Preventing and Responding to Instances of Student Bullying & Harassment

<u>Contents</u>

Chisholm Catholic College Bullying Prevention & Response Policy

Chisholm Catholic College Stands Together and Says NO to Bullying

Rationale

As a Catholic learning community, our students are challenged to live the gospel of Jesus Christ so they can participate critically and contribute authentically in the community and wider society. Our College recognises that for a successful tomorrow, our young people need a core belief, a sense of hope, opportunities to shine, to be recognised and extended…And then they will flourish. Our signature, however, will be what the students of Chisholm do as a result of the values they learnt here at our school. We aim to send young people of integrity out into the wider world. Young people who have achieved their best, who have self-confidence, a sense of justice, a recognition of the needs of others, care for the earth, possess an ability to think critically and act wisely, and love their fellow human beings.

As such, we are called to provide all students with opportunities to develop positive behaviours and self-discipline in a safe, supportive environment where mutually respectful relationships are the defining features of a dynamic, Christ-centred community. This is in line with the National Safe Schools Framework (2013) that has the following overarching vision:

All Australian schools are safe, supportive and respectful teaching and learning communities that promote student wellbeing. … In a safe and supportive school, the risk from all types of harm is minimised, diversity is valued, and all members of the school community feel respected and included and can be confident that they will receive support in the face of any threats to their safety or wellbeing (NSSF, 2013).

The prevention and management of bullying and harassment within the community is a concern for all. This document focuses the work of our community to ensure that Chisholm Catholic College students and staff will have:
➢ the right of respect from others
➢ the right to learn or teach
➢ the right to feel safe and secure in their school environment.

Purpose

This policy document, including guidelines and procedures, is intended to create a safe and supportive learning and teaching community by:

➢ ensuring that there are positive, proactive practices in support of student behaviour and wellbeing
➢ fostering positive and respectful relationships between all members of the community so that all feel cared for and supported
➢ promoting positive connection to the school community as a means of enhancing student safety and wellbeing
➢ articulating the College's and the community's shared understanding of bullying and how to best respond, and the agreed preventative and responsive strategies to be implemented within the school.
➢ ensuring that all programs of the College, including Pastoral Care, Teaching and Learning, promote preventative approaches to bullying and responsive approaches to restoring relationships.

Policy Statement

Chisholm Catholic College aims to provide a safe, supportive and respectful teaching and learning community that promotes the wellbeing of each individual student. We value respect, acceptance, and compassion as a foundation to affirm each student's worth and dignity. All students are entitled to an education free from humiliation, oppression and abuse.

The basic beliefs underlying the Policy are:

1. Each **student has value** in our community
2. Each student has the **right to feel safe** from bullying or harassment in all its forms
3. **Most conflicts can be resolved**. Our aim as a Catholic community is to restore and build up, encouraging each other to act in a manner that is in keeping with the ethos of the College. The college will take necessary steps to resolve all bullying situations in age appropriate

ways that may include consequences, forgiveness and restitution so that where possible, relationships are renewed and restored within the community.

4. Each student in a community is responsible for the safety of themselves and others in that community. As a college, we desire that **no cases of bullying go unreported**. It is every student's and parent's responsibility to report bullying to a relevant staff member to ensure support is provided to those involved in bullying situations.

5. Each student in a community is responsible for ensuring that other individuals in that community can **reach their potential in a supportive and non-threatening environment**.

This Policy is aimed at providing some guidelines as to how incidents are managed by the College.

Definitions

The following definitions have been taken from the National Safe Schools' Framework – NSSF (© 2010, revised 2013) and the Bullying No Way website that is linked to the NSSF, unless stated otherwise.

Aggression
Words or actions (overt and covert) that are directed towards another and intended to harm, distress, coerce or cause fear.

Bullying
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 can be overt (obvious bullying) or covert (a type of subtle social or verbal bullying, hidden from those not directly involved. It harms another's social reputation, relationships and self-esteem).

Discrimination
Discrimination occurs when people are treated less favourably than others because of 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 ongoing or a single, random act, as well as intentional or unintentional. This may lead to harm.

Harm

Any detrimental effect of a significant nature on the child's physical, psychological or emotional wellbeing (section 9 of the Child Protection Act 1999). For harm to be significant, the detrimental effect on a child's wellbeing must be substantial or serious, more than transitory and must be demonstrable in the child's presentation, functioning or behaviour (Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services, 2015).

