

Seventh-day Adventist Schools (South Queensland) Limited



Department: Education	Description: Procedure
Administrative Area: Students	Type: Highly Recommended
Document Name: Student Bullying Reporting and Response	Issue Date: 5 November 2018
Document ID: SQS205.001.EDU	Review Date: Term 4 - 2020

Gold Coast Christian College

Student Bullying Reporting and Response Procedures

Purpose:	The purpose of this policy is to provide details on how to report allegations of bullying by and of students at Gold Coast Christian College . It also outlines the implementation of appropriate response strategies which address school bullying.	
Scope:	Students and employees, including full-time, part-time, permanent, fixed-term and casual employees, as well as contractors, volunteers and people undertaking work experience or vocational placements	
References:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulations 2001 (Qld) • Australian Education Act 2013 (Cth) • Australian Education Regulations 2013 (Cth) • SDAS(SQ)Ltd Student Bullying Policy (SQS195.001.ADM) • SDAS(SQ)Ltd Child Risk Management Strategy (SQ114.003.ADM) • SDAS(SQ)Ltd Staff Code of Conduct (SQS188.001.ADM) • SDAS(SQ)Ltd Complaints and Dispute Resolution Policy (SQS193.001.ADM) • SDAS(SQ)Ltd Child Protection Policy (SQS170.002.EDU) • SDAS(SQ)Ltd Child Protection Procedures (SQS105.006.EDU) 	
Status:	Approved	Supersedes:
Policy Owner:	Seventh-day Adventist School (South Queensland) Limited	
Authorised by:	Chief Executive Officer	Date of Authorisation: 5 November 2018
Approved by:	<p>This procedure has been ratified by the Board of Directors of Seventh-day Adventist Schools (South Queensland) Limited as the Student Bullying Reporting and Response Procedures for Seventh-day Adventist Schools (South Queensland) Limited.</p> <p>Pr Brett Townend Board of Directors Chairperson: Date of Approval: 6/11/2018</p> <p>Pr Colin Renfrew Board of Directors Secretary: Date of Approval: 6/11/2018</p>	
Review Cycle:	Reviewed Biennially (every two years)	Next Review Date: Term 4 - 2020
Review Team:	Board of Directors, Chief Executive Officer, Project Officers, Principals	
Revised by	<u>Section</u>	<u>Details of Changes</u>

Policy Statement

Seventh-day Adventist Schools (South Queensland) Limited has a zero tolerance to bullying.

Seventh-day Adventist Schools (South Queensland) Limited is committed to taking action to protect students from bullying and to respond appropriately when bullying does occur.

In order to prevent bullying from occurring, Seventh-day Adventist Schools (South Queensland) Limited will implement the following actions:

- Raise awareness within each of the entities of Seventh-day Adventist Schools (South Queensland) Limited of what bullying is, how it impacts on people and how bullying is responded to at each school site;
- Ensure that programs and processes within each entity of Seventh-day Adventist Schools (South Queensland) Limited develop and promote effective social skills and positive relationships amongst students.

In order to respond appropriately to any incidences of bullying, Seventh-day Adventist Schools (South Queensland) Limited will ensure that each entity:

- Develops an appropriate mechanism for students and parents to report bullying;
- Educates students and parents on how to respond, in the first instance, to incidences of bullying, and how to then report all incidences of bullying;
- Educates employees on how to appropriately respond to reports of bullying;
- Investigates and act upon all reports of bullying;
- Takes appropriate action, which might include support for targets of bullying and perpetrators and/or disciplinary measures.

This document explains the bullying reporting mechanism for students and parents, and details how employees will respond to reports, including that all reports will be investigated and acted upon, with appropriate support and consequences implemented.

Definitions

The national definition of bullying for Australian schools is:

Bullying is an ongoing misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that causes physical and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power over one or more persons. Bullying can happen in person or online, and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert).

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have 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.

