Caloundra City Private School

Student Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy

Last Review: December 2025	**Constructed / Reviewed by:** Russell Kennedy Lawyers/Company Secretary
Next Review: December 2027(and every two years thereafter in accordance with the School's review cycle, or more frequently as required)	**Approval Required:** CCPS Risk and Compliance Committee and CCPS Board of Directors
	Board Sign Off Date: 29th January 2026 **Implementation Date:** 29th January 2026

1 Statement of Context and Purpose

Caloundra City Private School (the **School** or **CCPS**) is committed to providing a safe, respectful learning environment that is inclusive and supportive for all students. All members of our School community have the right to be in an environment free from fear, intimidation, humiliation and harassment.

Bullying, in any of its forms, will not be tolerated at the School and will be treated seriously. Our approach is drawn from, and inherent in the School's values of: *Excellence, Integrity, Learning, Respect and Inclusiveness*.

Bullying is complex. Knowing exactly what bullying is and understanding why it happens are critical to finding positive and lasting solutions for everyone involved. Students can play various roles within the bullying dynamic. Understanding the peer group is central to understanding bullying.

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long-term negative impacts. Intervening appropriately to respond to or prevent bullying is essential. Dealing with bullying involves tapping into their motivations and understandings of the social situation. The reasons for bullying will be found below the surface by investigating issues of power, norms and social status, tolerance and diversity. Exploring these areas and how they influence students' interactions and behaviour can provide essential insights into the most appropriate responses.

2 Scope

This policy applies to students enrolled at the School. A Year 12 student is considered to be enrolled until the business day after the completion of their final exam or their final attendance at a School day or formal event in their capacity as a student.

The application of this policy is not limited to the School's site and operating hours. It extends to all activities and events that are School related, including when students are:

(a) On School grounds.

(b) At any in School related activities or representing the School (including for example camps, events, excursions, incursions, retreats, sport, awards nights).

(c) Representing the School, including when off campus, or in a digital environment.

(d) Travelling to and from School, as well as to and from off-site activities.

(e) Wearing the School uniform.

(f) Under the School's legal duty of care.

(g) Otherwise engaging in behaviour which in the reasonable opinion of the School may affect student health and safety, student relationships, staff health and safety, staff-student relationships, or the reputation of the School.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the *Student Code of Conduct*

3 Aim

This policy aims to:

(a) signal to all members of the School community that the School does not tolerate bullying;

(b) support a culture of positive behaviour with high levels of student engagement as essential for ongoing achievement and wellbeing;

(c) outline the School's approach to bullying;

(d) establish a transparency around processes followed when students exhibit adverse behaviours;

(e) ensure the safety of all the members of the community;

(f) support the development of self-discipline, self-respect, self-worth, and respect for others; and

(g) to create an environment where the right of students to learn and the right of teachers to teach is respected.

4 Definition

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.

5 Examples of Bullying

Bullying can happen in different ways. Examples of bullying include:

(a) **Verbal** – name calling, teasing, abuse, putdowns (particularly those which refer to personal characteristics and impact on self-esteem), sarcasm, insults, threats of unfair criticism, suggestive comments, rumour spreading.

(b) **Non-verbal** – writing offensive notes, graffiti about others, rude gestures, damaging other people's possessions.

(c) **Physical** - hitting, rubbing, grabbing, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting, taking/damaging property, using a weapon and any other unwelcome physical contact used to intimidate or hurt someone.

(d) **Social** - ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating including forming groups to leave out, ignoring and disrespect, making inappropriate gestures, looks, stares, facial expressions

(e) **Racial** – treating someone inappropriately because of their race, including by using racial slurs, making inappropriate comments in respect of a persons race, or excluding a person because of their race.

(f) **Ableism** – treating someone differently or unfairly because of a disability or additional needs, including by using inappropriate slurs, seeking to trigger a person in respect of their disability, or excluding a person because of their disability.