Harassment

Behaviour that targets 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 ongoing or a single, random act, as well as intentional or unintentional. This may lead to harm.

Resilience

The ability to return to (almost) the same level of wellbeing and to continue to thrive despite encountering negative events, difficult situations, challenges or adversity.

Student wellbeing

A student's level of satisfaction with the quality of their life at school. Optimal wellbeing is characterised by positive feelings and attitudes, positive relationships with other students and teachers, resilience, and satisfaction with self and learning experiences at school.

Violence

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. Students can exhibit aggressive and violent behaviours that do not necessarily constitute bullying.

Types of bullying

> **Physical bullying:** any bullying that hurts someone's body or damages their possessions. Stealing, shoving, hitting, fighting, and destroying property all are types of physical bullying. Physical bullying is rarely the first form of bullying that a target will experience. Often bullying will begin in a different form and progress to physical violence (http://respect2all.org).
> **Verbal bullying:** an individual repeatedly uses verbal language (e.g. teasing, insults) to gain power over his/her peers in an attempt to degrade or demean.

➢ **Relational bullying:** also called social bullying, is repeatedly ostracising others or convincing peers to reject another person, as well as sharing rumours or private information.

➢ **Cyber bullying:** The use of electronic communication to bully a person, typically by sending messages of an intimidating or threatening nature (Rigby & Johnson, Bullying in schools: how well is it being addressed?, 2016).

The Australian Government knows that online safety is an important issue for schools and families. Many Government cyberbullying initiatives provide information for students, teachers, parents and the community on creating safe online environments.

The Office of the eSafety Commissioner is Australia's leader in online safety, helping young people have safe, positive experiences online, and encouraging behavioural change to help ensure a generation of Australian youth can act responsibly online.

Cyber bullying is extremely invasive and more likely to occur outside of school hours. Cyber bullying includes but is not limited to:

➢ **Pranking** – repeated hang ups, anonymous mocking or threatening phone calls.

➢ **Threats** – sending threatening or hurtful comments via text, email, social networking sites or chat spaces.

➢ **Image sharing** – forwarding or sharing unflattering or private images without permission.

➢ **Sexually explicit images** – people of any age, who forward or share images of a sexual nature of a person under 18 need ot be aware that this is a criminal offence that may result in prosecution.

➢ **Text/email** – sending insulting or threatening text messages (via social media applications) or emails.

➢ **Personal online information** – publishing online someone's private, personal or embarrassing information without permission, or spreading rumours online.

➢ **Identity theft** – assuming someone's identity and negatively representing them in a way that damages their reputation or relationships.

➢ **Hate sites** – creating hate sites or implementing social exclusion campaigns on social networking.

➢ **Peer pressure** – pressuring a person to send compromising or revealing images of themselves.

➢ **Catfishing** - Catfishing is a deceptive activity where a person creates a fake identity on a social network account, for attention seeking, bullying or as a romance scam.

➢ **Covert filming** – recording or taking photos of someone and posting or sharing these to cause hurt.

What bullying is not

Whilst these conflicts still need to be addressed and resolved, the incidents on this list are NOT considered bullying:

> ➢ Mutual arguments and disagreements (where there is no power imbalance)
> ➢ Not liking someone
> ➢ Being excluded (a single act of social rejection)
> ➢ Accidentally bumping into someone
> ➢ A single act of telling a joke about someone
> ➢ Arguments
> ➢ One-off acts of meanness or spite
> ➢ Expression of unpleasant thoughts or feelings regarding others
> ➢ Isolated acts of harassment, aggressive behaviour, intimidation or meanness
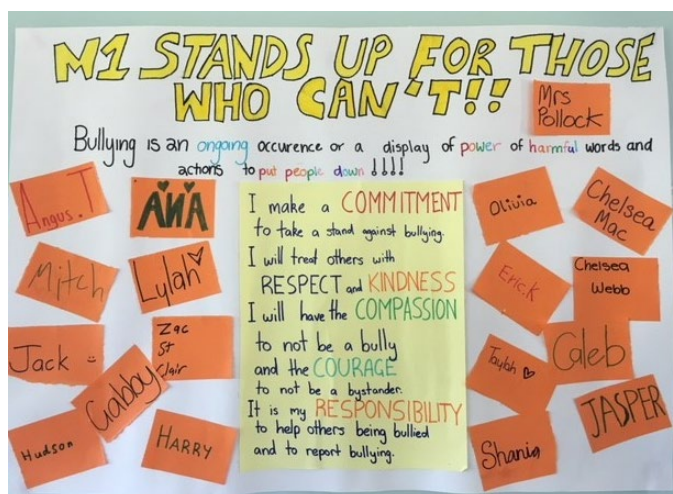
Why does bullying happen?

