

St William's School Anti – Bullying Policy



In the spirit of our school Mission Statement and our beliefs about behaviour and learning at St William's, in partnership with parents, staff and students, we will strive to be a community who create a safe environment by:

- *Treating each other with dignity and respect*
- *Acting safely and responsibly*
- *Adopting a proactive rather than a reactive approach to bullying*
- *Working together to create a shared understanding of processes and procedures contained in this policy*
- *Support for those who are the victims of bullying*

Definition of Bullying and Cyberbullying

Bullying is the “repeated oppression, psychological or physical of a less powerful person by a more powerful person or group of persons” (Rigby, 1996)

Bullying is when someone has power over another person by hurting or harming that person, more than just once. The bullying is intentional and there is an imbalance of power. Bullying is continuing to 'pick on' someone, torment them or exclude them, so that the person feels helpless. Cyber bullying is another form of bullying that uses technology such as mobile phone and computers through MSM, text messaging, social networking and web pages.

At St William's we agree that if you are a bystander who is involved in a bullying incident or you witness bullying and do not report the incident, your behaviour is also bullying.

Forms of bullying:

- Physical: any form of violence or threat, intimidation.
- Verbal: name calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, persistent teasing, intimidation.
- Emotional: excluding, tormenting, ridicule, humiliation, intimidation.
- Racist: taunts, graffiti, gestures, intimidation.
- Sexual: unwanted physical contact, abusive comments, intimidation.
- Cyber: unwanted text messages, emails, information technology, intimidation.

Bullying behaviours include physical hurting or harming, teasing, excluding children or groups, name calling, rumour spreading, destroying property, cyber bullying through text messaging, web pages, social networking sites or instant messaging.

What is NOT Bullying at St William's School

In keeping with the above definition, “one off” incidents involving social isolation, conflict, random acts of aggression/intimidation or meanness are not defined as bullying.

Some examples of situations that are not bullying are:

- If there is a conflict between two students where there is an equal balance of power between students and both students want to find a solution to the conflict.
- Talking to a teacher or parents about something that someone has done.
- A random act of hurt or harm against another without that student provoking the other.
- A random act of destroying property.
- Leaving someone out of an activity once because of different interests or skills.
- Standing up for others if you have seen a bullying situation happen.
- Accidents are not bullying as they do not have intention to hurt or harm.

Responsibilities of Children

- To have an understanding of bullying, bullying behaviours, bystanders and cyberbullying.
- To appropriately report incidents – if you believe you are being bullied or as a bystander to a bullying incident.
- To help someone who is being bullied as a bystander.
- To not bully others.
- To use appropriate, positive anti-bullying behaviours.

Responsibilities of Staff

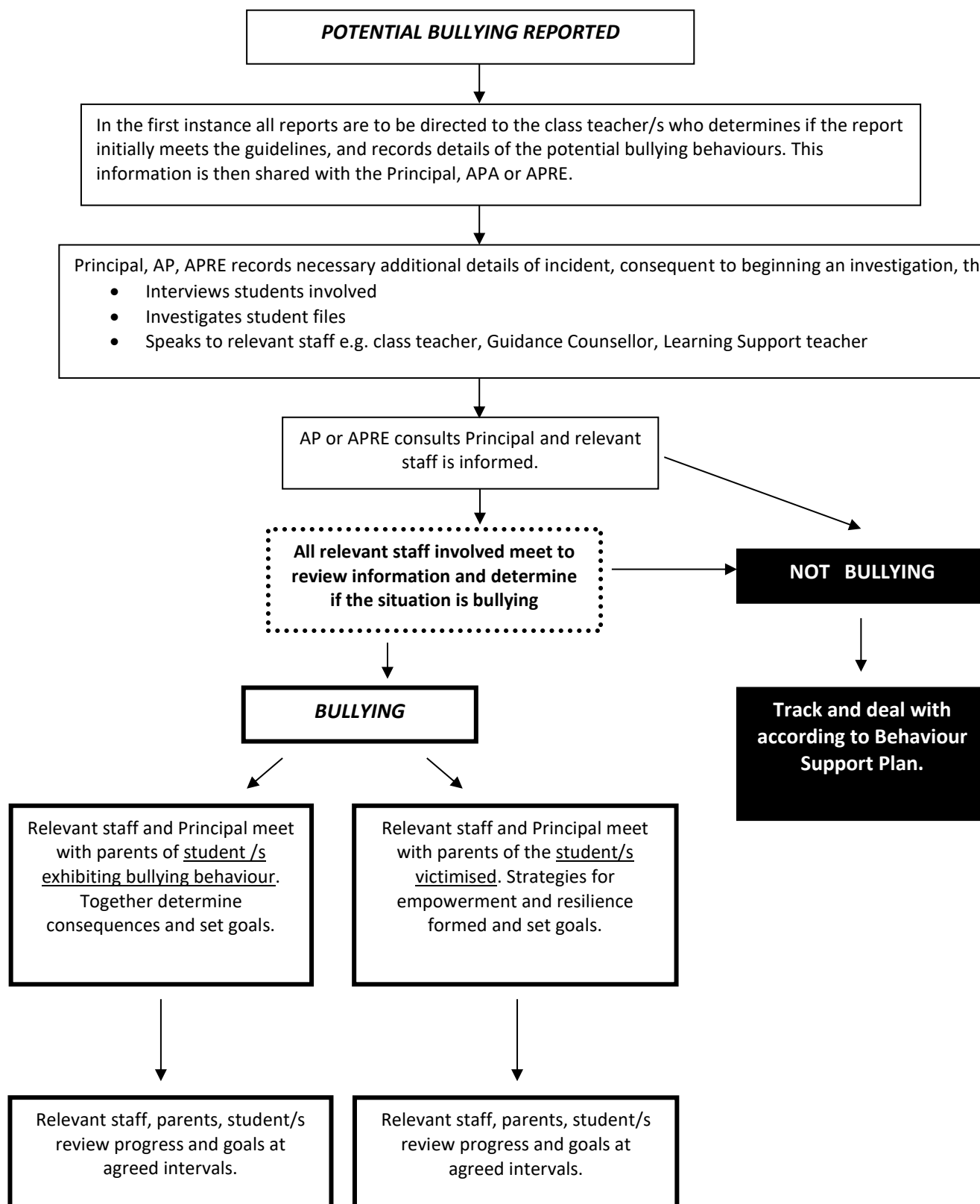
- To model, educate and suggest appropriate, positive anti-bullying behaviours and supportive bystander behaviours.
- To listen to all student reports and watch for signs of possible bullying.
- To ensure that children are supervised adequately.
- To respond to all reported and observed incidents of bullying as set out in this policy under **Responding to Bullying**. This includes identification of potential bullying by reporting through *Playground Incident Reports*. (See Appendix)