(Source: <<https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/WhatsBullying/DefinitionOfBullying>>, accessed 12/2/18)

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Other useful definitions

- **Bullying:** is a systemic and repeated abuse of power. In general bullying may be defined as:
 - dominating or hurting someone;
 - unfair action by the perpetrator(s) and an imbalance of power;
 - a lack of adequate defence by the target and feelings of oppression and humiliation.

It can occur at any age, across cultures, genders and socioeconomic groups. It can happen in the playground, toilet areas, to and from school or in the classroom.

- **Behaviours that do not constitute bullying include¹:**
 - 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.
- **Physical bullying:** this is when a person (or group of people) uses physical actions to bully, such as hitting, poking, tripping or pushing. Repeatedly and intentionally damaging someone's belongings is also physical bullying
- **Verbal bullying:** repeated or systematic name calling, insults, homophobic or racist remarks and verbal abuse
- **Covert bullying:** such as lying about someone, spreading rumours, playing a nasty joke that make the person feel humiliated or powerless, mimicking or deliberately excluding someone
- **Psychological bullying:** for example, threatening, manipulating or stalking someone
- **Cyber bullying:** using technology, such as email, mobile phones, chat rooms, social networking sites to bully verbally, socially or psychologically
- **Supportive Bystander Behaviour:** is when the actions of a supportive bystander can stop or diminish a specific bullying incident or help another student to recover from it. A bystander is someone who sees or knows about child maltreatment, harassment, aggression, violence or bullying that is happening to someone else. Supportive bystander behaviours are actions and / or words that are intended to support someone who is being attacked, abused or bullied.
- **Restorative Discipline:** a whole school approach to building school climate and addressing student behaviour that fosters belonging over exclusion, social engagement over control, and meaningful accountability over punishment.

¹ Bullying. No Way!, 2018, *Definition of Bullying*, < <https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/WhatIsBullying/DefinitionOfBullying>>, accessed 16 May 2018

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Responsibilities

System Responsibilities

Seventh-day Adventist Schools (South Queensland) Limited acknowledges its responsibility to:

- Promote programs that raise awareness of bullying and how the schools will respond to it;
- Ensure that systems and processes are in place so that action is taken to prevent bullying;
- Develop and implement a reporting mechanism for students and parents;
- Support the education of students and parents on how to respond to bullying and how to report it;
- Oversee the education of employees on how to appropriately respond to bullying;
- Require the investigation of all reports of bullying, including the provision of appropriate support and consequences;
- Share the responsibility of systemically opposing all forms of bullying.

Principal Responsibilities

The school principals of Seventh-day Adventist Schools (South Queensland) Limited acknowledges their responsibility to:

- Assist in the creation of a positive school climate of respectful relationships where bullying behaviours are not tolerated and cannot flourish;
- Consult with school staff (and if required, Seventh-day Adventist Schools (South Queensland) Limited) and uses professional judgment to determine the appropriate response strategy for a specific behavioural issue. The SDAS(SQ)Ltd Student Bullying Policy (SQS195.001.ADM) and SDAS(SQ)Ltd Serious Discipline Policy (SQS004.001.EDU) provide a set of factors to consider in determining the appropriate level of response;
- Take responsibility for the implementation of their school's bullying procedures;
- Identify patterns of bullying behaviour and initiate school action to address them;
- Ensure the development, implementation and evaluation of education and prevention strategies to promote student safety and wellbeing;
- Respond to incidents of bullying that have been reported to the school quickly and effectively;
- Ensure that support will be given to any student who has been affected by, engaged in or witnessed bullying behaviour.

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Employee Responsibilities

Employees of Seventh-day Adventist Schools (South Queensland) Limited have a responsibility to:

- Support the school in maintaining a safe and supportive learning environment;
- Model and promote appropriate right relationships and behaviours;
- Respond in a timely manner to incidents of bullying according to the school's student behaviour support plan;
- Support students to be effective bystanders while maintaining their own safety;
- Know the school's student behaviour support plan and anti-bullying procedures and reporting structures;
- Promote a school culture where bullying is not acceptable;
- Teach students to identify, react, report and respond to bullying at school and online;
- Provide curriculum and pedagogy that supports students to develop an understanding of bullying and its impact on individuals and the broader community.