Why do people bully others?

People who bully others are often motivated by the status and social power they can achieve through bullying. Some may bully others to compensate for what is happening to them and their own feelings of powerlessness. Bullying behaviours can also be copied by others. Investigating how student view the situation and why they think the bullying is happening is central to appropriate College responses.

Who bullies others?

All individuals have the potential to bully others or to be bullied. However, some individuals persistently bully others for a range of reasons and in a range of contexts.

A student who bullies may:

> ➢ repeatedly tease, imitate or make fun of the same targets
> ➢ feel the need to dominate or control others
> ➢ show no compassion for someone who's experiencing bullying

- ➢ repeatedly exclude or ignore the same target
- ➢ whisper behind their backs on a frequent basis
- ➢ feel disconnected from school and dislike school
- ➢ demonstrate good leadership skills
- ➢ demonstrate good verbal skills and ability to talk themselves out of trouble.

What is the impact of bullying?

Bullying affects everyone involved, including people who witness it. It can have serious and long-term emotional or psychological consequences in addition to the immediate harmful effects. Communities that condone or ignore bullying may create an environment where more serious anti-social behaviour is condoned. Bullying undermines key values that schools aim to promote in students – respect, trust and honesty.

What are the signs of bullying?

Each individual student who has been bullied or is bullying others will respond and act differently (Society, 2018). A student's behaviours and moods can also change for a variety of reasons (Department of Education Queensland Government, 2018).

Signs a Teacher may notice:
- ➢ becomes aggressive and unreasonable
- ➢ starts getting into fights
- ➢ refuses to talk about what is wrong
- ➢ school grades begin to fall
- ➢ often alone or excluded from friendship groups at school
- ➢ frequent target for teasing, mimicking or ridicule at school
- ➢ change in the student's ability or willingness to speak up in class and appears insecure or frightened.

Signs a Parent may notice:
- ➢ doesn't want to go to school
- ➢ changes their method or route to school or are frightened of walking to school
- ➢ changes in sleep patterns
- ➢ changes in eating patterns
- ➢ frequent tears, anger, mood swings
- ➢ unexplained bruises, cuts, scratches
- ➢ missing or damaged belongings or clothes
- ➢ arriving home hungry
- ➢ feeling disconnected from school and not liking school
- ➢ lacks quality friendships at school
- ➢ displays high levels of emotionality that indicate vulnerability and low levels of resilience
- ➢ less well accepted by peers, avoids conflict and is socially withdrawn
- ➢ has low self esteem
- ➢ be relatively non-assertive
- ➢ be different in some way.
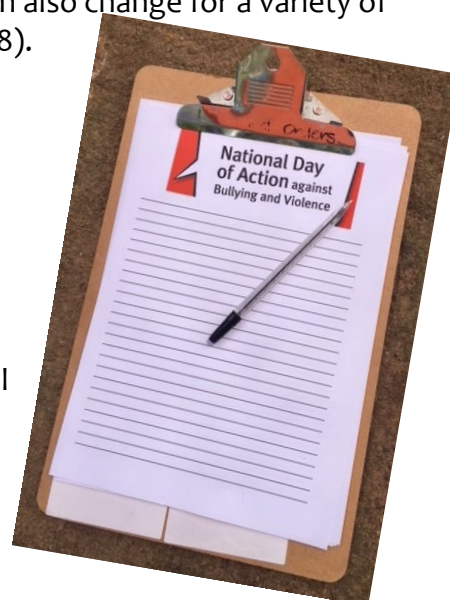
Roles within bullying incidents:

Target
The person who is the object of the bullying

Perpetrator/Initiator/Bully
The person who is exhibiting the bullying behaviour. Please note that a person may exhibit bullying behaviours and also be a target of bullying.

Bystander
A bystander is someone who sees or knows about bullying, harassment or violence that is happening to someone else.   There are three main types of bystander:
- **Follower** - do not initiate, but take an active role in the bullying behaviour.
- **Supporter** - support the bullying behaviour (overtly or covertly; for example, by turning a blind eye or standing and watching) but do not take an active role in the bullying behaviour.
- **Upstander (defender)** - someone who recognizes when something is wrong and acts to make it right. When an upstander sees or hears about someone being bullied, they speak up. Being an upstander is standing up for what is right and doing our best to help support and protect someone who is being hurt. In many ways, this is being socially responsible (NSCC, 2010).

