ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

1. PURPOSE

1.1 Whitefriars Catholic School is committed to ensuring a safe environment exemplified by positive, respectful relationships for all members of the school community. Whitefriars will take all reasonable steps to minimise bullying or harassment ensuring all members of the school community are treated with dignity and respect.

1.2 Through the application of this policy, we at Whitefriars Catholic School aim to:
- Facilitate an environment and community where bullying and harassment are not tolerated, and students have instilled values and practice of respecting the dignity and well-being of all other individuals. Specifically, the Policy aims to prevent, reduce and manage bullying and harassment by or of students.
- Act in ways consistent with the Guiding Principles of our school. These principles identify our school as a place which witnesses values exemplified by relationships based on respect and restorative justice through reconciliation,
- Respond to bullying and harassment in an informed, supportive and effective manner. This Policy is focused on bullying & harassment between children. Should a situation arise where a child is bullied or harassed by an adult this will be referred to the Principal as outlined in the Resolution Procedure for Parents/ Caregivers (refer 6.1).

2. UNDERLYING PRINCIPLES

2.1 Everyone has the fundamental right to be treated with dignity and respect, free from discrimination of any kind, including but not limited to race, colour, gender, language, religion, political or other opinions, national or social origin, property, birth or another status. We believe that:
- Safety is a basic human right and a pre-requisite for a Catholic School to be able to carry out its mission to educate.
- We are all created in the image of God.
- We all have the right to feel safe.
- We all have the right to learn and work in a safe environment.
- We all have the right to feel happy about who we are.
- We all have the responsibility to keep ourselves and others safe.
- We all have the responsibility to respect ourselves, others, and the property of others.
- We all have the responsibility to restore relationships when conflict or harm has occurred.

3. DEFINITIONS

3.1 **Bullying**
Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical, social and/ or cyber behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/ or psychological

harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening.

- Bullying can happen in person or online, it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time.
- Behaviours that do not constitute bullying include:
  - 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
- However, these conflicts still need to be addressed and resolved.

3.2 Harassment
Harassment is behaviour that is demeaning, offensive, humiliating or intimidating to an individual or group due to their:

- Identity, race, culture or ethnic origin
- Religion
- Physical characteristics
- Gender
- Sexual orientation
- Marital, parenting or economic status
- Age
- Ability or disability.

It offends, humiliates, intimidates or creates a hostile environment. It may be:

- An ongoing pattern of behaviour or a single act
- Directed randomly or towards the same person(s)
- Intentional or unintentional

3.3 Discrimination
Discrimination occurs when an individual or group is treated less favourably than others due to their:

- Identity, race, culture or ethnic origin
- Religion
- Physical characteristics
- Gender
- Sexual orientation
- Marital, parenting or economic status
- Age
- Ability or disability.

3.4 Violence
Violence is the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against another person(s) that results in psychological harm, injury or in some cases death. It may involve provoked or unprovoked acts and can be a single incident, a random act or can occur over time.

4. TYPES OF BULLYING

4.1   Bullying is usually described by the types of behaviour involved; verbal, social and physical. However, the behaviours alone don't define bullying. If these behaviours occur only once or are part

of a conflict between equals they are not bullying. Bullying is sometimes also labelled by where it occurs or by what type of harm is done.

4.2 **Behaviour**
There are 3 types of bullying behaviour:
- Verbal Bullying – involves but is not limited to name calling, put downs, pay outs, offensive language, slander (putting people down behind their back), teasing, threats to 'get' others, pressuring people to do things against their will, making jokes or showing offensive reading matter or pictures and making comments about another person's sexuality.
- Social Bullying – involves but is not limited to consistently excluding another person, spreading rumours, embarrassing someone in public, preventing people from talking to someone, playing humiliating pranks or jokes, mimicking or making fun of someone, telling others to ignore or exclude someone and name calling in front of others.
- Physical Bullying – involves but is not limited to hitting, shoving, tripping, kicking, pinching, spitting, stealing and destroying someone's belongings.

4.3 **Setting**
Bullying can happen in 2 types of settings:
- In person – where verbal, social and physical bullying can occur.
- Online – where verbal and social bullying can occur, as can threats of physical bullying.

4.4 **Means**
Bullying can be by direct or indirect means:
- Direct Bullying – includes behaviours which are obvious and easily observed by others including pushing, kicking, name calling and excluding others from social activities.
- Indirect Bullying – not always immediately observable as it can be discreet and anonymous. The person experiencing the bullying may not realise until after it has occurred. Examples include damaging another person's social relationships and self-esteem through actions such as jokes shared with a group, demeaning someone's personal attributes, discreetly stealing personal belongings and sharing unflattering images online without permission.

