

SAINT STEPHEN'S COLLEGE



STUDENT ANTI-BULLYING EDUCATION AND INTERVENTION POLICY

Rationale

Saint Stephen's College's 'Anti-Bullying Policy' is a component of the College's overall Behaviour Management Policy, which emphasises the proactive nature of managing student behaviour. As such, the College is committed from P-12 to providing an environment that is safe, supportive and one that nurtures individual students to achieve to his/her potential. The College has the responsibility to foster an educational environment where every attempt is made to eliminate barriers to learning and where all students feel safe and valued. As such, Saint Stephen's College does not tolerate bullying or harassment in any form and makes a commitment to work towards the eradication of these behaviours from the College community. Each student is of equal importance within Saint Stephen's College, however, students who bully, in any of its forms, or harass others and who do not respond to behaviour management strategies, which may include counselling, could ultimately be asked to leave the College.

This policy also considers the Criminal Code Act 1995 Section 474.17 and 4.15 and Clause 17 of the Queensland Sexual Offences Protection of Children Amendment Bill 2002. If the behaviour is considered in violation of these laws the police may be notified and appropriate action taken.

Sections 3 and 10 of the Education (Accreditation of Non-State Schools) Regulation 2001 and Section 146B of the Education (General Provisions) Act 1989 as amended, and the Child Protection Act 1989 all provide that every non-state school must have in place the processes and policies concerning the health and safety of its students that accord with the relevant workplace health and safety legislation. These processes and policies must specifically include the process of reporting and dealing with harm caused to a student by bullying and/or other inappropriate behaviour including sexual abuse and/or sexual harassment.

Definition

(a) The following definitions should be referred to when identifying bullying:

*'Bullying is when someone (or a group of people) with **more power** than you, **repeatedly** and **intentionally** uses negative words and/or actions against you, which causes you distress and **risks your wellbeing**.'*

(National Centre Against Bullying <http://www.ncab.org.au>)

'Bullying involves a desire to hurt, hurtful actions, a power imbalance (typically) repetition, an unjust use of power, evident by the aggressor and a sense of being oppressed on the part of the victim'.

(Ken Rigby <http://www.education.unisa.edu.au/bullying>)

'Cyber Bullying is when someone is tormented, threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed, or otherwise targeted by another child, pre-teen or teen using the Internet, interactive and digital technologies or mobile phones.'

(WiredKids <http://www.stopcyberbullying.org>)

'A student is being bullied or victimised when he or she is exposed repeatedly and over time to negative actions on the part of one or more students'.

(Olweus, 1993)

(b) The word "**Headmaster**" when used in this policy includes any person acting as the Headmaster for the time being and/or who for the time being has day to day management of the College.

(c) "**Department of Communities**" means and includes any alternative Department or Agency from time to time or at any time named in the *Child Protection Act* or any Regulation made there under including (but not limited to) the Department of Child Protection.

1. TYPES OF BULLYING, ITS EFFECTS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF OFFENDERS AND VICTIMS

Bullying covers a wide range of hurtful behaviours, encompassing physically injurious actions as well as verbal forms of harassment and indirect means of hurting others.

It generally causes 'Harm' as defined in the College's Child Protection Policy and as exemplified in this policy.

Bullying is:

- persistent (not a one off event)
- predatory
- intended to cause hurt or upset
- an imbalance of power
- often not apparent to the casual observer
- is often considered an acceptable form of behaviour by the bully

Categorising bullying behaviour into the following is helpful:

1.1 Direct Bullying

- physical - hitting, tripping, pushing, kicking, taking or damaging someone's property
- verbal- name calling, insulting, making derogatory remarks, intimidation, teasing, sexist / racist remarks, offensive body language e.g. gesturing
- threat to bully, physically or verbally.

1.2 Indirect Bullying

- exclusion – cutting off students from peer group / rejection
- rumour spreading
- graffiti writing
- taking or damaging someone's property
- stalking
- extortion
- playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate
- cyber-bullying which includes the use of email, text messaging, internet chat rooms, instant messaging and other social networking sites such as, but not limited to, Facebook and Myspace.