What approaches to bullying have been proven effective?

Effective school responses to bullying incidents are:
- **Solution focused** – approaches to bullying need to include relationship and social solutions at the whole-school, class and student level, and on occasion, at the family and community level. Although bullying may stop in the short term after a 'get tough on bullying' approach, unless the relationship and social factors are addressed, it is very likely to reoccur, take another form, or just become hidden (covert).
- **Relationship based/Restorative practices** - This refers to the means by which practitioners can resolve conflict between students by bringing about genuine remorse on the part of the offender(s) accompanied by restorative action. For example, apologising to a victim and having the apology accepted (Rigby and Johnson, 2016). This is a component of the College's Student Behaviour Support Plan.
- **At the school level, the class level and the student level** – this 'whole school' approach to optimising student wellbeing fosters lower levels of bullying. This includes explicit teaching and modelling of positive values and wellbeing through Social and Emotional Learning curriculum and Pastoral Care. The long-term aim is to foster a school culture based on positive values and supportive relationships which feature respect, inclusion, belonging and cooperation. Through effective classroom management and classroom rules it is easy to promote a positive learning

environment that provides safety, security and support for students.

> **Based on strong links between parents and schools** – it is crucial that the parents and the College work in partnership with each other (as outlined in Chisholm Catholic College's Parent Partnership's document).

> **Universal and multi-faceted** – effective responses take time should aim to develop an increased awareness of bullying in the school community through assemblies, Pastoral Care and Pastoral Program lessons.

> **Consistent, non-hostile and utilise non-punitive behaviour management methods** – behaviour is learned and appropriate behaviour must be taught and modelled. Students should be encouraged to respond negatively to bullying behaviour and support students who are bullied.

What approaches to bullying have been proven <u>less</u> <u>effective?</u>

Less Effective school responses to bullying incidents include:

> **Rigid control of student behaviour**
> **Belief that students must receive punitive and negative consequences in *all* cases**
> **Unfair and inconsistent use of discipline**
> **Punishment without support.**

Implementation

The College reserves the right to apply appropriate sanctions and procedures as required to resolve incidents. For Staff, Students and Parents, the following flow charts indicate the suggested steps to be taken to deal with any suspected incidences.

If you are being bullied, you are encouraged to do the RITE thing:

R = RECOGNISE

you have the right to feel safe and to operate in an environment free of bullying.

I = INFORM

the bullies that you want them to stop. Do this in a polite but firm way.

T = TELL

a responsible adult about the bullying.

E = EVALUATE

the situation. If it does not improve, seek further help.

Chisholm Catholic College's Response flow chart Staff

RECOGNISE	Educate staff, students and parents about bullying policy and procedures	➢ Inform about the location of the policy and procedures ➢ Advise at meetings and information evenings
	If a student approaches you to speak about a situation/incident or if you witness an incident or notice a change in student's Behaviour.	
INFORM	Listen carefully and calmly, and document what the student tells you	➢ Ensure a private place to talk ➢ Do not dismiss their concerns ➢ Clarify if there are immediate safety risks
	Collect additional information	➢ Ask for any evidence from the student ➢ Speak with all students involved, including bystanders ➢ Keep records
	Discuss a plan of action with the students	➢ Invite suggestions from students as appropriate ➢ Inform all students involved of your intention to inform their parents/guardians
TELL	Inform the students what you intend to do	➢ Also inform them about when you are planning to follow up with them after implementing the plan
	Provide suggestions about what to do if the bullying occurs again	➢ Refer to the counsellor if appropriate ➢ Offer strategies for future dealings (e.g. Bully Blockers, Ignore, Walk Away, Dismiss)
	Record the incident in school's data management system	➢ All conversations and correspondence are recorded in SBSS "My conversations"
	Notify appropriate personnel	➢ Refer the matter to the appropriate person: Home, Pastoral Care Teacher, Pastoral Leader, Assistant Principal – Staff & Students, School Counsellor
EVALUATE	Set a date for follow up review/s	➢ Bullying can require a sustained effort to prevent
	Contact the parent/guardian about the incident and the plan of action	➢ Initially contact the parent by phone and follow-up with an email. This contact should be made by the Pastoral Leader or AP S&S. The relevant PC Teacher/AP S&S/GC/PL should be included.
	Follow up with students over the next several weeks and months	➢ Be alert to ongoing bullying, particularly the possibility that the bullying can 'reappear' in another from sometime later.

