



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

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1. Introduction and Purpose

Catholic Education in the Diocese of Parramatta is a ministry of the Church whose mission is to transform students' lives so they can flourish and thrive academically, spiritually, socially, and emotionally. This mission calls each learner to develop their individual gifts and talents and to use them in the service of their communities and the common good.

Catholic Schools Parramatta Diocese (CSPD) is committed to nurturing learning communities that are safe, supportive, inclusive, and deeply connected. We uphold the inherent dignity of every person, grounded in the belief that all are created “*in the image and likeness of God*” (Genesis 1:28). This commitment guides our daily practice, our relationships, and our collective responsibility to protect and promote the wellbeing of all students and staff.

A caring and supportive school culture that promotes positive relationships and reflects Gospel teachings is a core aspect of the prevention and response to incidents of bullying and unsafe behaviour. This is only possible when there is a positive relationship between parents and the school. The focus of this procedure and the Safe, Supported, Connected Communities (SSCC) initiative is:

- To promote belonging and provide schools with guidance to implement, strengthen and embed effective tiered preventative strategies. This work supports the creation of safe, supported and connected Catholic communities, and fosters school cultures that are inclusive and promote a strong sense of belonging through respectful relationships.
- Providing ongoing support and developing structures that build effective partnerships that capture the voices and experiences of students, staff, families, and the broader community. By ensuring these insights are gathered consistently and meaningfully, schools can develop more effective processes that foster safe, supportive, and connected communities. This work is strengthened by the ongoing development and implementation of clear System support documentation that guides practice, supports decision-making, and promotes transparency in policy and practice.

- Enhancing the implementation processes and practices through which schools respond to bullying and unsafe behaviour. The Safe, Supported and Connected Communities Initiative integrates the six national standards on Anti-Bullying and ensures that responses are effective, timely and grounded in the principles of safety and connection.

NESA requires all schools in NSW to have an anti-bullying policy, which the Safe, Supported and Connected Communities Policy encompasses. These procedures will assist schools in operationalising and tracking the success of that policy. While schools are required to maintain an anti-bullying policy, *Safe, Supported and Connected Communities* adopts a broader, more holistic approach. Grounded in our Catholic understanding of dignity, relationships, and human flourishing, the policy and these procedures extend beyond just preventing bullying. They promote safe, respectful, and connected Catholic communities where every person is known, valued, and supported.

2. Scope

This procedure applies to all CSPD, including all staff, students, parents/carers, and community members engaged in school life.

It covers bullying and unsafe behaviours occurring;

- on school grounds during school-related activities
 - in-school-related settings outside school grounds, including online interactions and use of Digital Devices (including BYODs), where there is a clear and close connection between the school and the conduct of students, as outlined in Section 3 (Definitions)
 - outside school hours or off school premises, where the school becomes aware of harm or risk of harm connected to school relationships, in accordance with Section 11 (Off-School Premises and Out-of-School Hours Incidents).
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3. Definitions

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

CSPD Support Teams refers to the Directorates and service areas that provide specialist support to Schools. The term applies to office-based staff.

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.

Connected: We are committed to positive partnerships with all members of our school communities, promoting transparency, agency and respectful engagements. We are proactive and responsive to ensuring all members of our Catholic community are valued, have a deep sense of belonging and are safe. All staff, students, parents / carers and community members are responsible for and committed to creating Safe, Supportive and Connected Communities.

SSCC: 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: We are committed 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.

School-related settings include school grounds, school-related activities and outside of school settings where there is a clear and close connection between the school and the conduct of students. This connection may exist in situations where Online Services and/or Digital Devices, including BYODs, are being used outside of school grounds where:

- a student is wearing their school uniform but is not on school premises

- interactions occur between students and/or other members of the community
- students are online in digital classrooms
- where online behaviour between students has flow-on consequences at school and duty of care requires the school to respond once an incident is reported.

Staff means employees (casual, temporary and permanent employees), contractors, religious, volunteers and any other person appointed or engaged by CSPD to perform work or functions for CSPD.

Supportive: We are committed to establishing supportive communities that promote trust and positive relationships that are reflective of Christ.

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 occur within a continuum. All of these behaviours require a response.

4. National Standards on Bullying in Australian Schools and the NSW Antibullying Framework

CSPD is committed to upholding both the [National Standards on Bullying in Australian Schools](#) and the NSW Antibullying Framework.

The National Standard considers bullying to be within a continuum of harmful behaviours and negative interpersonal behaviours, whether physical or psychosocial, that are counter to creating a safe learning environment.

