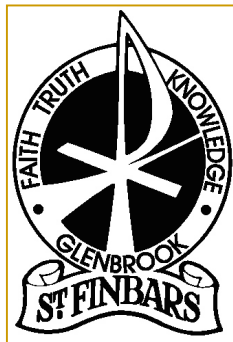


STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS POLICY 2012



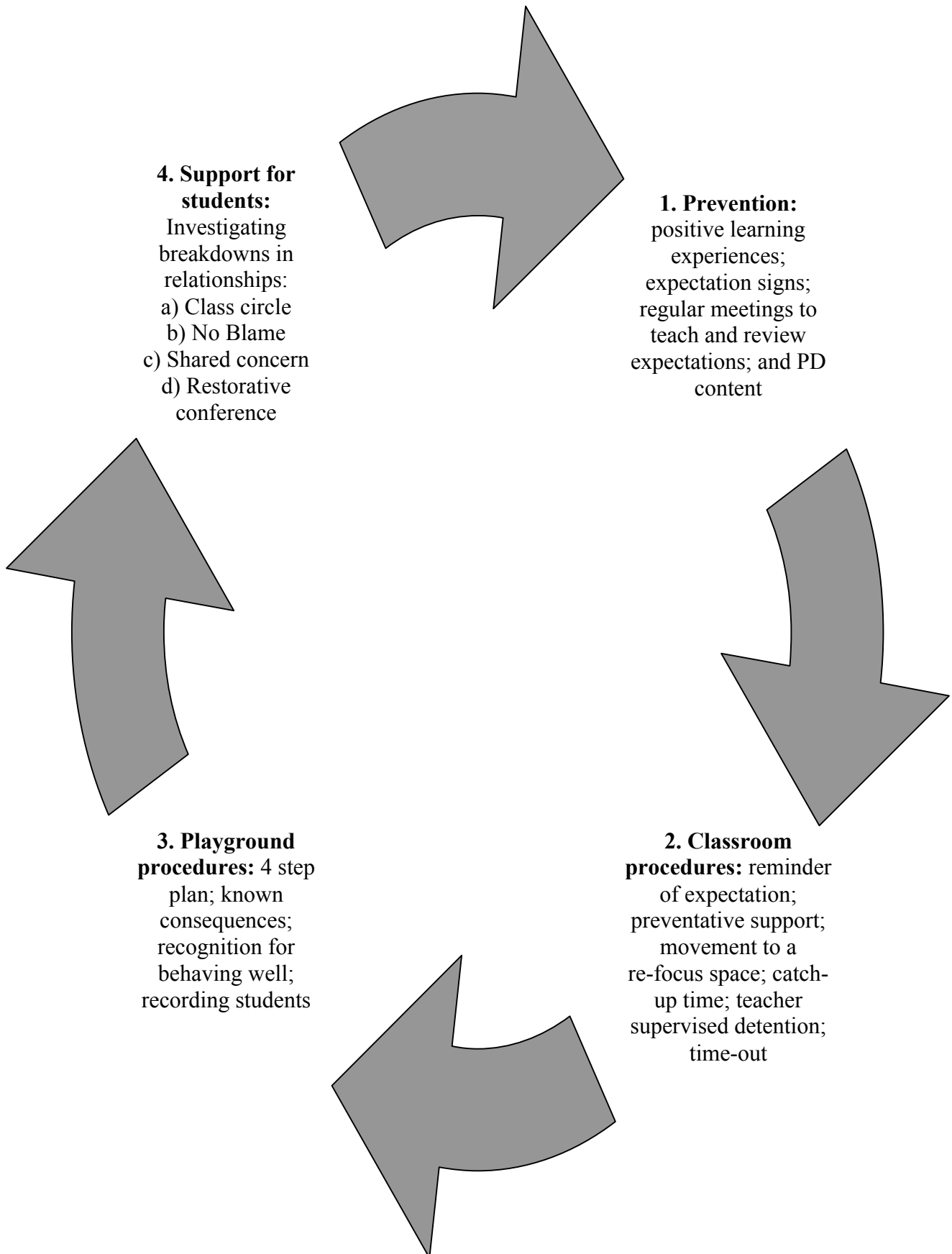
St. Finbar's Glenbrook

This school based policy is a procedural support for members of our school community. It aims to assist teachers' in their professional duty of care to be in accord with:

- The National Safe Schools Framework
- The NSW Child Protection Act
- Maintaining Right Relations
- CCH Australia. School Health and Safety Guide, 2005
- Pastoral Care of Students in Catholic Systemic Schools (CEO, Parramatta, 1988)
- Approaches to Student Management: A System Framework (Working Draft, 2005)
- And the CEO Parramatta Anti-Bullying Policy for Students (2005)
- Quality Teaching Framework

This policy is an integral part of Pastoral Care at St. Finbar's.