A set of procedures for Staff is provided in Appendix A as a support document to this flow chart

Chisholm Catholic College's Response flow chart Students

This flow chart indicates the steps to take where a bullying incident/behaviour is being reported.

RECOGNISE	**Self -awareness** ➢ Are my friends treating me how I should be treated? ➢ Am I treating others how they deserve to be treated? ➢ How safe am I feeling? **Other-awareness** ➢ What behaviours am I noticing that are causing me concern? ➢ What behaviours would I like to see stop/happen moving forward? ➢ How might others be feeling? ➢ Am I feeling worried about another person?
INFORM	**Who are the people at school that I should speak to for assistance for myself or others:** ➢ Pastoral Care Teacher ➢ Pastoral Leader ➢ Counsellor ➢ Chisholm Watchbox – if uncomfortable initially making the report in person These people may also be notified via email or you may want friends/parent to do this for you or with you for support. **Provide factual information** ➢ **Who** was involved? **Who** has tried to help? **Who** has witnessed the bullying behaviour? ➢ **What** specifically happened**? What** factors led to this? **What** strategies have you tried to solve this**?** ➢ **When** did it start? **When** did it happen? ➢ **Where** is it occurring? **Where** has it occurred? ➢ **How** is it occurring? **How** often is it occurring? **How** is it making you feel? ➢ If the incident is cyber-bullying**, what evidence** have you saved**?**
TELL	**Work with your Teacher/Pastoral Leader/Parents to come up with a plan for how you will manage the situation.** **If the behaviour involves physical assault or cyber crime, the relevant authorities will be informed.** **Have a plan that you will follow should the situation continue**
EVALUATE	**When you meet the appropriate staff member, give clear and factual information regarding the situation and whether it has changed?** ➢ **How** have things changed? ➢ Are things better, worse or the same? ➢ **How** am I feeling now? **Participate in discussions on any changes that can be made to further improve/maintain the situation.**

Resources/Links

Help for Students and Parents

Australian Guidance and Counselling Association
www.agca.com.au
Australian Psychological Society
www.psychology.org.au
Beyondblue
www.beyondblue.org.au
Bullying. No Way!
www.bullyingnoway.gov.au
Cyber bullying/Online bullying
The Office of the eSafety Commisioner
Online help and reporting www.esafety.gov.au
iParent - https://esafety.gov.au/education-resources/iparent
Headspace
www.headspace.org.au
Kids Helpline
1800 551 800
www.kidshelp.com.au
Quick Tips about Bullying
http://behaviour.education.qld.gov.au/bullying-and-violence/schools/Pages/quick-tips.aspx
Reach Out
www.reachout.com.au
Student Wellbeing Hub – Information and support for Parents
https://studentwellbeinghub.edu.au/parents/secondary#/
Student Wellbeing Hub – Information and support for Students
https://studentwellbeinghub.edu.au/students/secondary#/

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or as:

- New developments/research occurs
- Legislation updates occurs
- Brisbane Catholic Education requirements change.

By this process, Chisholm Catholic College can ensure the best practice for its students, staff and parents.

Authorisation

The Chisholm Catholic College Pastoral Board endorses this policy which has been determined in consultation with staff and parents. The policy takes effect as of October 2018 and is authorised by the Chisholm Catholic College Principal.

References

ACARA. (2016). *National Standards for Student Attendance Data Reporting.* Retrieved August 27, 2018, from Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority: https://www.acara.edu.au/reporting/national-standards-for-student-attendance-data-reporting

Australian Education Authorities. (2017). *Bullying. No Way!* Retrieved August 22, 2018, from Definitions of Bullying: https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/WhatIsBullying/DefinitionOfBullying/Pages/Glossary.aspx

Australian Government. (2013). *Australian Education Regulations.* Australian Government. Retrieved from https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2013L01476

Brisbane Catholic Education. (2018). *Student Attendance.* Retrieved August 27, 2018, from Brisbane Catholic Education KWeb Wellbeing: file:///C:/Users/twilliamson/Desktop/Attendance/Attendance%20-%20Description%20of%20Attendance%20Categories%20-%20eMinerva.pdf

