



Safe, Supported and Connected Communities Policy (Anti-Bullying)

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1. Introduction and Purpose

Catholic Schools Parramatta Diocese (CSPD) is committed to learning communities that are safe, supportive, inclusive and connected, grounded in the inherent dignity of each person as created in the image and likeness of God. This policy sets the expectations for preventing, responding to, implementing, and partnering to address unsafe behaviours, including bullying, so that students and the school community can flourish cognitively, spiritually, physically, socially, and emotionally.

This policy incorporates the NSW Anti-bullying Framework, requiring schools to have an anti-bullying policy, while adopting a broader approach that promotes human flourishing and respectful relationships across school communities.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- all CSPD schools and workplaces
- all students and staff (including employees, contractors, religious, volunteers, parents/carers and other engaged persons)
- school-related settings, including school grounds, school activities, and out-of-school settings where a clear connection to the school exists, including online spaces where behaviour has flow-on consequences at school.

Catholic Schools Parramatta Diocese Schools will:

- implement strategies to prevent bullying and unsafe behaviours through a whole-school, evidence-informed, multi-tiered approach
 - respond promptly, consistently and compassionately to reported concerns
 - partner with students, families, parishes and community to foster a sense of community, inclusion and safety.
 - implement and review practice through continuous improvement cycles and data-informed decision-making.
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3. Definitions

CSPD means the Catholic Schools Parramatta Diocese and includes CSPD Support Teams (office-based staff) and Schools.

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 online, 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). 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.

Safe, Supportive and Connected Catholic Communities refers to each school within the Parramatta Diocese. CSPD schools embed positive behaviour approaches and are focused on enriching the lives of our communities through education grounded in excellence, inclusivity, and Catholic Tradition.

Safety: Commitment to providing our communities with environments where they are safe, informed, and participate, and where the adult community works together with them towards making this happen. In line with our obligations under Work Health and Safety (WHS) legislation, we take all steps that are reasonably practicable to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of those within our care. This includes identifying and managing risks, implementing preventative and responsive practices, and continually reviewing our system and processes.

STL means Strive, Thrive, Learn which is CSPD's Multi-Tiered System of Supports.

Unsafe Behaviours. When students face actual or perceived threats to their physical, social, psychosocial or emotional wellbeing. This includes experiencing bullying, negative interpersonal behaviours, witnessing violence, feeling targeted, or being in environments where harmful behaviours are tolerated or ignored, including in online spaces. Unsafe behaviours can be intentional, targeted, repetitive and can range in severity. All of these behaviours require a response.

4. Roles and responsibilities

All members of the school community share responsibility for safe, supported and connected communities.

Principals are responsible for;

- implementing this policy and associated procedures
- ensuring staff capability, clear reporting pathways, and consistent documentation
- responding promptly and proportionately to unsafe behaviours, including escalation where required
- communicating to relevant parties that the school is responding to reports of bullying / unsafe behaviours
- monitoring patterns and leading cycles of review and improvement.

Staff are responsible for;

- modelling respectful behaviour and fostering positive relationships
- taking all reports seriously, acting in line with procedures, and maintaining privacy and dignity
- recording and escalating concerns in accordance with procedures and safeguarding requirements.

Students are responsible for;

- contributing to a respectful community
- seeking help when they experience or witness unsafe behaviour
- engaging with support and restorative processes as required.

Parents/carers are responsible for;

- partnering respectfully with the school, as outlined in the CSPD Family and School Partnership Principles.
- supporting their child's wellbeing and participation in responses and support plans
- engaging with school processes and external supports where appropriate.

5. Prevention, response, partnering and implementation

CSPD expects all schools to enact the following, as detailed in the procedures;

Prevention includes;

- whole-school, tiered prevention aligned to STL and wellbeing frameworks
- explicit teaching of social and emotional learning, respectful relationships, and help-seeking
- inclusive practices and environments that strengthen belonging and reduce risk.

Responding includes;

- consistent, timely and trauma-informed triage and response. Schools should make reasonable efforts to respond to concerns within two school days.
Reasonable efforts are outlined in the Procedures
- appropriate restorative and behaviour-change responses, with proportionate consequences where required, taking into account any additional needs the student(s) may have. This process ensures procedural fairness to all involved parties
- clear family engagement and communication, with privacy and procedural fairness
- accurate recording and documentation to support safety, accountability and learning.

Partnering includes;

- meaningful student voice, parent/carers voice and participation
- strong school–family–church–community partnerships
- coordinated support for students with complex needs, including engagement with relevant agencies.

Implementing and reviewing includes;

- ongoing professional learning
- alignment with related CSPD policies and school practices
- school-based cycles of review using relevant data (including behaviour/wellbeing records) to refine practice
- enable students to contribute to actions to prevent and respond to bullying

- ensure that approaches to address bullying reflect real student experiences, so that actions taken to prevent and reduce student harm from bullying are trusted, relevant, and impactful.

6. Off-School Premises and Out-Of-School Hours Incidents

The duty of care owed to students is not limited to incidents that occur on school property, during school hours or at school or CSPD events.

Whenever the school has knowledge of harm or potential harm suffered by a student due to the acts of another student, the school is obliged to act to protect the student. The test that is applied in these circumstances is “Could the school have reasonably been expected to have acted in the interests of the young person with the information they had that there was harm or the risk of harm?”.

A consideration is that if an incident will impact risk or safety at the school, schools need to have a plan to respond.

While schools are not responsible for policing all online or out-of-school interactions, schools do have a role to support students, particularly when the impact continues in school. Schools are expected to respond, within their locus of control, where behaviour creates a foreseeable impact on student safety, wellbeing or participation at school.

7. Compliance, monitoring and review

CSPD will support schools to implement this policy through guidance, resources and advisory support. Schools will monitor and review effectiveness through implementation and improvement cycles, including analysis of relevant student wellbeing and behaviour data.

This policy will be reviewed in line with CSPD governance and the scheduled review date, or earlier if required due to legislative or system change.

8. Related documents

- [eSafety Commissioner article - Cyberbullying](#)
 - [Family and School Partnership Principles](#)
 - National Standards on Bullying in Australian Schools
 - [NESA requirements for school anti-bullying policies](#)
 - NSW Antibullying Framework (Preventing, Responding, Partnering, Implementing)
 - [Safe, Supported and Connected Communities procedures](#) (CSPD internal)
 - [Safeguarding Procedures](#)
 - [Staff Code of Conduct when Working With Children and Students](#)
 - [Strive, Thrive, Learn](#)
 - [Student Behaviour Policy](#)
 - Student Care Coordination approaches
 - [Student Wellbeing Framework](#)
 - [Student Wellbeing Policy](#)
 - [Student Use of Mobile Phones and Wearable Devices at School Policy](#)
(External - with Online Service Agreement)
 - [Unsafe Behaviours Chronicle Map](#)
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9. Further information

Further information on this policy can be directed to the [CSPD Help Centre](#) (internal) or the [Contact Us page](#) (external).