Note: Direct and Indirect bullying may also involve sexual harassment and/or sexual abuse or may otherwise cause harm. In such cases, it will be for the Headmaster, and at the Headmaster's sole discretion, to determine whether the allegations should be dealt with in terms of this policy or of the College's Child Protection Policy.

The Anti-discrimination Act 1991 provides that sexual harassment can amount to unlawful discrimination.

1.3 Characteristics of Offenders

Possible existence of one/some characteristics does not necessarily guarantee bullying behaviour has occurred

- derive satisfaction from inflicting injury and suffering on others
- have little empathy with victims
- defiant or oppositional toward adults, anti-social and apt to break school rules
- defend their actions by saying that their victims provoked the offender's actions
- come from a background where abuse may be experienced
- are taught to strike back physically or verbally as a way to handle problems
- come from a background where parental involvement and warmth are frequently lacking

1.4 Characteristics of Victims

Possible existence of one/some characteristics does not necessarily guarantee bullying behaviour has occurred

- unexplained bruises and cuts
- torn clothes and belongings
- vague pains, headaches, stomach aches
- fear of walking to, and unwillingness to go to school
- deterioration in school work
- coming home hungry (because lunch or lunch money is stolen)
- 'loss' of possessions and pocket money
- few friends, rarely invited to parties
- behaviour changes (withdrawn, stammering, moody, irritable, temper upsets, unhappy, tearful, eating problems, suicide attempts)
- anxious, bed wetting, biting nails and sleeping poorly
- giving improbable explanations for above

1.5 Consequences of Bullying for Victim

Possible existence of one / some effects does not necessarily guarantee bullying behaviour has occurred

- a feeling of being unsupported, vulnerable and disempowered
- a decreased sense of safety and security
- a loss of trust in adults to protect them
- a sense of isolation
- a decreased ability to participate in learning

2. PREVENTION OF BULLYING IN SAINT STEPHEN'S COLLEGE

2.1 The College supports a 'whole school' approach to dealing with bullying. The key elements are:

- a shared understanding of bullying as a problem
- a shared understanding of the different forms of bullying
- a shared resolve to eliminate bullying
- identification of bullying problems in the College and community
- the creation of a 'telling' environment and the use of a range of interventions to address incidents when they happen
- recognition by teachers of their role in creating an anti-bullying ethos
- a classroom anti-bullying education programme

2.2 Advice for Students being bullied:

- be assertive, you have rights. State "leave me alone"
- do not retaliate with physical or verbal aggression
- do not respond. If you show you are not upset, the harassment may stop
- use humour to defuse the situation if possible
- build your own protection by establishing friends
- be smart about avoiding high risk places and times
- talk about it with others who can help you decide how to handle the situation or decide on what action you should take, e.g. your friends or family; the older students in the school, especially the House or College prefects; teachers, pastoral care leaders, Heads of Year, Heads of House, counsellors, chaplain, nurse, Dean of Junior College, Deputy Headmaster, Headmaster, and possibly, the police in serious matters or if it contravenes the Child Protection Policy.
- know you can report bullying
- contact your service provider to report and block bullying behaviour.
- keep records such as text messages, emails or chat logs as evidence.

Note: If the bullying involves sexual abuse, it is a requirement of the College's 'Child Protection Policy' that you report the alleged sexual abuse or sexual harassment to a member of the College staff as soon as possible after it occurs.