(g) **Sexual** - any unwelcome written, verbal or physical contact of a sexual nature (including those actions which are perceived to be sexual in nature), sexually orientated jokes, drawings of or writing about another person's body, unwanted invitations of a sexual nature, showing explicit images without permission and asking questions about another person's sexual activity or orientation.

(h) **Psychological** - spreading rumours, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions, malicious SMS and email messages, voice and text messages, inappropriate use of camera phones, photographic and video images, inappropriate use of social media.

(i) **Indirect** - influencing or organising someone else to bully or harass another person.

(j) **Cyberbullying** – using email, text messaging, social media, the internet or other online forums to cause hurt or upset to another person. Further details are provided below.

6 Cyberbullying

Cyber-bullying is direct verbal or indirect bullying behaviours using digital technologies. This includes harassment via a mobile phone, setting up a defamatory personal website or deliberately excluding someone from social networking.

Cyber bullying can be particularly damaging because of the capacity to humiliate, hurt and harm a person in front of a huge 'audience'.

A dangerous feature of cyber bullying is that it can be done quickly and easily. On an impulse, a person can create emotional havoc for another and do so before the voice of reason hints at the inappropriateness of the action. A further problem with cyber bullying is that the person bullying is often unaware of the extent of the harm they are causing because cyber bullying seldom occurs face-to-face.

The feedback is muted by distance so that they are protected from an understanding of the awfulness of their behaviour. Cyber bullying represents unlawful activity that may result in police laying charges. Cyber bullying has been linked to depression, self-harm and even suicide.

Further examples of cyberbullying include:

(a) Sending hateful or threatening comments or pictures via an instant messaging service, mobile phone or the internet and by social networking sites such as X (formerly known as Twitter), Tumblr, Snapchat, Be Real, Instagram, TikTok and Facebook.

(b) Sending messages containing emojis intended to be hateful, threatening or otherwise harmful.

(c) Using modern technologies to engage in the social exclusion of someone and in hate group recruitment, including through comment sections or within private group chats.

(d) Posting rude, explicit or embarrassing messages, comments or pictures about someone online.

(e) Stealing someone's identity or otherwise impersonating a person to harm them in some way.

(f) Putting pressure on a person to send revealing or compromising pictures of themselves.

(g) Covertly filming, recording or taking a picture of someone and posting the images on the Internet to cause hurt.

(h) Disseminating confidential information about someone.

(i) 'Flaming' and multi-messaging to clog up a person's electronic system and to cause them distress.

(j) Using aliases and pseudonyms in chat rooms and on social networking sites to harass and upset.

(k) Engaging in cyber-stalking and the invading of privacy.

(l) Referring to the School in a negative or disparaging manner.

7 What is Not Bullying?

Many distressing behaviours are not examples of bullying, even though they are unpleasant and often require staff intervention and management.

Behaviours that do not constitute bullying include:

(a) **Single incidents** - Single episodes of nastiness, intimidation, violence or acts of physical aggression are not the same as bullying. If a student is verbally abused or pushed on one occasion they are not being bullied. Nastiness or physical aggression that is directed towards many different students is not the same as bullying.

That said, single incidents can still constitute a breach of the School's standards and expectations and warrant disciplinary outcomes.

(b) **Mutual conflict** - Bullying behaviour is not disagreements between equals, situations of mutual conflict or children not getting along well. In mutual conflict situations, there is an argument or disagreement between students but not an imbalance of power. Both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution to the problem. However, unresolved mutual conflict sometimes develops into a bullying situation with one person becoming targeted repeatedly for 'retaliation' in a one-sided way.

(c) **Social rejection or dislike** - Not liking a person or a one-off act of social rejection, meanness or spite is not bullying. Unless the social rejection is directed towards someone specific and involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others, it is not bullying.

8 Signs of Bullying

Signs that a student may be the subject of bulling include:

(a) becoming aggressive and unreasonable;

(b) startling physical or verbal altercations;

(c) refusing to talk about what is wrong;

(d) crying and night and having nightmares;

(e) feeling ill in the mornings;

(f) refusing to go to school;

(g) unexplained bruises, cuts or scratches; or

(h) a drop in academic performance.