Student Relationships: Procedural flowchart of teacher interventions



Classroom Behaviour Management Procedure 2012

8. Co-ordinator / AP will monitor number of occasions and when or if necessary contact parents. A record will be filed in the school behaviour file (Principal's office).

7. Teacher makes contact with parent regarding behaviour via a note with a photocopy of the reflection sheets. A follow up note phone call is needed to make sure that correspondence was received.

6. At third instance send student to AP (Primary) and Coordinator (Infants) with three reflection sheets stapled together (2 completed and one blank). Discussion with student about their behaviour and the third reflection sheet is completed.

5. Use procedure twice in any one day.

4. Discussion with teacher on re-entering classroom: Teacher explains to the student why their behaviour was not acceptable. Teacher monitors student's plan for fulfilling classroom expectations. File reflection sheet in student classroom file.

3. Time-out at pre-arranged buddy classroom with 'Reflection sheet' written on by teacher (for copies see Student Relationship Policy: appendix inside School policies and procedures folder). Say no more than 10-15 minutes.

Buddy classes: 2008

Kindergarten ⇔ Yr 1/2

Yr 3 ⇔ Yr 3 / 4

Yr 4 ⇔ 6R

Yr 1 ⇔ Yr 2

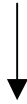
Yr 5 ⇔ 6G

2. At second instance the student is instructed to move to a 're-focus desk' in the classroom in order to settle, reflect or complete work.

1. At the first instance of inappropriate behaviour a verbal reminder of the relevant school expectation is given: **Be Safe; Be Fair; Be Responsible; Be a Learner; Be Respectful**; Eg, "(N) you are not being safe when you....."

Playground Behaviour Management Procedure, 2012

1. The Teacher should be on time for duty and have a megaphone and a first aid bag. Supervision should be preventative, proactive and vigilant with regular relevant reminders to the students of the expectations. ***Be Safe; Be Fair; Be Responsible; Be a Learner; Be Respectful.***

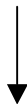


2. The teacher on duty deals with minor issues arising on the playground by completing behaviour tickets (in First Aid bag) for students who are not fulfilling the expectations. Management strategies:

- time out with supporting teacher
- sitting down at a quiet space to have some reflection time
- community service
- follow-up meeting with teacher



3. At the conclusion of the playground duty the teacher hands any behaviour tickets to the student's classroom teacher(s). This written information indicates how the issue has been dealt with. The classroom teacher keeps the tickets with the student's classroom file.



4. Three (3) such tickets in any one term correlates the student being referred to the appropriate Co-ordinator – (Please send the three tickets stapled together.)



5. After discussion with the child: The Co-ordinator makes contact with the parents via a phone call or letter to notify them of their child's behaviour and appropriate consequence. A record of the student's behaviour is placed in the school behaviour file (Principal's office).



6. The student's behaviour is monitored via playground tickets and classroom teacher.

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STUDENT RELATIONSHIPS POLICY

The philosophical basis at St Finbar's is founded on the Hebrew scripture Micah 6:8 "to act justly". Our approach endeavours to integrate policy suitable to the age of students and the context of the issues.

St Finbar's Catholic Primary School aims to graduate students who have experienced opportunities to develop:

- **An experience of Catholic Church community** - the Sacraments and Scriptures are foundational to an understanding of Christianity. Faith in Christ Jesus provides opportunity for relating to God in daily interactions which often require decision making and reconciliation.
- **An understanding of discipline** - discipline is a form of guidance, offering support for the student towards the development of their character. Discipline instructs, educates, supports and trains with faithful consistency. It is more than giving orders and making rules or punishing misbehaviour. There are two elements to discipline, constructive and corrective:
 - constructive measures seek to build self-discipline in students
 - corrective measures are also necessary at times.
- **Responsibility in relationships** – it is desired students will take responsibility for their behaviour. As students experience positive recognition they value their sense of belonging to the school; as members of the Church we endeavour to strengthen our willingness to serve others respectfully.
- **A concern for self and others** - seeking to build up a caring community where God's love is demonstrated through developed ethical and moral standards, courtesy and consideration.
- **Skills for relating to others** - to be expressive of our Christian faith, enlivened by authentic, vibrant and professional relationships that demonstrate the school community as noticeably welcoming and supportive of its members. Students have opportunity to further their social resilience supported by the professionalism of teachers and educational experiences.
- **A commitment to achievement in the Key Learning Areas** - students are provided with engaging opportunities that value and deepen their ongoing knowledge of Key Learning Areas.
- **A sense of vocation and vision** - understanding that members can contribute decisively to their community, valuing the contributions of each person. Students should have a sense of their own worth and that of others, together with an understanding of rights and responsibilities.
- **A sense of hope** - through a resolution based approach; students can better themselves, solve problems and make worthwhile contributions to the school and the broader community with the support of salient members.