2.3 Advice for Students witnessing bullying:

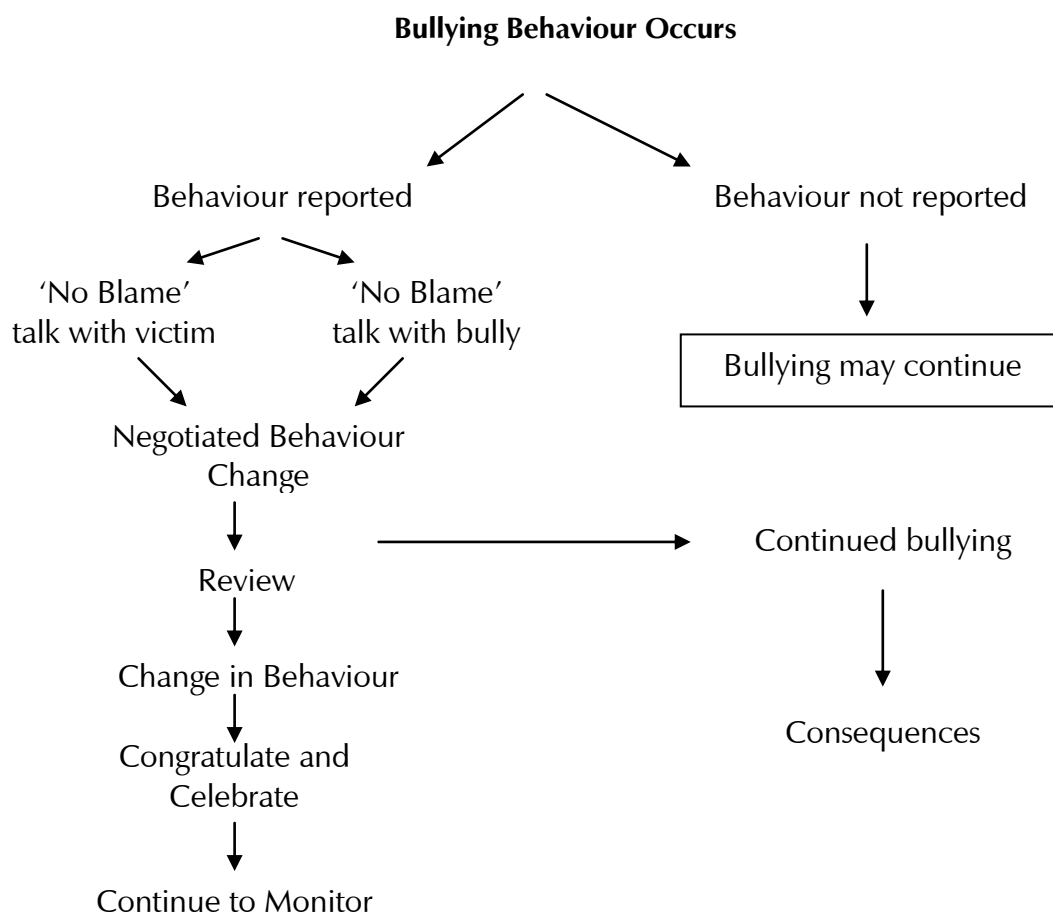
- take action as the bullying occurs by saying "leave him/her alone"
- you can show your support by standing next to / sitting with the victim
- report the incident to a member of staff as soon as you can. It is OK to ask for privacy and confidentiality, or make an anonymous report that will alert the staff to a trouble spot or a bullying incident
- offer support to the student being bullied. Make suggestions about handling it. Encourage student to get help through an adult, a prefect or family
- enlist the support of an older / senior student
- avoid making an audience for the bully

Note: If the bullying involves sexual abuse or sexual harassment you must (in terms of the College's 'Child Protection Policy') report the incident to a staff member as soon as you become aware of the incident.

2.4 Reporting Bullying

Where a suspected case of bullying is identified by a student or parent, it is strongly encouraged that the College is contacted as soon as possible. Contact can be made in person, by phone or via email. If your child is in Prep to Year 6, initial contact should be made with the classroom teacher. If your child is in Year 7 to 12, initial contact should be directed to their tutor teacher or alternatively, their Head of Year.

The following flow chart is indicative of what may occur in response to an incident of bullying.