Parent/Caregiver Responsibilities

Parents and caregivers of children enrolled at entities of Seventh-day Adventist Schools (South Queensland) Limited have a responsibility to:

- Keep the school informed of concerns around behaviour, their child's health and wellbeing issues or other matters of relevance;
- Communicate in a respectful manner with school staff about issues of concern;
- Support their children to become responsible citizens and to develop responsible online behaviours;
- Support their children in developing supportive bystander behaviours;
- Work collaboratively with the school to resolve incidents when they happen.

Student Responsibilities

Students enrolled at entities of Seventh-day Adventist Schools (South Queensland) Limited have a responsibility to:

- Be respectful towards other students, staff and members of the school community;
- Understand what bullying is, what is not bullying and how to report bullying;
- Behave as responsible digital citizens;
- Communicate with an appropriate adult if bullied or harassed or if they are aware someone else is being bullied or harassed;
- Learn to be an effective bystander, so that bullying and harassment are discouraged through peer influence.

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Implementation

Seventh-day Adventist Schools (South Queensland) Limited is committed to developing and maintaining a zero-tolerance approach to bullying at each of its educational entities, including by the development and implementation of this policy and related procedures, and via the clear support and promotion of the policy, procedures and support documents.

Seventh-day Adventist Schools (South Queensland) Limited is also committed to appropriately training all employees on how to take reasonable steps to respond, investigate and act upon all reports and allegations of bullying. Entities of Seventh-day Adventist Schools (South Queensland) Limited will be required to keep appropriate records of all reports and incidences of bullying, including action taken and consequences implemented (refer to *Documentation of Allegation or Incident* on page 10 of this document).

The individual educational entities of Seventh-day Adventist Schools (South Queensland) Limited will act to encourage students, parents and employees to contribute to a healthy school culture through the promotion of each campus as having a zero-tolerance approach to bullying.

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Reporting an Allegation of Suspected Bullying

Reports of possible student bullying can be made to any staff member at the school. A teacher or school executive staff (such as the principal, deputy principal or assistant principal, head teacher) at the school will address the alleged bullying in a timely manner.

Reporting by a student:

Student reporting systems are of value when students have confidence that their concerns will be treated promptly and seriously, and that action will be taken which will not make their situation worse.

Reporting for students should include confidential and varied ways in which they are able to report instances of bullying. However, if a student's safety is at risk, school staff cannot keep the information confidential and must report to the appropriate authorities.

Reporting by a parent/caregiver:

Parents are frequently the ones to report bullying incidents to the school. It is important that school staff are sensitive to the emotional needs of parents when they make contact with the school and that parents have confidence that staff will act promptly, take the concern seriously and report back on progress on the issue to parents.

Dispute Resolution:

If a student, parent or caregiver believes a matter is not being dealt with effectively, they can refer the matter to the school's principal (or delegate) for resolution.

If the student, parent or caregiver still has concerns, after referring the matter to the school's principal (or delegate), they can contact the Chief Executive Officer of Seventh-day Adventist Schools (South Queensland) Limited to lodge a complaint about the school's local systems, processes and procedures with regards to bullying behaviour.

Procedural steps in responding to bullying incidents

Once reported, the bullying allegation or incident will be investigated by the appropriate member of staff as required (i.e. teacher or leadership team member). The investigation will afford all those involved natural justice and will treat all parties involved with respect and support. Parents and caregivers will be notified of incidents involving their children as soon as practical.