Responsibilities of Parents

- To support the information outlined in the St William's School Bullying Policy.
- To model, educate and discuss appropriate, positive anti-bullying behaviours.
- To watch for signs of possible bullying.
- To encourage and support your child to inform to a teacher if they are being bullied or witness bullying as a bystander.
- Parents may need to speak on their child's behalf about bullying to the class teacher. Under no circumstances should parents contact other parents or children regarding the issue.

Responding to Bullying

When a bullying incident is reported or observed the following steps will be taken. This process may be accelerated according to student age and the seriousness of the incident.



When an investigation about bullying is required, the following procedures will be followed:

1. St William's will use a 'no blame' approach and process in the first instance. Those involved will be interviewed and made aware of the bullying and the school's anti-bullying position. At this stage, there may not be any consequences and parents may not be notified. The incident, if deemed not to be bullying, will be referred back to the classroom teacher so the incident can be tracked according to the Positive Behaviour Support Plan.
2. If bullying is identified, Leadership Team members may choose to use the following methods with the children involved:
 - Method of shared concern.
 - Mediation.
 - Individual counselling.(Refer to Appendix for further explanation)

Parents of both the child exhibiting the bullying behaviour and the victim will be notified of the level and severity of the incident and its consequences. A record of the incident is kept on file.

3. Continued bullying would result in a further action plan being devised, appropriate consequences for the child, and further dialogue with the parents. The Guidance Counsellor and/or Learning Support may be involved in formulating this action plan.

All reports of bullying will be dealt with and recorded using a standard form (see Appendix). These forms will be kept on file.

How will the School Respond to Cyberbullying?

When a cyberbullying incident occurs, students are advised to tell an adult immediately and shut down the computer.

If it is observed at school, similar steps will be taken as outlined for **Responding to Bullying** incidents. If it is reported to the school, the school will assist to review the report and take appropriate action. St William's advises parents to report any cyberbullying or suspicious activity on the internet to the relevant authorities. For further information please refer to www.acma.gov.au and www.thinkuknow.org.au or contact your local Queensland Police station.

Support for the Victim and the Child Exhibiting the Bullying Behaviours

We support the victim in the following ways:

- By offering them an immediate opportunity to talk about the experience with their class teacher, or another teacher or member of administration.
- Informing the child's parents.
- Suggest and role play appropriate, positive anti-bullying behaviours with the child.
- By offering continuing support when they feel they need it and encouraging immediate reporting of incidents.
- By taking necessary actions to prevent more bullying.

We support the child doing the bullying in the following ways:

- By talking immediately about what has happened and the behaviours the child has been displaying, with their class teacher, or another teacher or member of administration.
- Informing the child's parents.
- By continuing to monitor the child's behaviour and offering appropriate support.
- By enforcing appropriate consequences that are directly linked to the child's bullying behaviour.

Positive, Proactive Anti-bullying and Cyber Safe Behaviours

At St William's we take a positive, proactive approach to bullying by teaching anti-bullying strategies to all students in Prep to Year 6 we continue to teach positive, proactive approaches to bullying. All children at St William's are encouraged to talk about bullying and to let someone know if they feel unsafe. If it continues, REPORT IT. Students can report to: parents, friends, class teacher, a teacher that the child is comfortable talking to, an older student or buddy, Principal, APA, APRE or Guidance Counsellor. This information is displayed on **Recognise React Report** posters in all classrooms. Also in these year levels, supportive bystander behaviours are taught, with a focus on safety and responsibility to report incidents of bullying or cyberbullying.

Safe and responsible use of the internet and all technologies is promoted in our school during our school assemblies and message times.

Some Useful Websites

www.bullyingnoway.com.au

www.antibullying.net/youngpeople.htm

www.education.unisa.edu.au/bullying/

www.stopbullyingnow.hrsa.gov/adult/indexAdult.asp?Area=cyberbullying

www.dfes.gov.uk/bullying/index.shtml

www.cyberquoll.com.au/hub.htm

www.thinkuknow.com.au

The St William's Behaviour Support Plan has been developed in accordance with Brisbane Catholic Education 'Student Behaviour Support Policy' and 'Student Behaviour Support Regulations and Guidelines'. For issues relating to suspension and exclusion please refer to these documents.