2.5 Educating the College Community about Bullying

- Curriculum programmes to teach and inform students about bullying and harassment; victimisation; assertiveness training (Mind Matters, You Can Do It!, Pastoral Care Programme, Tutor Group, Peer Support, Drama, Health and Personal Development classes, Computer Studies classes)
- Anti-Bullying brochure and poster (Bullying No Way)
- Student Diary – what constitutes bullying and how to report it
- Opportunities in student leadership programmes for students to contribute to managing the problem (Prefects, Student Leadership Group, Peer Helpers and College Ambassadors)
- Assemblies and Year Level Meetings
- Informal discussions with teachers
- Whole school information seminars (eg. Iness – Brett Lee - Cyber Safety Presentation)
- Resources (eg. 123educateme, Norton Online Family)
- Staff meetings
- Staff Professional Development opportunities

2.6 Educating Parents and Eliciting Parent Support

Information in Acta Ludi, Class / House newsletter and student information about College policy, what constitutes bullying, how to help, communication with the College and how the College responds; parenting sessions; counselling, You Can Do It! and similar personal development programmes.

2.7 Reducing Opportunities for Bullying Behaviour

- teachers being punctual to classes and duties
- rigorous monitoring of high risk areas and movement of students from one part of the College to another between classes
- active patrol while on duty
- classroom rules and expectations clearly stated and reinforced
- encouragement of play activities during recess to reduce 'boredom' e.g. playing touch on oval, handball, chess, gardening
- creation of safe places for students who feel vulnerable
- modelling of pro-social behaviour

3. CYBER-BULLYING

Although face to face bullying is still the predominant means used to bully, cyber-bullying is considered to be an increasingly serious problem. Whilst the impact of any bullying experience can be severe and long-term, some suggest the unique nature of cyber-bullying increases its severity due to its potentially wider audience and its ability to penetrate the home, making the victim accessible 24/7.

Studies show that the majority of cyber-bullying incidents occur outside the school environment. However, where the unacceptable use of a mobile device, computer and/or network outside of the College is deemed to have a negative impact on student wellbeing, the College reserves the right to intervene in a manner that it deems appropriate.

3.1 Common Terms

Cyber-bullying

A repeated or sustained pattern of intentional cyber-attacks that causes distress and is directed against a specific student or group. Cyber-bullying can also be a multi-faceted or multi-stepped campaign of humiliation or hostility that causes distress and is directed against a specific student or group. (McGrath, Prof H. 2009 *Young People and Technology: A review of the current literature* 2nd ed. Alannah and Madeline Foundation)

Cyber-exploitation

The use of the internet to manipulate others for one's own self-serving or dishonest ends; mainly financial or sexual. (McGrath, Prof H. 2009 *Young People and Technology: A review of the current literature* 2nd ed. Alannah and Madeline Foundation)

Cyber-attack

A single or 'one-off' act of aggression, denigration or nastiness against a specific student via technology. Cyber-attacks include, for example, cyber-threats, cyber-insults and cyber-humiliation. (McGrath, Prof H. 2009 *Young People and Technology: A review of the current literature* 2nd ed. Alannah and Madeline Foundation)

Sexting

Is where a person takes a sexually-explicit digital photograph of himself or herself or of someone else, and sends it as an MMS and/or SMS via a mobile phone. These images can then be posted on the internet or forwarded electronically to other people. Once posted on the internet these images can leave a permanent digital footprint and be accessed at any time in the future. It is illegal to take sexual photos or videos of children and young people.

(<http://www.schools.sa.gov.au/speced2/pages/cybersafety/36277/?reFlag=1>)