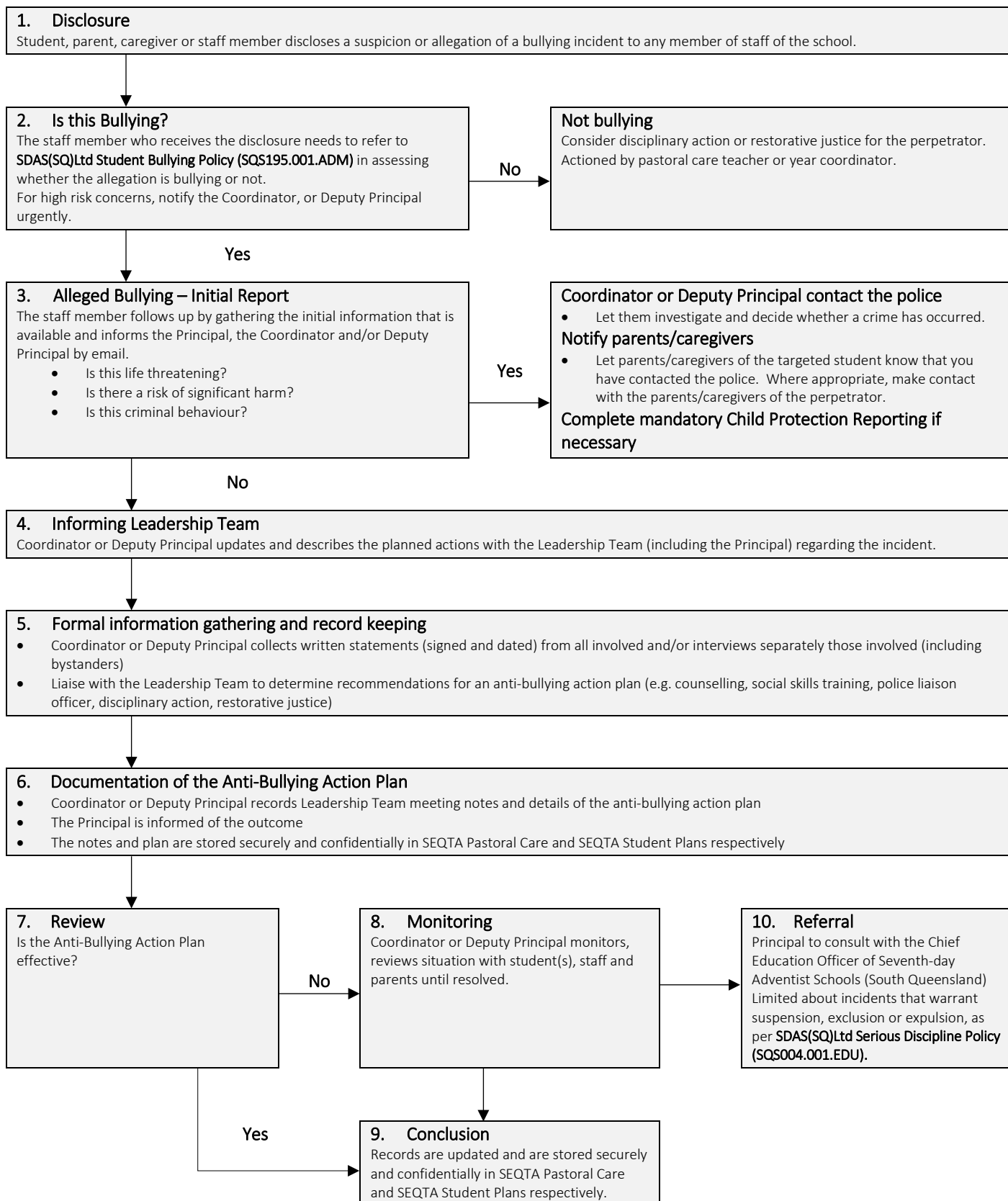
The steps of the investigation, which is outlined below, consists of two flowcharts:

- Procedure for Reporting Suspected Bullying²
- Procedure for Responding to Suspected Bullying²

² Developed from: Anti-Bullying Procedures, Marist College Emerald, < http://www.maristcollegeemerald.com.au/uploads/8/3/9/8/83986394/mce_anti-bullying_procedure_2017.pdf>, accessed 30 October 2018

