



## Policy for Preventing and Responding to Student Bullying

### OUR VISION FOR LEARNING AT ST KEVIN'S

*Inspired by St Kevin, our Catholic School is a community that is welcoming to all; fostering our connectedness to God, to each other, and to all of creation.*

*St Kevin's is a place of partnerships for contemporary learning, encouraging the growth and well-being of all, within a positive environment.*

*Learning at St Kevin's is inclusive, supportive, engaging and sustainable.*

At St Kevin's, we strive to provide an environment that is free from bullying. Everyone has the right to feel safe at school, valued and respected in our school environment. We believe when the dignity of each individual is respected, their full potential may be realised. We value positive behaviour which we believe can be learned and is taught, operating within the Positive Behaviour 4 Learning (PB4L) framework. We encourage growth and wellbeing for all as reflected in the [St Kevin's Vision for Learning](#) statement.

#### **DEFINITION:**

The national definition of bullying for Australian schools says:

*Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social 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 on-line, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert).*

*Bullying behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time (for example, through sharing of digital records – sharing of images, text or other media via email, sms/text messaging, social media etc).*

*Bullying of any form or for any reason can have immediate, medium and long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders.*

*Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.*

*This may include:*

- *physical behaviours*
- *verbal, physical, or psychological threats*
- *written threats (including emails, SMS messages and other forms of digital communication)*
- *teasing*
- *exclusion.*

*Behaviours that do not constitute bullying include:*

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

## **STRATEGIES AND PROCESSES:**

### **How we educate to minimise instances of bullying**

At St Kevin's we:

- ensure that members of our school community are taught about and understand what bullying is and what *does not* constitute bullying, the role of *bystanders* and how to respond to instances of bullying
- support and review already established programs such as the *St Kevin's Student Behaviour Support Plan*
- record information about student behaviour in the *BCE Engage database (Engage)*. Information is reviewed regularly
- implement everyday teaching and other practices for maintaining a positive school environment and relationships such as Peer Mediation and Buddies programs which play a major role in maintaining a safe and positive environment
- recognise positive behaviour through regular Spirit of Jesus, Student of the Week and Principal's Awards; and individual classes and groups use numerous strategies to recognise and reward positive behaviour.

### **How we respond to reported incidents**

At St Kevin's we:

- provide individual support for students who are bullied as well as those who bully others
- utilise processes that do not alienate, over-identify or compromise confidentiality for students who bully others
- implement appropriate responses, consequences and behaviour teaching for students who bully others
- continue to develop appropriate intervention strategies including individual, group and whole school initiatives.

## **PROCESS FOR RESPONDING TO REPORTED INSTANCES OF BULLYING**

When bullying is suspected or reported:

1. Incident is investigated by the member of teaching staff who observed an incident, or who an incident is reported to
2. Appropriate responses implemented by investigating teacher and recorded in *Engage*. If further support is required, incident is referred to Leadership Team or Guidance Counsellor. Details are recorded in *Engage* by member/s of teaching staff
3. Support for those who have been bullied e.g. support from Guidance Counsellor, Class Teacher
4. Appropriate responses, consequences and behaviour teaching for student(s) who have bullied others. Appropriate responses may include, teacher/student/parent conference, counselling, restorative practices etc.

Feedback is to be provided to the teacher/s who initially reported the incident of bullying, as well as the classroom teacher, including responses, details recorded in *Engage*. Parental contact occurs throughout the process.