3.2 Examples of the Inappropriate Use of ICT which may be Signs of Cyber Bullying

- Repeated e-mails or instant messages
- Following the child around online, into chat rooms, favorite Web sites, etc.
- Building fake profiles, Web sites or posing as the child's e-mail or instant messenger
- Planting statements to provoke third-party stalking and harassment
- Signing the child up for porn sites and e-mailing lists and junk e-mail and instant messengers.
- Breaking into the child's account online
- Stealing or otherwise accessing their passwords
- Posting images of the child online (taken from any source, including video and photo phones)
- Posting real or doctored sexual images of the child online
- Sharing personal information about the child
- Sharing intimate information about the child (sexual, special problems, etc.)
- Sharing contact information about the child coupled with a sexual solicitation ("for a good time call ..." or "I am interested in [fill in the blank] sex...")
- Reporting the child for real or provoked terms of service violations ("notify wars" or "warning wars")
- Encouraging that others share their top ten 'hit lists', or 'ugly lists', or 'slut lists' online and including the child on that list.
- Posting and encouraging others to post nasty comments on the child's blog.
- Hacking the child's computer and sending the child malicious codes.
- Sending threats to others (like the president of the United States) or attacking others while posing as the child.
- Copying others on the child's private e-mail and INSTANT MESSENGER communications.
- Posting bad reviews or feedback on the child without cause.
- Registering the child's name and setting up a bash Web site or profile.
- Posting rude or provocative comments while posing as the child (such as insulting racial minorities at a Web site devoted to that racial minority).
- Sending spam or malware to others while posing as the child.
- Breaking the rules of a Web site or service while posing as the child.
- Setting up a vote for site (like "hot or not?") designed to embarrass or humiliate the child.
- Masquerading as the child for any purpose.
- Posting the child's text-messaging address or cell phone number online to encourage abuse and increase the child's text-messaging or cell phone charges.
- Launching a denial of service attack on the child's Web site
- Sending "jokes" or rude things about the child to others or mailing lists.

(WiredKids <http://www.stopcyberbullying.org>)

3.3 Reducing Opportunities for Cyber Bullying

- Provide a supportive atmosphere for your children so they can freely tell you if they are being cyber bullied.
- Place your home computer in a public place within your home ie. not in bedrooms.
- Monitor the search history of your children when online.
- Be familiar with social networking and chat sites that are visited by your children.
- Discuss cyber safety and check profiles made by your children.
- Keep records of instances of cyber-bullying and report matters to the College or in more serious cases to the police.

3.4 Useful links

I.T. vision (www.itvision.net.au)

Cyber Smart (www.cybersmart.gov.au)

Think U Know (www.thinkuknow.org.au)

Bullying No Way (www.bullyingnoway.com.au)

WiredKids (www.stopcyberbullying.org)

Kids Helpline (www.kidshelp.com.au) or 1800 55 1800

4. RESPONDING TO BULLYING AND CYBER BULLYING

At Saint Stephen's College it is recognised that a variety of approaches, as advocated by Dr Ken Rigby in his many publications, are required when responding to reported / observed cases of bullying. This allows for the distinction to be made between more severe and less severe forms of bullying, as well as the individual nature of each case. Having each individual student as our focus, this range of approaches enables the College to keep this as a priority as it deals with each bullying incident.