The National Standard comprises interconnected principles-based elements, set out below, which should be implemented together to effectively prevent and address bullying and other harmful behaviours. The six principles are:

- Consistent anti-bullying requirements
- Whole of school and locally tailored approaches

- Create clarity and confidence in school anti-bullying action
- Intervening early and appropriately
- Support the school workforce
- Reducing risks and fostering safe, inclusive and respectful communities.

The [NSW Anti-bullying Framework](#) integrates these strategies into four domains which focuses on how best to implement and maintain these standards. The four domains are:

- Preventing
- Responding
- Partnering
- Implementing

This procedure has aligned structurally with the NSW Antibullying framework, however, also integrates the six standards from the National Standards and the 10 Childsafe standards.

5. Unsafe Student Behaviours

Quantifying Unsafe Behaviours

Schools are often required to assess and record the severity and impact of unsafe behaviours in order to determine the most appropriate response. While behaviours exist along a continuum, Compass Chronicle recording categories allow schools to identify behaviours as Minor (Grey), Moderate (Amber) or Major (Red).

The risk of harm (or potential risk) should be the primary factor in quantifying the level of a behaviour. Informing the risk would include considering;

- the intent of the behaviour
- whether the behaviour is repeated or part of a pattern
- the presence of a power imbalance
- actual or potential consequences of the behaviour
- any contextual or contributing considerations.

5.1. Minor Unsafe Behaviours (Minor)

Low-level behaviours that may cause minor conflict or discomfort but do not involve significant harm or ongoing targeting. These behaviours are typically isolated and can be addressed through immediate teacher guidance, restorative conversations and reinforcement of expected behaviours.

5.2. Moderate Unsafe Behaviours (Moderate)

Behaviours that involve repeated, targeted, or more harmful interpersonal actions, including emerging patterns of bullying or harassment. These behaviours require structured intervention, documentation, and involvement of school leadership or wellbeing staff.

5.3. Major Unsafe Behaviours (Major-High Risk)

Serious behaviours that pose a significant risk to the safety or wellbeing of students or others. These incidents require immediate escalation and coordinated school response, and may involve safeguarding processes, disciplinary action or external agencies.

5.4. Concerning/Inappropriate Behaviours

Behaviours that are inconsiderate, disrespectful or cross boundaries and may intensify if left unaddressed.

5.5. Bullying Behaviours

Repeated behaviour involving harm and power imbalance - physical, verbal, social or psychological.

5.6. Cyberbullying and other Unsafe Online Behaviours

Bullying or harassment using digital tools - can be single or repeated acts with high impact.

5.7. Harrassment

Unwanted behaviour that targets a person and creates distress or a hostile environment.

5.8. Hate Speech and Vilification

Language or behaviour that targets a person or group based on characteristics such as race, religion, gender, sexuality or disability, and which demeans, dehumanises or incites harm.

These behaviours are considered serious, unsafe behaviours and may meet the threshold for major (high risk) depending on the context, intent and impact.

5.9. Sexual Harassment & Sexual Misconduct

Any unwelcome sexual behaviour - verbal, physical, visual or online. Important to capture if it is student towards student - with or without power imbalance, student towards staff.

Schools should consider their reporting obligations when determining a response. This could include reports to the Department of Communities and Justice or NSW Police for example.

5.10. High-Risk, Abusive, Potentially Criminal Behaviours

Serious safety concerns requiring immediate escalation.

For advice on mapping behaviours to standardised behaviour chronicles, please see the [Unsafe Student Behaviours Chronicle Map](#).

6. Rights and Responsibilities

It is the right of all students to have a safe, supportive and caring environment in which to pursue their education. It is the responsibility of the entire school community to make this possible. This includes students, teachers, support staff, parents/carers and principals.

6.1. Teacher/Support Staff

Actively contribute to a safe, respectful, supported and connected school community by modelling positive behaviours, fostering healthy relationships, and promoting a culture where safety and dignity are upheld for all. They support students to recognise and respond to unsafe situations, use proactive and preventative strategies to maintain wellbeing, and ensure clear communication and documentation when concerns arise.

Staff have the right to work in a safe, respectful and supportive environment, where unsafe behaviour, including harassment, abuse or vilification.

6.2. Students

Students contribute to a safe and respectful school community by demonstrating positive behaviours, looking out for the wellbeing of their peers, and seeking help from trusted adults when they experience or witness unsafe behaviour. They communicate with parents or carers for additional support, follow the strategies provided to them, and actively engage in any support or behaviour plans in place. Through these actions, students play an important role in promoting safety, respect and connection across the school.