4.5 **Visibility**
Bullying can be easy to see, called over or hidden from those not directly involved, known as covert:
- Overt Bullying – involves physical bullying or observable verbal bullying. Overt, direct, physical bullying is the most common depiction of bullying.
- Covert Bullying – can include repeatedly using hand gestures, threatening looks, whispering, excluding or turning your back on a person, restricting where a person can sit and who they can talk with. Covert social or verbal bullying can be subtle and even sometimes denied by a person who claims they were joking or 'just having fun'. This type mostly inflicts psychological harm rather than physical harm.

4.6 **Harm**
Bullying has the potential to cause harm that is physical or psychological:
- Physical Harm – includes physical injury or damage occurring as a result of bullying.
- Psychological Harm – when bullying impacts the mental health and wellbeing of those involved.

4.7 **Context**
The settings in which bullying can occur is known as the context and may include school, home, family, workplace, etc.

5. IN SUPPORT OF THIS POLICY

5.1   The Principal will:
- Ensure the school works collaboratively with the school community in implementing a comprehensive schoolwide approach to bullying. This includes:
  - the development, implementation and periodic review of the school's policy and procedures,
  - ensuring staff are trained and well-informed about how to respond to bullying and abide by the school's policy and procedures consistently and fairly,
  - educating students about positive social behaviours and how to develop and sustain these,
  - educating students about bullying, its negative impact on people and the responsibilities all members of the school community have in ensuring that it does not occur,
- Promote a safe and supportive school climate where all students are accepted,
- Ensure relationships of trust exist between the school and families,
- Model positive interpersonal relations when working with children, colleagues and parents/carers.

5.2   The School will:
- Implement in-class levels of support,
- Record in CESA School Management system,
- Offer counselling support to all parties,
- Mediate restorative meetings when required, permitted and agreed by all parties,
- Educate and inform students in relation to the Policy and its implications,
- Coordinate consequences.

5.3   Staff will:
- Model positive interpersonal relations when working with children, colleagues and families,
- Build relationships of trust with parents and carers,
- Ensure they are well-informed about and apply consistently and fairly the school's policy and procedures about bullying,
- Initiate action as required according to school policy and procedures when bullying is reported, or they witness it occurring. This includes:
  - listening carefully to all children who bring bullying issues to their attention,
  - Investigating reports to determine what is happening, documenting and responding appropriately to findings,
  - Inform, seek advice and escalate to school leadership as necessary,
  - Notifying all parents/carers involved to discuss the situation and to determine a plan of action to help resolve bullying incidents,
  - Assisting children to develop strategies to manage bullying incidents. This includes seeking to restore working relationships between the children involved,
  - Provide feedback to all parties involved,
  - Develop a Wellbeing Care Plan in collaboration with the Wellbeing Leader and the classroom teacher, in consultation with the student and their parents/carers, to provide tailored support and guidance.
  - Facilitate a restorative conversation between the victim and the bully, if deemed appropriate and with the consent of all parties involved, to promote understanding, accountability, and the rebuilding of relationships.

5.4   Parents/ Carers will:

- Promptly communicate with the class teacher or school leadership via phone, email or in-person if they suspect their child is involved in any bullying,
- Work cooperatively with the school in dealing effectively with bullying issues in ways consistent with school policy,
- Watch for changes in their child's behaviour or disposition that may indicate signs of bullying e.g. reluctance to go to school; unexplained injuries; being extra hungry; changes in mood; disturbed sleep patterns; wanting lifts to and from school,
- Support their child(ren) to develop strategies to effectively deal with bullying and to interact with others respectfully.

5.5 **Children will:**
- Interact with others respectfully and adhere to the school's anti-bullying policy,
- Participate in and learn from teaching and learning programs about bullying (refer 6.9),
- Communicate to a responsible adult their concerns if they find themselves or others being bullied,
- Develop and implement strategies to help them deal effectively with bullying,
- Participate fully in a restorative process to restore the working relationship(s) with those they have hurt or those that have been hurt,
- Not be a bystander and allow bullying to take place,
- Not assist a bully by either joining in or reinforcing the bully's behaviour by smiling, laughing or making comments that signal the behaviour is acceptable,
- Support a person who is being bullied by getting help from a teacher, distracting the students engaging in the bullying behaviour.

6. RELATED DOCUMENTS

6.1 Whitefriars Resolution Procedure for Parents and Caregivers v1
6.2 Bullying. No Way!
6.3 SACCS Policy for the Care, Wellbeing and Protection of Children & Young People 2011
6.4 SACCS Building Respectful Relationships: Behaviour Education and Student Behaviour Support Procedure 2019
6.5 SACCS Duty of Care Policy 2020
6.6 SACCS Duty of Care Procedures 2020
6.7 Whitefriars Duty of Care Policy
6.8 Whitefriars Duty of Care Procedure
6.9 The Respect Reset – A Bullying Prevention Program

7. DOCUMENT CONTROL

Title	Anti-Bullying Policy
Code	SSHW-26
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Approved by	Frank Congedi (Principal, Whitefriars Catholic School)
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