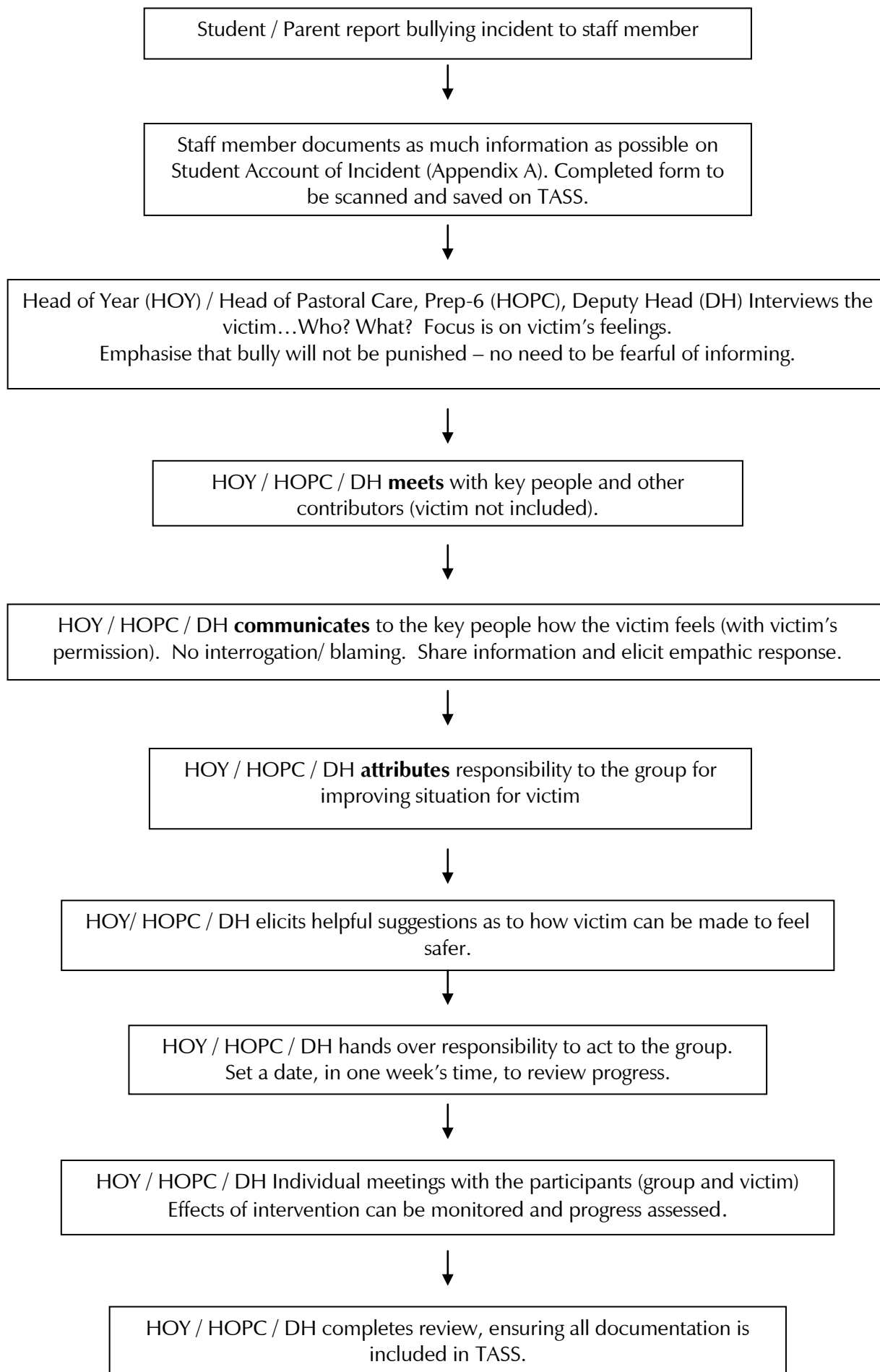
At Saint Stephen's College we draw upon six very similar approaches to Dr Rigby, such as and including:

- i) the Support Group Method (no blame approach);
- ii) the Shared Concern Method;
- iii) the Traditional Disciplinary Approach (consequences);
- iv) Strengthening the Victim;
- v) Mediation; and
- vi) Restorative Practice