Less obvious signs could include a student that:

(a) is often alone or excluded from friendship groups at school;

(b) is a frequent target for teasing, mimicking or ridicule at school;

(c) changes their willingness to speak up in class;

(d) withdraws from friends and activities they previously enjoyed; or

(e) appears insecure or frightened in the classroom.

9 The School's Response to, and Management of Reports of Bullying

Staff, students and parents are encouraged to report bullying so that it can be dealt with appropriately. Most often, it can be dealt with internally at the School, however, in some instances, it may be appropriate to report bullying to other authorities, in the case of behaviours which may constitute a crime, or serious online bullying.

If suspected bullying is reported to the School, students and parents can expect that a member of staff will:

(a) Reassure the student that they will be supported and assisted by the School.

(b) Reassure the student that bullying is not tolerated by the School.

(c) Avoid minimising the issue, or saying dismissive things that imply the issue is not important.

(d) Find a suitable place to talk, or make a time to discuss the problem privately.

(e) Ensure that their voice is calm and body language is open as they listen to the concerns being raised.

(f) Listen without interrupting, using only encouraging questions or sounds to show they are listening.

(g) Only after the student has shared their version of events, staff may ask specific questions to clarify or seek more details.

(h) If the student has not already advised, ask the student: "*who, what, when, why, how and where"* questions, including:

(i) What words have been said or written?

(ii) Has anyone been physically hurt and how?

(iii) Who is usually around?

(iv) Who else has the student told about this?

(v) Is any evidence of what has happened? This typically relates to screenshots etc. in instances of cyberbullying.

(i) Ask the student questions to help distinguish between single incidents of conflict and an ongoing pattern of bullying.

(j) Ask the student to write down any information they have about their concerns.

(k) Reassure the student it is never okay to be bullied.

(l) Reassure the student it is not their fault that the other person is behaving in such a way that makes the student feel the way they are feeling.

(m) Praise the student for speaking out, and acknowledge that talking about it takes lots of courage.

(n) Ask the student what they want the School to do in response (for example, a stop bullying conversation or a formal investigation). The School will consider a range of possible outcomes, including (but not limited to) the implementation of a class seating plan, assigning a mentor to the accused victim or bully or both, and referrals to wellbeing and support services.

(o) Reassure the student that the School takes their concerns seriously and that the School will follow up as quickly as possible.

(p) Ask the student if they feel safe in the short term, and consider whether interim preventative safety measures may need to be implemented.

The School will further ensure that any students accused of bullying are afforded with procedural fairness, including by being the opportunity to respond.

10 Responsibilities and Delegations

The School has allocated the following responsibility and delegations in support of its commitment to prevent and manage bullying.

Principal	• Ensure a safe, secure and harmonious work environment for students and staff • Develop, implement and monitor this policy and ensure it is evaluated and reviewed by the school community • Ensure staff are provided with training and development opportunities to identify and manage incidents of bullying and/or harassment • Ensure that this policy is available to the school community • Employ staff who have specialist skills in helping both targets and perpetrators of bullying • Ensure effective pastoral and wellbeing support for students • Model and promote appropriate relationships and behaviours
Deputy Principal-Students and Deputy Principal-	• Ensure staff are aware of this policy and monitor its implementation • Model and promote appropriate relationships and behaviours