***Staff need to be aware:**

- that corporal punishment is NOT sanctioned at St. Finbar's. This includes staff statements that may be comprehended as endorsing corporal punishment of a student by non-school persons to enforce discipline of a child
- the nature of bullying and its potential consequences
- how to recognise instances of bullying
- how to respond when bullying behaviour is noticed or reported.

The ability to recognise instances of bullying, establish the level or degree of bullying involved and to respond appropriately to incidents is not a natural ability for many people. The minimum level of understanding for both staff and students would be awareness of:

- the existence of a school policy on bullying
- the contents of the policy
- the significance of bullying behaviour on individuals and the broader school culture.

*Source: CCH Australia. School Health and Safety Guide, 2005

In partnership with families

Developing ongoing partnerships with parents and families within the school community fosters an inclusive and encompassing approach to dealing with bullying behaviour at the school.

Parents should be contacted by class teachers once it is evident that the student is regularly disrupting educational activities or is playing inappropriately on most days. There may be incidences that require the class teacher to consider the support of a colleague in the Leadership Team when communicating with a parent. Teacher - parent communication along these lines require a form of professional diarising for future reference.

Through relationships students have the opportunity to experience hope, faith and love.

Children develop dispositions for learning termed habits of mind, (Katz, 1995). These habits of mind become established according to the patterns of behaviour that develop in children's lives. The dynamics of early relationships in children's lives effects the psychological adjustment of children and influences their behaviour (Berk, 2003).

Adults play a crucial role in the early relationships of children's lives creating an atmosphere fostering the development of self concept and esteem. Positive adult behaviour communicates a message of acceptance and encouragement, supportive of children, and enables children in developing a positive self concept and high self esteem (Rodd, 1996). In this way teachers can influence the type of behaviour students engage in and the patterns that develop as they grow.

In order to feel competent, children need ample opportunity to feel successful in making recognisable contributions to their environment. Through helping and affirming students by setting goals that are realistically achievable and challenging, a level of responsible control over their lives is better realised. Such opportunities develop competency and a higher sense of self esteem (Rodd, 1996).

A student's self perception is formed through association with others and this will often influence their behaviour. Students can discover and learn how to enter a group, deal appropriately with conflict and be supportive of others. As students grow in confidence their personal resilience has an opportunity to develop. When students view themselves as competent and liked by others they increasingly develop an acceptable social behaviour becoming less likely to engage in inappropriate behaviour.

Educators can make a long term commitment to creating these classroom environments through teaching and supporting students in their practice of skills explicitly associated with learning cooperatively (Briggs and Potter, 2000). A sense of interdependence in the understanding of relationships within the group is nurtured as students experience each member being accountable for learning in the group. Students will also develop interpersonal and reflective skills to assist the group to function as best as possible.

Given opportunities to get to know themselves and others, through friendships and working together, students can better develop an authentic self concept, becoming sensitive to the other person in the process. Such opportunity promotes the development of prosocial behaviour (Berk, 2003). The development of social skills includes an awareness of cooperation and mutual respect in regards to others, building the groundwork for successful social relationships (Youniss, 1982).

STUDENT RELATIONSHIP PROCEDURES

Research with young children has shown that the more popular children are skilled in being a good friend. The expectations of being a good friend involve being seen to be kind, affectionate and caring, as well as having an ability to include others when playing. The development of such social understanding is related to children's growing levels of maturity, (Dowling, 2000).

Mutual expectations

There is of course a professional expectation upon staff to ensure the safety of students on a daily basis. As well it is hoped that staff can assist students to make their own contribution to the school's sense of trust. Students may on occasion make mistakes; however, by teaching the expectations and applying the guidelines students will gain an understanding of the boundaries and comprehend the consequences as justifiable.

Classroom expectations

In order to help students, teachers and relief teachers the school expectations are to be displayed prominently in all classrooms. Class teachers are requested to teach and maintain these expectations. They number five only:

- Be Safe
- Be Fair
- Be Respectful
- Be a Learner
- Be Responsible

In order to assist student comprehension the teacher, in collaboration with the class, can add sub-headings that are appropriate to the age, stage and make up of the class.

Positive consequences

Positive consequences assist in creating an ethos supportive of students enjoying a sense of belonging to their class. Authentic teacher comments that give encouragement and recognition will best establish a model for students to copy and co-create an extraordinary learning environment based on trusting relationships.

Tangible and objective reward systems are from time to time supportive in assisting students with various learning styles to engage pro-socially.

St Finbar's has a merit award system in place providing opportunity for students to gain recognition in the wider community for academic and non-academic achievements.

Further details of this award system can found in the Staff Handbook.