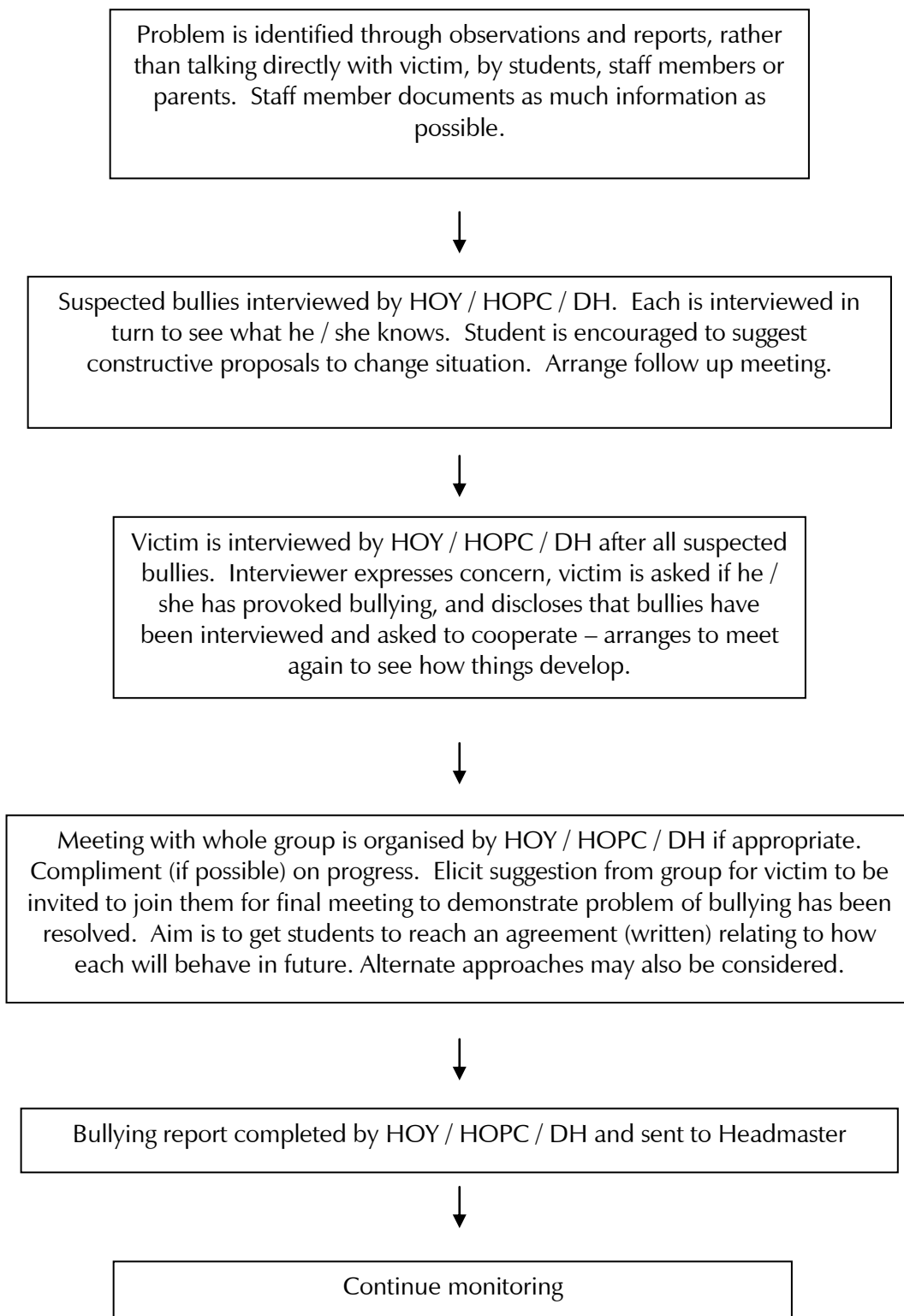
The following flow charts are examples of what may occur in response to an incident of bullying, using some of the six approaches. At Saint Stephen's College, we also utilise additional methods on occasions through the counselling process.

It is reiterated here that each student is of equal importance within Saint Stephen's College, however, students who bully, in any of its forms, or harass others and who do not respond to behaviour management strategies, which may include counselling, could ultimately be asked to leave the College.

