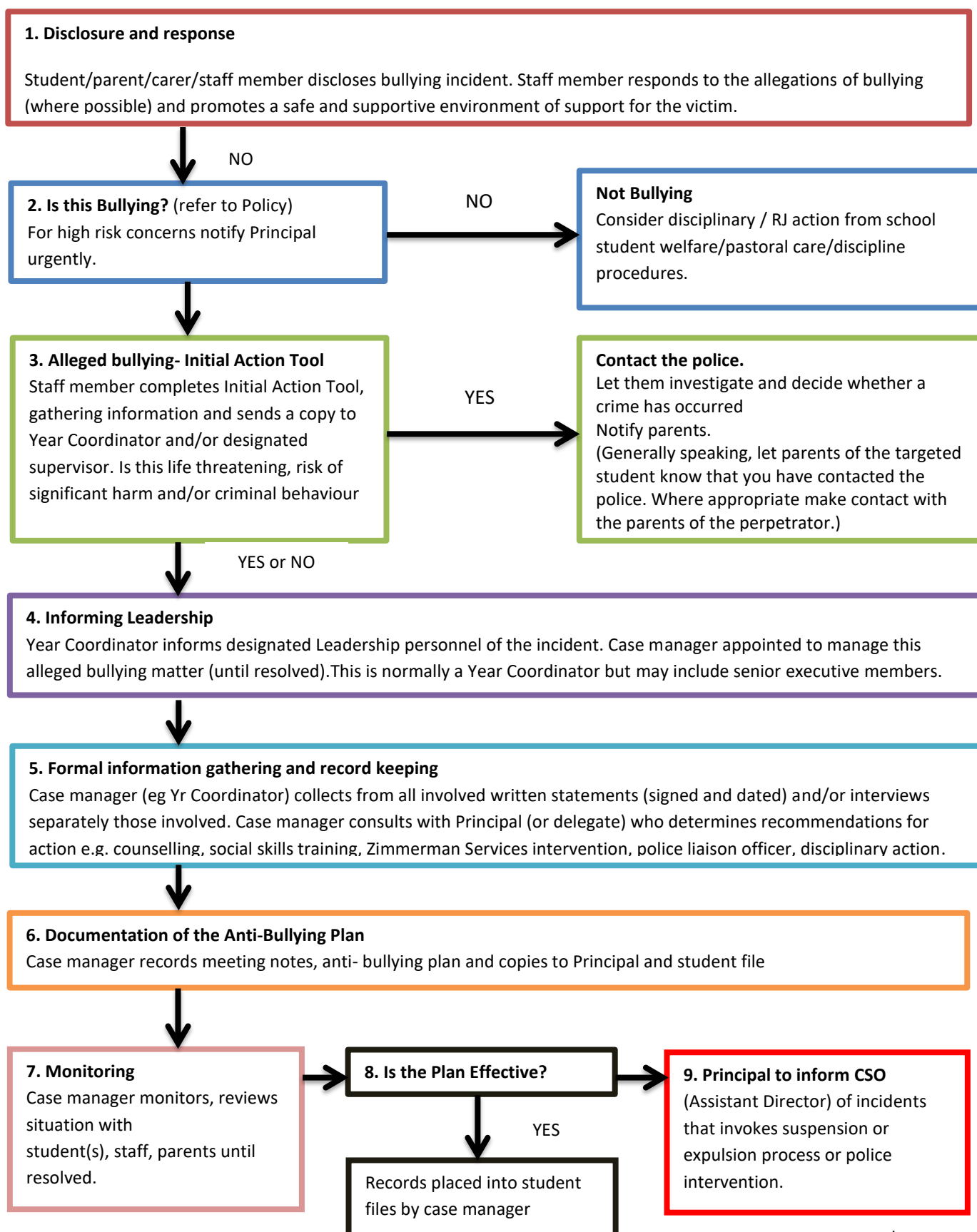
7 RESPONSES TO BULLYING

7.1 The response to and/or consequences of bullying are outlined in the 'Restorative Actions Procedures' document depending on the degree of seriousness. The options available may include more than one of the following:

- Initial investigation will occur including a Student Interview with the relevant Pastoral Care Coordinator, Assistant Principal or Principal.
 - Necessary documentation will occur at this stage including the completion of the relevant initial action tool, and written statements from all major stake holders.
- Consultation between the Pastoral Care coordinator and other members of the pastoral team.
- Parental contact by phone, this may also include formal notification through letter.
- Restorative Justice Conference for all major stakeholders.
- Parental Interview.
- Counselling (either by the school counsellor or referral to an external agency).
- Participation in Wellbeing or Social Skills programs.
- Placement within the school discipline system.
 - The severity of the incident will determine the behavioural management response. (records to be stored on school data base) Internal Suspension, External Suspension, Conditional Enrolment.
- Exclusion, investigation of alternative educational options.
- Regular monitoring of all involved by relevant Pastoral Care coordinator or delegate.
- Police intervention - situations when police intervention is required in cases of bullying (e.g. Possession of weapon, extreme assault) and cyber bullying (e.g.sexting) – see Support Document 4. Advice for Principals (Feb 2012)