College, C. C. (2018, August). *Parent Partnerships.* Retrieved September 4, 2018, from Chisholm Catholic College: http://www.chisholm.qld.edu.au/community/Documents/Parent%20partnership%20booklet%20incorporating%20Parent%20Code%20of%20Conduct.pdf

Department of Communities, Child Safety and Disability Services. (2012). *About Child Abuse.* Retrieved September 6, 2018, from https://www.qld.gov.au/community/getting-support-health-social-issue/about-child-abuse/

Department of Education Queensland Government. (2018, March 22). *Queensland Government Department of Education Safe, Supportive and Disciplined Schools.* Retrieved September 5, 2018, from Working Together: A toolkit for effective school based action against bullying: http://www.behaviour.education.qld.gov.au/bullying-and-violence/schools/Pages/qsaav.aspx#toolkit

Education Services Australia as the legal entitiy for the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhool (SCSEEC). (2013). *National Safe Schools Framework.* Carlton South: SCSEEC. Retrieved September 1, 2018, from https://studentwellbeinghub.edu.au/docs/default-source/nationalsafeschoolsframework-pdf.pdf?sfvrsn=0

National School Climate Center. (2010). Retrieved September 1, 2018, from BullyBust:Promoting a community of upstanders: http://www.bullybust.org/

Queensland Government. (2018, January). Education (General Provisions) Act 2006. *Education (General Provisions) Act 2006.* Queensland, Australia: Queensland Government. Retrieved August 28, 2018, from https://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/view/pdf/2018-01-01/act-2006-039

Queensland Government: Department of Education. (2018). *Tips about Bullying.* Retrieved August 29, 2018, from Safe, Supportive and Disciplined Schools: http://behaviour.education.qld.gov.au/bullying-and-violence/schools/Pages/quick-tips.aspx

Rigby, K. (2010). *Bullying Interventions in Schools: Six basic approaches.* Melbourne, Victoria, Australia: ACER Press.

Rigby, K., & Johnson, K. (2016, April 29). *Bullying in schools: how well is it being addressed?* Retrieved September 1, 2018, from University of South Australia:

http://www.unisa.edu.au/Media-Centre/Releases/2016-Media-releases/Bullying-in-schools-how-well-is-it-being-addressed/#.W49cqfZuLIU

Rigby, K., & Johnson, K. (2016). *The Prevalence and Effectiveness of Anti-Bullying Strategies employed in Australian Schools.* University of South Australia: School of Education.

Society, T. A. (2018). *Bullying.* Retrieved September 5, 2018, from The Australian Psychological Society - Believe in Change: https://www.psychology.org.au/for-the-public/Psychology-topics/Bullying#s9

State Government of Victoria. (2018). *Attendance.* Retrieved August 24, 2018, from Department of Education and Training: https://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/studentmanagement/Pages/attendance.aspx

APPENDIX A

RECOGNISE	➢ Do I know where to find the Anti-Bullying Policy? ➢ Have I noticed a change in behaviour for any students? ➢ Do I know the definitions of bullying in the Chisholm Catholic College Bullying Prevention and Response Policy? ➢ Am I actively encouraging students to talk if they are having concerns about bullying?
INFORM	➢ Ask the student/s if they are okay ➢ Listen patiently to student/s and/or parent/s concerns ➢ Validate their feelings, as well as any concerns they might have about seeking help and recognise their efforts in doing so ➢ Provide feedback about the process for following up information that you will have to do ➢ Liaise with appropriate staff (Pastoral Leader, Counsellor, and Assistant Principal – Students) as necessary to help to determine if it is a bullying situation.
TELL	➢ Work out with the student/s and parent/s a specific course of action that will be taken to help manage the situation ➢ Outline who they should approach to discuss any concerns as they arise (and confirm they know how to do this) ➢ Disseminate information about the plan to appropriate people (ensure the student/s and parent/s know who these people are) ➢ Set in place a time to review the plan ➢ Document facts and procedures followed on SBSS
EVALUATE	**Have any behavioural/emotional changes been observed?** **Check-in with each of the people involved (including parents) to see if the situation has changed following the intervention:** ➢ How has it changed? ➢ How is everyone feeling about the situation now? ➢ What adjustments (if any) need to be made? ➢ Who needs to be informed of any adjustments? ➢ When will any adjustments be evaluated (schedule a time)? ➢ Does this need to be escalated to the next level?