(i) **The Support Group Method (No Blame Approach)**



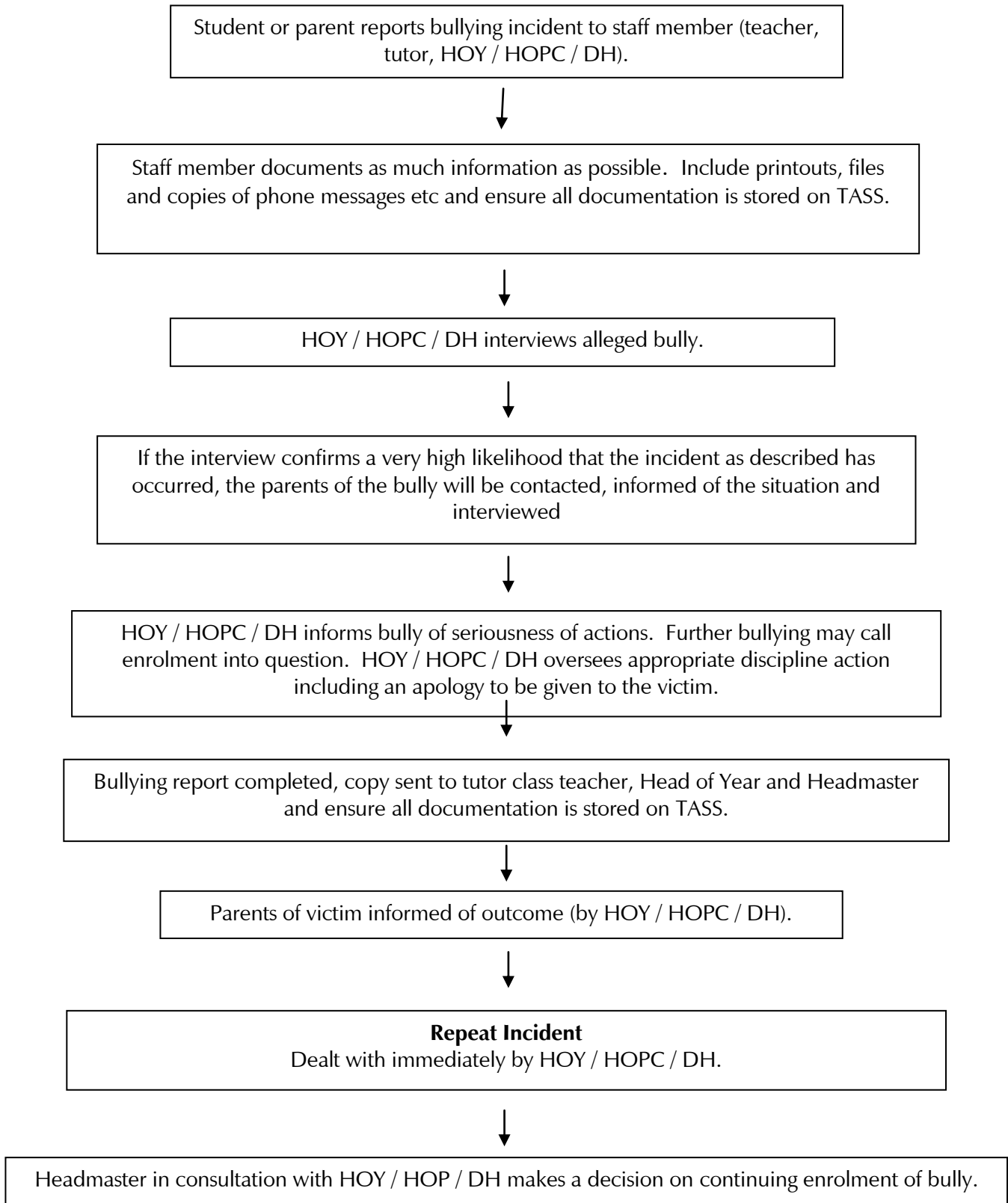
(ii) The Shared Concern Method



The Headmaster may in his absolute discretion, delete any step or number of steps in the above two tables.

(iii) The Traditional Disciplinary Approach (Consequences)

Generally this approach is taken in more severe cases of bullying e.g. physical (hitting, shoving, biting, pushing, fighting), a clear case of cyber-bullying or in continued or repeated bullying behaviour. However, if the bullying involves sexual abuse, or aggravated or sustained sexual harassment, the procedures set out in the College's Child Protection Policy under the heading Procedures for Reporting Harm will apply instead of these provisions



Conclusion

As stated in the introduction, the Anti-Bullying Policy at Saint Stephen's College is integrated in the Behaviour Management Policy. Saint Stephen's College does not tolerate bullying or harassment in any form and makes a commitment to work towards the eradication of these behaviours from the College community.

However, the College also recognises that bullying; both face-to-face and cyber-bullying, does occur within a school environment and that through the curriculum, proactive monitoring, positive role modelling of pro-social behaviour and a whole school approach, instances of bullying can be prevented or at least responded to quickly and effectively. It is perhaps valuable to remember that schools are among the safest places in the community for children and young people.

As a College community, we are committed to ensuring that Saint Stephen's College strives to be a safe and supportive environment that values diversity, where all have the right to be treated with fairness and dignity.