8 ANTI-BULLYING PROCEDURES

8.1 Anti-Bullying staff flowchart



9 RESOURCES/CONTACTS

- Catholic Schools Office - Maitland Newcastle
 - Pastoral Care document,
 - Student Anti Bullying Policy 2012
 - Anti-Bullying Support Document 2012
- www.bullyingnoway.com.au
- www.curriculum.edu.au/mctyapdf/natsafeschools
- www.bullying.org/help
- www.kidshelp.com.au
- www.nobully.org.nz
- www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/bullying
- Bullying Poster (displayed in each classroom)
- Kids Help line: 1800 551 800
- Parent Help line: 13 20 55
- [www. cybersmart.gov.au/schools.aspx](http://www.cybersmart.gov.au/schools.aspx)
- Police Youth Liaison Officer – Ph. 02 6552 0317, Email: barr1bra@police.nsw.gov.au
- Centacare catholic family welfare services – Ph. 02 6551 3715
- Community Health Ph. 02 6592 9315
- Anti-Bullying Learning & Teaching Resource (ALTER), CEO Wollongong DVD.
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EA5C-1N_r1w

10. BUDGET

- 10.1 The Catholic Schools Office will make provision each year in its annual budget for professional development opportunities for schools in this area.
- 10.2 The school will budget for anti-bullying resources that develop ongoing understanding and ownership of programs.

11. EVALUATION

- 11.1 The school will annually revisit the procedures explicit within the Anti-bullying policy and evaluate their currency.
- 11.2 As part of the school Policy review and development cycle, the Anti-bullying Policy will be reviewed by staff/committee at regular interval.

12 APPENDICES

Alleged Bullying – Initial Action Tool

Bullying is a serious offence and is not acceptable in our school. All school employees are required to report alleged violations and every act of bullying will be duly investigated, and parents/carer informed.

School:

Teacher investigating incident:

Student Name: **PC Class:**

Date of incident: **Time of incident:**

Where did the incident occur? Please circle:

On bus transport in playground in classroom outside school
other

Who reported the alleged incident? Please circle:

Alleged victim(s) other student(s) Parent/Carer Member of staff Wider school

Identify the nature of the alleged bullying incident: Please tick:

- Written: e.g. graffiti, notes, letters, writing on books, written threats, ridicule through drawings, etc.
- Social: e.g. lying, spreading rumours, playing a nasty joke, mimicking and deliberate exclusion, etc.
- Verbal: e.g. name-calling, insults, threats, severe sarcasm, abusive comments, racist remarks, etc.
- Physical: e.g. pushing, shoving, fighting, tripping, hitting, poking, spitting, etc.
- Cyber: e.g. using technology such as email, mobile phones, chat rooms, social networking sites, etc. to verbally, socially or psychologically bully
- Psychological bullying: e.g. intimidation, manipulation and stalking
- Damage to property: e.g. theft of bags, clothes, money, property, tearing clothes, ripping books, etc.
- Bystander: Encouraging others to bully or witnessing bullying without taking affirmative action.

Briefly outline what occurred in the alleged incident:

Is there concern the alleged incident may have been influenced by any of the following? Please circle:

Race/culture Disability Gender Socio-economic status Other

Is there evidence of an imbalance of power in this incident through either: Please circle:

Academic ability Age Social status Strength Size Other

Is there evidence that this behaviour is deliberate or planned?

According to the alleged victim has he/she experienced other or repeated incidences of bullying from the alleged perpetrator? (If yes, please give dates, who was involved, outcomes.)

Is there any relevant background/history to this alleged incident?

Were there any witnesses? (Identify student names and homerooms)

What do the witnesses to the alleged incident perceive happened?

What effect is the situation having on the alleged victim's wellbeing including self-esteem, feelings about school, motivation, relationships with peers, physical health, etc?

What is required to resolve this situation now and in the future?

Indicate the investigative procedures carried out. Please tick:

- Interviewed student (s) involved
- Interview Parents of victim(s)
- Interviewed parents of alleged perpetrator(s)

After investigation, was the allegation of bullying substantiated? Please circle

Yes / No

If **'No'**, please sign below and place a copy of this bullying Situation Analysis Tool into student(s) file and refer to the school's Behaviour Management Policy.

If **'Yes'**, please sign below, place copy of this Bullying Situation Analysis Tool into student(s) file and refer incident to the Year Co-ordinator or Assistant Principal/Principal.

Signed:

Date:

Bullying – Survey

Student Name: _____

Year Group: _____ Date: _____

1. Have you ever witnessed someone being **Bullied** by another student? YES / NO (Circle)
2. If YES, who was the **Victim**?

3. Who was the **Bully(s)**?

4. Describe what happened.

5. Have you ever been **Bullied**? YES / NO
6. If YES, who was the **Bully(s)**?

7. Describe what happened?