Operations	• Ensure anti-bullying and harassment content is included in the curriculum • Implement and monitor strategies for dealing with bullying and harassment matters when raised • Periodically undertake confidential surveys of student wellbeing and bullying behaviour and where possible following up on identified perpetrators and targets • Identify patterns of bullying behaviour and initiate School action to respond • Provide feedback to the appropriate persons when bullying and harassment issues occur • Use a range of interventions and sanctions applicable to various age groups and situations to deal with and discourage bullying behaviour in accordance with the *Student Code of Conduct* • Manage complaints about bullying, investigate thoroughly and take necessary action in a timely manner • Liaise with a Police Liaison Officer or equivalent person in the police department (depending on nature of incident) • Maintain partnerships with parents in the prevention and appropriate response to bullying behaviours • Ensure that consequences for bullying include opportunities for students to learn more appropriate social skills and responsible behaviours through explicit teaching of these behaviours
Teachers	• Contribute to the development of this policy and support its effective implementation • Model and promote appropriate relationships and behaviours • Endeavour to identify and minimise bullying behaviour at the School • Monitor, address and follow up on bullying and/or harassment matters when identified in a timely manner • Provide feedback to the appropriate persons when bullying and harassment occur • Promote positive behaviours and a bully-free environment with students • Support and implement programs that provide information, strategies and counselling regarding bullying • Provide opportunities for students to learn about positive behaviour including problem solving and conflict resolution, bullying and the School process for responding to bullying • Actively supervise whilst on duty so that there is a pervasive sense of staff presence • Actively engage with professional development regarding anti-bullying and harassment strategies • Notify the Senior Leadership Team of allegations of bullying and ensure that bullying behaviour is addressed • Be familiar with and follow this policy for preventing and responding to bullying

Parents	• Support the School in the implementation of this policy and assist their child(ren) in understanding bullying behaviour • Notify a teacher if they think their or another child is experiencing bullying • Model positive social behaviour and relationships in interactions with the School community, including in interactions with teachers, other parents and students • Work collaboratively with the School to resolve bullying when it occurs and promote appropriate behaviour
Students	• Follow School policies and procedures (including this policy and the *Student Code of Conduct*) • Notifying a teacher if they witness or experience bullying • Implement strategies teachers have suggested when responding to bullying • Behave appropriately, respecting individual differences and diversity • Take responsibility for ensuring other students can learn in a safe and supportive environment and contribute to the safety and wellbeing of others

1 Bullying Prevention Strategies

The School recognises that the implementation of school-wide prevention strategies is the most effective way of eliminating, or at least minimising incidents of bullying within our community. The following initiatives form part of our overall bullying prevention strategy and our strategy to create a 'no bullying' culture within the School:

(a) a structured curriculum and peer group support system, which provides age-appropriate information and skills relating to bullying (including cyber bullying) and bullying prevention, to students over the course of the academic year;

(b) education, training, and professional development of staff in bullying prevention and response strategies;

(c) regular provision of information to parents/guardians, to raise awareness of bullying as a school community issue to equip them to recognise signs of bullying, as well as to provide them with clear paths for raising any concerns they may have related to bullying directly with the School;

(d) promotion of a supportive environment that encourages the development of positive relationships and communication between staff, students, and parents/guardians;

(e) promotion of responsible bystander behaviour amongst students, staff, and parents/guardians;

(f) reporting of incidents of alleged bullying by students, bystanders, parents/guardians, and staff are encouraged, and made easy through the establishment of multiple reporting channels;

(g) regular risk assessments of bullying within the School are undertaken by surveying students to identify bullying issues that may ordinarily go unnoticed by staff;

(h) records of reported bullying incidents are maintained and analysed, in order to identify persistent bullies and/or victims and to implement targeted prevention strategies where appropriate;

(i) statements supporting bullying prevention are included in students' School diaries;

(j) education of staff, students, and parents/guardians on health conditions to promote understanding and to reduce stigma and fear;

(k) anti-bullying posters are displayed strategically within the School; and

(l) promotion of student awareness and a 'no-bullying' environment by participating in events such as the National Day of Action Against Bullying and Violence.

11 Definitions

Parent includes a guardian or carer, and 'parents' has a corresponding meaning.

Senior Leadership Team refers to the Principal, Deputy Principal-Operations, Deputy Principal-Students and Business Manager.

Staff and **staff members** include Board members, the Principal, employees, volunteers, contractors, and other authorised personnel required to perform functions on the School's premises, or at school-organised activities and events.

Student means a child under 18 years of age, and any student at the School over 18 years of age, and **'students'** has a corresponding meaning.