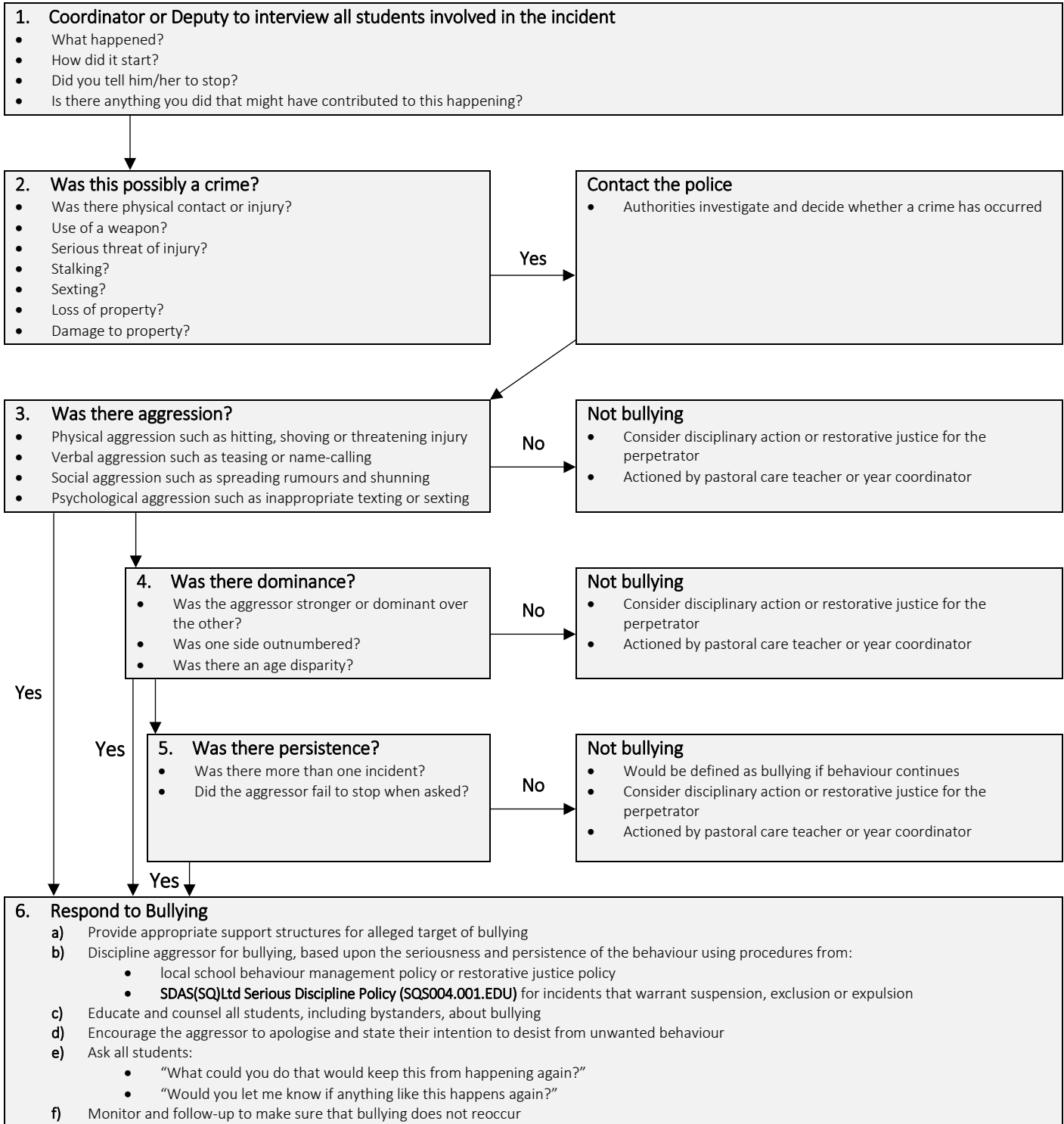
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Procedure for Reporting Suspected Bullying at Gold Coast Christian College



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Procedure for Responding to Suspected Bullying at Gold Coast Christian College



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Consequences of Allegation or Incident

Whilst any discipline outcome for the students who perpetrated the bullying will include appropriate consequences, they will also be supported through a process of restorative discipline that mends relationships and identifies strategies for maintaining more appropriate behaviours in the future. However, it must be acknowledged that repeated or extreme cases of bullying will be managed as per SDAS(SQ)Ltd Serious Discipline Policy (SQS004.001.EDU), which may lead to the perpetrator being stood-down, suspended, excluded and/or expelled.