Students have the right to learn and grow in a safe, inclusive and supportive environment where they are respected, heard and given the opportunity to flourish. They are entitled to consistent, fair responses from staff, and access to support that promotes their wellbeing, learning and sense of belonging.

6.3. Parents/Carers

Parents and carers help create a safe and supportive school community by modelling respectful behaviour, nurturing positive relationships with their child, and responding calmly and supportively when concerns arise. They maintain open, respectful communication with the school, collaborate with behaviour management and restorative processes and engage with additional supports when needed. Through this partnership, families and the school work together to promote student wellbeing, safety and positive outcomes.

6.4. Principals

Principals contribute to a safe, supportive and connected school community by leading and modelling positive behaviours and creating meaningful opportunities for students to learn how to interact safely and respectfully. They foster an inclusive school climate, ensure students have accessible ways to seek help and work collaboratively with families to build shared understanding around promoting safety. They support staff through professional learning, actively monitor patterns of behaviour to guide school-wide action and respond promptly and effectively when concerns arise. They promote restorative practices and provide helpful

resources to families so the entire community is informed, empowered and engaged in maintaining a positive and safe environment.

Principals have the right to a safe and respectful workplace, where unsafe behaviours are actively prevented, addressed and managed. They are entitled to appropriate system support.

7. Preventing

Evidence informed prevention strategies create safe, supported and connected Catholic communities. Building a whole school culture through the use of the Student Wellbeing Framework to promote positive relationships, inclusion and safety creates school environments where every student feels valued, connected and supported. The Strive, Thrive, Learn offers a framework to implement tiered preventative strategies in schools.

When these values and social and emotional skills are consistently modelled and reinforced across the school, the school community is more likely to treat each other with respect, resolve conflicts peacefully, and contribute to an environment where unsafe behaviours are less likely to occur or persist. CSPD recommends the following elements as the bases of preventative strategies in schools;

7.1. Student Wellbeing and Safety

- CSPDs wellbeing and Strive, Thrive, Learn (STL) frameworks actively encourage respectful behaviour if and by developing and reinforcing clear behavioural expectations and modelling positive relationships.
- Ensure students feel safe, allowing them to flourish academically, spiritually, socially and emotionally.

7.2. Positive and Inclusive Whole School Culture

- Establishing and providing schools with guidance to strengthen and embed effective, preventative strategies. The work supports the creation of safe, supported and connected Catholic communities and fosters school cultures that are centred on the Gospel, inclusive and promote a strong sense of belonging. A Catholic school culture should support communities to be kind, inclusive and

empathic, so all community members feel less isolated or targeted and more likely to support one another.

- CSPD ensures that this policy is aligned with the NSW Anti-bullying Framework, which places emphasis on teaching practices and physical environments being inclusive, signalling that every student is valued and diversity is celebrated.
- Foster trust by developing structures that effectively capture the voices and experiences of students, staff, families and the broader school community so students and families feel confident any concerns they raise will be heard and taken seriously.

7.3. Social and Emotional Skill Development

- The implementation of CSPD STL Framework across all CSPD schools prioritises the explicit teaching and modelling of appropriate social and emotional skills to all students, including developing respectful relationships, regulating emotions, treating others with kindness, recognising emotions in others and handling interpersonal conflict.
- Support students to manage negative emotions and resolve conflicts peacefully, reducing the likelihood of aggressive or bullying behaviour.
- The CSPD STL Framework supports the effective implementation of a safe and respectful school community by demonstrating positive behaviours by reinforcing messages of looking out for the wellbeing of peers and seeking help from trusted adults when they experience or witness unsafe behaviour.

7.4. Positive Relationships

- Safe, supported and connected Catholic communities require the fostering of mutually respectful relationships between school staff, students and parents in order to recognise the early signs of students in distress or experiencing conflict.
- Working collaboratively within school communities to harness inclusive peer interactions and encourage students to stand up for one another.

8. Responding to Unsafe Behaviours

When considering how to respond

When considering a response, which may include a consequence, staff should be guided by the foundational principles of our Catholic tradition. In the spirit of John 10:10 *'I have*

come that they may have life, and have it to the full' responses should uphold the dignity of each person and support growth, restoration, accountability and continued engagement in school life. In doing so, staff should be guided by the following principles;

- Empathy: Seek to understand the context and impact for all students involved, including any additional needs the student(s) may have.
- Unconditional Positive Regard: Address behaviour without diminishing the inherent worth of the student.
- Repair: Prioritise restoring relationships and addressing harm where appropriate.
- Opportunity for success: Ensure each student is supported to reset and reengage positively each day.