It is also a priority to support those impacted by the bullying behaviour, including opportunities to discuss strategies that will assist them in dealing with any future situations. Ongoing monitoring of individuals will be allocated to an appropriate staff member.

Parents or caregivers will be notified of the outcome of the bullying allegations involving their child. It is inappropriate for any staff member to discuss specific consequences with anyone other than that child's parents or caregivers.

Documentation of Allegation or Incident

All allegations and incidents of bullying will be documented as pastoral care notes in SEQTA Teach. The pastoral care entry will only include the information of the initial allegation regarding the bullying incident. This pastoral care entry can be later updated within SEQTA to reflect the outcome of the investigation. The details entered into the pastoral care note must include the:

- Date and time of the alleged incident of bullying;
- Location that the bullying allegedly took place (e.g. playground, classroom, toilets, bus, verandah etc...);
- Type of bullying that allegedly occurred (e.g. physical, verbal, covert, psychological, cyber etc...);
- Names of the students who were the alleged perpetrators of the bullying, recipients of the alleged bullying and those who were bystanders during the alleged;
- Outcome of the investigation into the allegation;
- Consequences and support plan for each of the students involved, including detail regarding the notification of parents or caregivers;
- Plans to review the ongoing behaviour and interactions of the students involved, including details about the staff member who will undertake the future monitoring.

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Compliance and Monitoring

Each entity that is part of Seventh-day Adventist Schools (South Queensland) Limited will need to take reasonable steps to increase awareness of bullying and its consequences through:

- **Awareness** - regularly raise awareness of bullying with staff, parents and students via the clear support and promotion of SDAS(SQ)Ltd Student Bullying Policy (SQS195.001.ADM) and SDAS(SQ)Ltd Student Bullying Reporting and Response Procedures (SQS205.001.EDU) by the school board and executive management team;
- **Training staff** - regularly educate and train employees (especially senior staff) appropriately on how to prevent and manage bullying;
- **Instructing students** – how to identify what bullying is and is not and that in the first instance to report directly to their classroom teacher;
- **Dispute resolution** - awareness, promotion and implementation of the SDAS(SQ)Ltd Complaints and Dispute Resolution Policy and Procedures (SQS193.001.ADM);
- **Record keeping, monitoring, reporting** - keep appropriate records, monitor and report on bullying issues;
- **Contact the Chief Executive Officer of Seventh-day Adventist Schools (South Queensland) Limited** - to provide confidential and impartial advice about the school’s local systems, processes and procedures with regards to bullying behaviour;
- **Culture** - removal of any discriminatory or offensive materials, rules and practices, and encouragement of employees and students to contribute to a healthy school culture.

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Resources

Australian Education Authorities, 2018, *Bullying. No Way!*, <www.bullyingnoway.gov.au>

Australian Government Department of Education, 2017, *Student Wellbeing Hub*, <<https://studentwellbeinghub.edu.au/glossary#/>>, accessed 16 May 2018

Department of Education and Skills (Ireland), 2013, *Anti-Bullying Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*, <<https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/Anti-Bullying-Procedures-for-Primary-and-Post-Primary-Schools.pdf#page=8>>, p42, (accessed 20 February 2018 – practical tips for building a positive school culture and climate)

Department of Education and Training, 2017, *The National Safe Schools Framework*, <<https://www.education.gov.au/national-safe-schools-framework-0>>

Kids Help Line, 2017, <<http://www.kidshelp.com.au/>>

Queensland Department of Education and Training, 2018, *Preventing bullying and violence*, <<http://behaviour.education.qld.gov.au/bullying-and-violence/Pages/default.aspx>>