8.1. Whole School Approach

Responding effectively to reduce harm or risk from unsafe behaviours requires a whole-school approach where every incident is consistently reported, recorded on Compass and responded to with urgency and care, respecting the dignity and privacy of those involved. When school staff effectively manage unsafe behaviours in both a coordinated and timely manner, it builds trust, ensures accountability and helps prevent further harm. If deemed necessary and appropriate, support may be offered to students and families who are involved. Responding may include mandatory reporting as well as reports to NSW Police in extreme cases.

8.2. Responding to Concerns

Responding in a timely and collaborative way to raised concerns improves the confidence in a school's response and the trust that the community holds in the school. Schools are expected to make 'reasonable efforts' to initiate a response within two school days of becoming aware of an incident of bullying or other harmful behaviour.

Reasonable Efforts means taking early, documented steps to ensure safety and support for affected students, initiating communication with relevant parties (for example Students, Families and Staff) and planning to prevent further harm. It does not mean that every incident must be fully resolved within this timeframe but that timely, good-faith action has commenced and is recorded. Reasonable efforts may include;

- safety assessment
- initial student interviews
- family contact
- compass recording
- temporary risk management.

8.3. Transparent and Trauma-Informed Practices

It is understood that when schools respond to unsafe behaviours in a predictable, transparent, fair and consistent manner, this develops a sense of trust and safety for individuals. Trauma-informed practices influence the response from the adults, ensuring that any response to unsafe behaviours is managed with dignity, respect and privacy. Fair, logical and proportionate consequences are applied where appropriate, and clear follow-up processes are implemented that promote accountability, safety and wellbeing. Taking additional needs into account does not remove accountability. It informs the nature, support and proportionality of the response. To ensure transparency, schools should continue to keep families informed, more on this can be found in the Partnerships section of this document.

8.4. Restorative Support and Behaviour Change

Schools will engage in timely, trauma-informed practices to respond to unsafe behaviours. Where appropriate, ongoing, personalised restorative support can be provided to all students involved, with clear timeframes and intended outcomes.

For students who engage in unsafe behaviours, support should extend beyond the immediate response and include working with the student and family to understand underlying drivers and promote sustained behaviour change.

8.5. Use of restorative approaches

Restorative responses should be used where there are safe, appropriate and guided by the readiness and consent of the person harmed. They are most effective where;

- the person harmed feels safe and is willing to engage
- the student responsible can acknowledge impact and take accountability.

Restorative approaches should not be used where;

- there are ongoing safety risks or significant power imbalances
- the person harmed does not wish to participate

- the student responsible is unwilling or unable to engage meaningfully.

In these cases, schools should prioritise protective and proportionate responses.

8.6. Clarity of practice

Not all responses are restorative. A response is restorative only where it intentionally seeks to repair harm and restore relationships. Other responses such as consequences may well be appropriate, but should not be labeled as restorative.

8.7. Staffing considerations

Responses should be led by the staff member best placed to achieve a positive outcome, including consideration of existing relationships and trust, not solely role or position.

8.8. Fair, Proportionate, Logical Consequences

A logical consequence is directly related to the behaviour and helps the student understand their actions and how they impact themselves, others and the environment. It aims to teach responsibility and support learning by encouraging the student to reflect on what has happened and repair relationships. Any response and consequence should be focused on learning and behaviour change while balancing the perception of safety within the school community. The needs, rights, and safety of all parties must be considered in bullying responses. This includes actively mitigating risk to the student who has experienced harm throughout follow-up, monitoring, and resolution processes.

8.9. Reporting, Family Engagement and Professional Learning

Schools will actively encourage early reporting of unsafe behaviours from both students and families, fostering trust, open communication, and a shared responsibility. Schools will consistently engage in professional learning to ensure all stakeholders understand the significance of responding appropriately and engaging safely with families. All responses to students and families will carefully reflect CSPD engagement norms of Unconditional Positive Regard, Empathy and Repair.

8.10. Data Informed Decision Making

Schools will consistently document accurate records of unsafe behaviours incidents using Compass. This will ensure transparency, identification of behaviour patterns, monitor progress, and guide effective, evidence informed decision making. Ongoing collection and analysis of data will be used to evaluate the impact of interventions and further inform future interventions and external stakeholder involvement.