Queensland Department of Education and Training, 2018, *Resources*, <<http://behaviour.education.qld.gov.au/bullying-and-violence/schools/Pages/resources.aspx>>

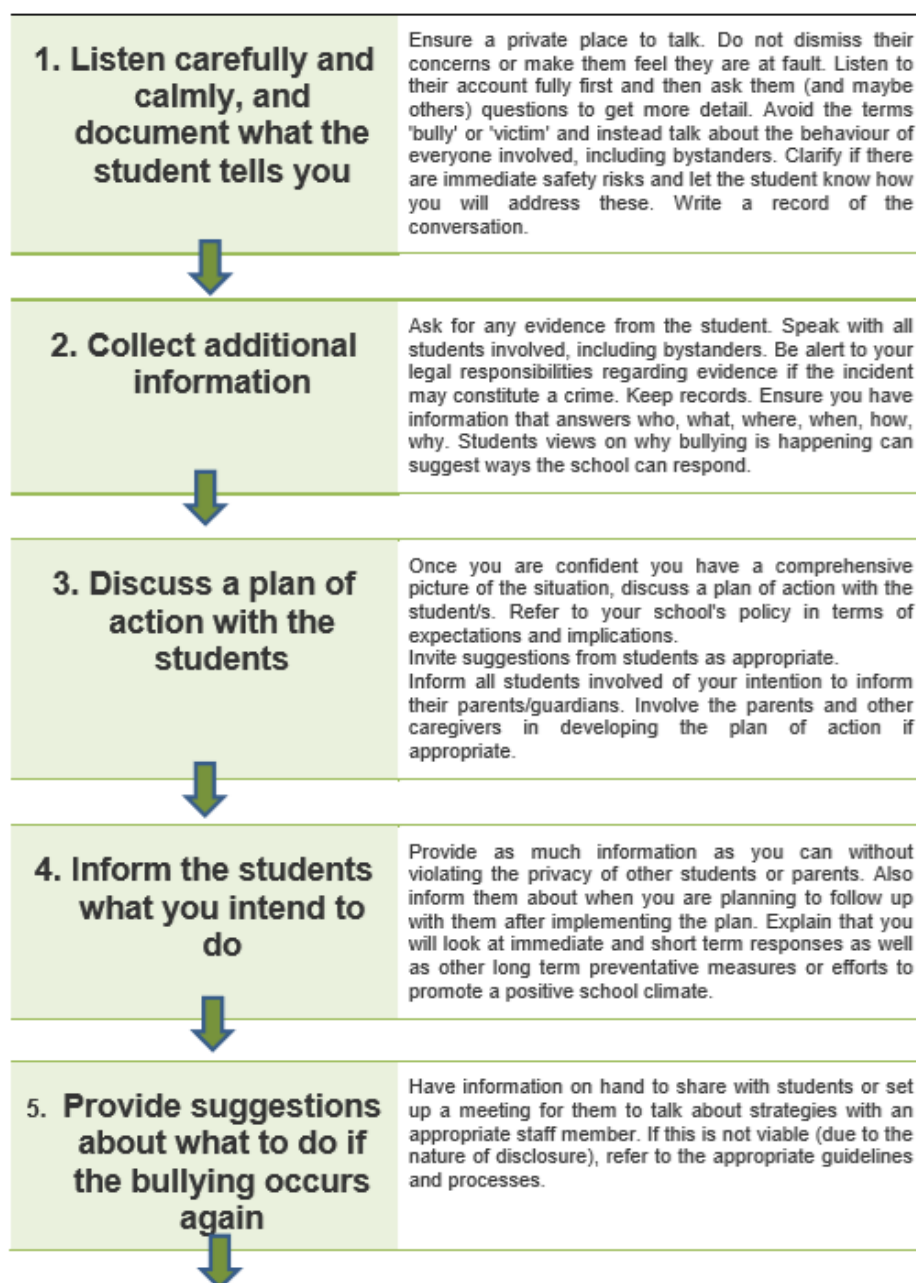
Appendix

For more information on how schools can respond to student bullying, see flow chart in Appendix A.