9. Implementing

The SSCC school-level implementation plan and Strive, Thrive, Learn framework support schools to enact this policy for their context. All universal, targeted and intensive supports should be evidence-informed and contextualised to the presenting need. Through the implementation of Tier 1 STL (MTSS) practices, and in reflection of CSPD's wellbeing framework, schools aim to develop environments that promote faith formation, safety, support and connectedness.

The NSW Anti-Bullying Standards recommend four considerations when implementing measures to reduce unsafe behaviours;

9.1. Whole-school, evidence informed and multi-tiered approach

By implementing CSPDs Strive, Thrive, Learn Framework and having appropriate Tier 1, 2 and 3 responses to unsafe behaviours, school are well placed to proactively respond to emerging concerns with their community. School should utilise Student Care Coordination, which is a structured, collaborated and data-informed problem-solving process at the core of CSPD's Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), Strive, Thrive, Learn that supports emerging concerns.

9.2. Alignment of the school Anti-bullying Policy with other school policies

This policy, which is CSPD's Anti-bullying policy, should be read in conjunction with the Strive, Thrive, Learn Framework, Student Wellbeing Framework, Parent and School Partnership Principles and Student Behaviour Policy.

9.3. Ongoing professional learning and resources

Schools have access to a variety of relevant professional learning opportunities to promote safe, supported and connected communities. For more information, please

contact Student Support.

9.4. Regular review and analysis of anti-bullying approaches and data

Schools should engage in regular cycles of review regarding the effectiveness of their strategies to manage unsafe behaviours. These could include SIP goals, guided reflection tools and review Compass and student data. For support in this space, please contact the Strive, Thrive, Learn team.

9.5. Implementing the Safe Supported and Connected Communities Policy in a CSPD school

CSPD schools are required to engage in an implementation and improvement cycle to ensure that the school's approaches remain aligned with the best practice and are effective.

10. Partnering

CSPD acknowledges that parents and carers are the first educators of their children. CSPD and its schools value parents and carers as partners and this partnership is critical in supporting each child to achieve their best throughout their learning and faith journey.

It is widely understood that when the school community works together in a coordinated and caring way, students feel safer, more connected, and confident that unsafe behaviours will be taken seriously and addressed effectively.

10.1. Student Voice and Active Participation

Students are active participants in their world, learning, wellbeing and faith journey. By listening to their experiences, a culture of wellbeing is co-created. Student belonging and inclusion are enhanced when students are valued, connected and heard within their school community. Providing such opportunities for student contribution is essential to addressing and preventing unsafe behaviours.

10.2. School, Family, Church and Community Partnerships

Partnerships with families and communities are essential and ensuring a mutual commitment to building strong partnerships between schools and families is critical to creating relationships that are based on transparency, honesty and respect. Our

Catholic schools are committed to ensuring that schools are places of welcome and belonging and provide a safe space for all members of the wider community.

10.3. Connected Catholic Communities

Recognising that the school community is a microcosm of the wider community in which it exists, it is essential that schools ensure students receive holistic care in line with student care coordination processes. To achieve this, CSPD recognises the need to partner with community agencies to support students entrusted to our care to support the diverse learning and wellbeing needs of every student.

11. 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 been reasonably 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?”

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.

Where the school becomes aware of harm (or risk of harm) suffered by a student connected to school relationships—including online behaviours—schools will act in accordance with duty of care and the procedures, including safety planning, documentation, family engagement, and escalation pathways as required. Information on on-line safety can be found here: [Australian Government eSafety Commissioner](#).

12. Related documents

- Anti-Discrimination Act 1977 (NSW)
- Crimes (Domestic and Personal Violence) Act 2007 (NSW)
- Crimes Act 1900 (NSW)

- Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)
- Education Act 1990 (NSW)
- Online Safety Act 2021 (Cth)
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)
- Work Health and Safety Act 2011 (NSW)
- <https://www.esafety.gov.au/key-topics/cyberbullying>

For Internal CSPD Documents, please see Policy Central.

- Safe Supported and Connected Communities Policy
- Student Wellbeing Framework
- STL
- [Unsafe Student Behaviours Chronicle Map](#)

For CSPD Public Facing Documents, please see the CSPD Website.

- Code of Conduct when Working with Children and Students
- Family and School Partnership Principles
- Responsible Use of Digital Devices and Online Services for Students Policy
(External - with Online Service Agreement)
- Safeguarding Procedures
- Student Behaviour Policy
- Student Wellbeing Policy
- Suspension, Expulsion and Exclusion Procedures
- Weapons Procedures

13. Further information

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