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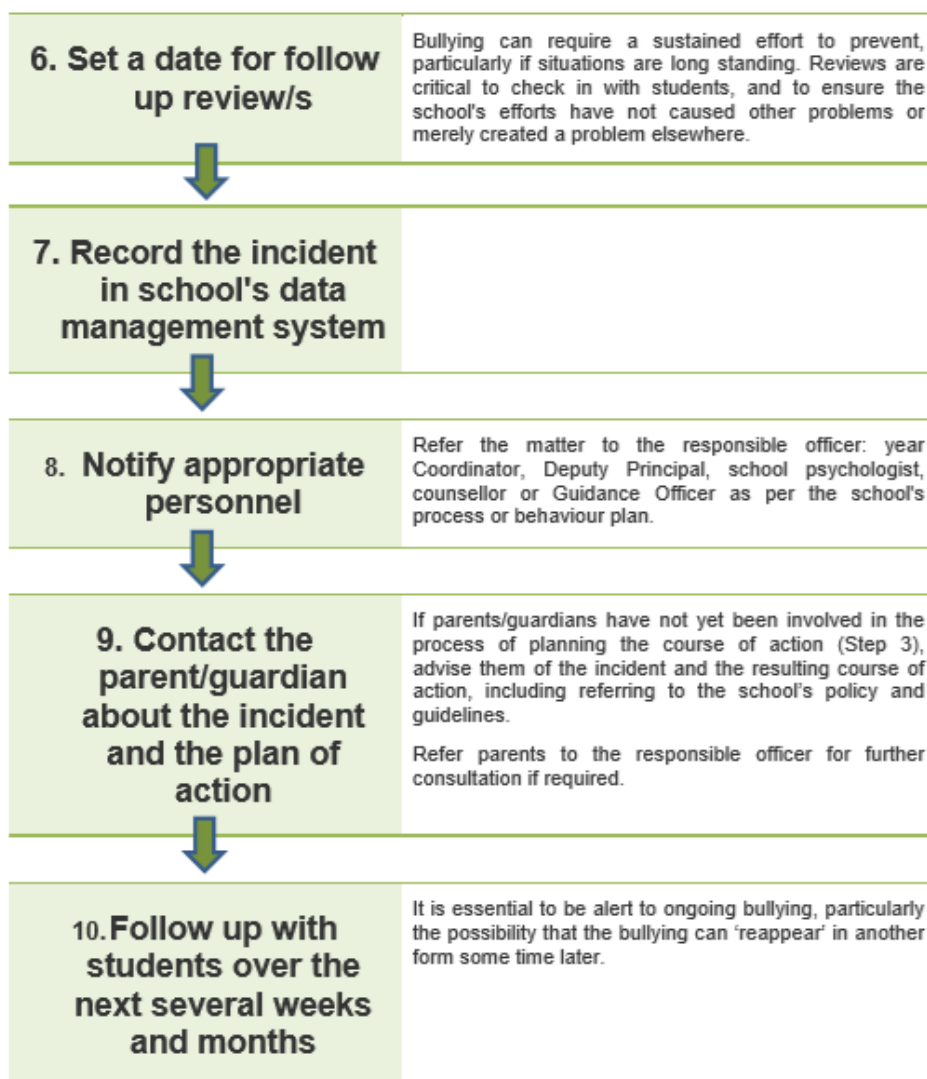


School response flow chart: student bullying



www.bullyingnoway.gov.au

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NOTES: Principals should ensure that all staff are aware of the procedures to follow when responding to incidents of student bullying, and that these are regularly reviewed and updated if necessary. Training for staff and the support of the school principal for teachers in dealing with bullying incidents improves staff capacity and readiness to respond well.

In the first instance, schools should consult their jurisdiction's policy and guidelines for how to respond to reports of bullying. This response flow chart provides a general guide for those who do not have jurisdictional guidelines. Your school or jurisdictional procedure may vary from above.

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