Negative consequences for classroom misbehaviour

1. At first instance it is advisable that any disruptive student is directed (with as little emotional attention as possible and within a 1.5 metre voice range) to sit at a desk arranged to support refocussing on class activities.

2. **'Catch up time'**. If a student is unable to focus on the learning task and continues being disruptive after the appropriate reminders of a particular expectation 'catch up time' can be effective as an immediate consequence. 'Catch up time' should be used consistently as a matter of procedure. It consists of keeping the student in class for 3 to 5 minutes at the start of recess or 5 to 15 minutes at lunch. To a student, not going out with the class is similar to a detention yet allows teachers to have a break. If after such intervention a student remains too unsettled, the teacher should speak discretely to the student advising that they will be placed on what is commonly termed 'time-out'.

3. **'Time-out'**. This level of the procedure is designed to prevent escalations of emotional and class attention being given for inappropriate behaviour to a student. Class teachers are requested to establish a flexible professional understanding with other teachers in regard to particular students who may require being escorted to another classroom for a period of 10 to 20 minutes. Generally, this is to be a time where the student is able to settle emotionally, and become reflective about their behaviour. A generic reflection sheet is attached, it may of course require suitable alteration by class teachers.

4. Teachers may choose to give students supervised detention at lunch time. It is not appropriate to detain a student in at Recess or after school. Teachers should not place themselves in a classroom with just one other student on detention. Indeed if your room is somewhat isolated it is advisable to use the classroom closest to the staffroom. (Please inform the teacher in this room of your intention).

5. A student who persistently does not attempt to meet expectations will have their name recorded for mention to a Stage Leader. On review the student may require a planned personal behaviour contract. There may also be further incident forms to be completed in the case of verbal or physical violence; this requires a decision by a member of the Leadership Team.

Playground expectations: No violence is allowed on the playground. To ensure the safety of all, students who act violently are to be escorted away from the play area and other students until a suitable time for further professional conversation. Serious incidences require documentation, the least of which is for the teacher on duty to utilise 'behaviour tickets' found in the First Aid bag used when on playground supervision. Teachers should satisfy themselves that they have a current working knowledge of this procedure.

The 4 step plan

In order to maintain consistency teachers are requested to ensure 'the 4 step plan' is a procedure that:

- is displayed prominently in classrooms
- is explicitly taught using strategies as socio-drama and classroom meetings
- is used for minor disputes
- is referred to during playground supervision

The steps for student assertiveness training:

Step 1

The student is to speak strongly to the student acting inappropriately: stating they don't like what the other is doing as well as how they are feeling.

Step 2

If the problem remains the student is to report to a teacher that they are having trouble and to say what they have already done. The student, after listening to the teacher's idea, returns to solve the problem.

Step 3

If the student continues to encounter a problem they are to return to the teacher once again. The teacher is requested to intervene by observing the student's next attempt at resolution.

Step 4

If things don't improve the teacher intervenes by meeting with the students.

This may mean the repositioning of a student(s) to a time out seat or by way of distracting the student ask the child to walk a way and get a drink from the bubbler or have that they be escorted to the staffroom entrance.

If further immediate support is required by the duty teacher the First Aid bag, carried when on playground duty, has a red card labelled 'Help needed on bottom playground'? This card is to be sent to the Staff Room.

Teacher to teacher communication

When necessary teachers on duty are requested to utilise 'behaviour tickets' found in the playground duty First Aid bag. These inform a student's class teacher that there has been an incident on playground. The incident may have been dealt with or may require further investigation or consequences. Again a student who persistently fails to meet expectations should have their name recorded for mention to a Stage Leader. Such a student often requires a planned personal behaviour contract. There may also be further incident forms to be completed. Class teachers require some collaborative discussion with a member of the Leadership Team around such issues.

Anti-bullying strategy

According to the National Coalition Against Bullying (NCAB 2004) one in six children are bullied. Children who are bullied are three times more likely to develop depressive symptoms, while children who engage in bullying are far more likely to become serious violent offenders and commit relatively serious crime.

Bullying can take many forms:

Verbal – name calling or 'put downs', threats, teasing (may be extended to written form through email or SMS).

Physical – being punched, tripped, kicked, or having belongings stolen or damaged.

Social – being ignored, excluded, or having rumours spread.

Psychological – often less obvious than other forms of bullying, this can include being given dirty looks, being stalked and being made feel manipulated or intimidated.

(In the Appendix is a student information sheet that identifies the above, feel free to add clip art and editing)

A bullying prevention policy ensures that the following areas are addressed:

- school culture and environment (this means that the expectations are known by staff, students and parents should they become aware of a bullying incident)
- curriculum
- code of behaviour for students stating the school's expectations
- school protocol for responding to bullying incidents
- a system to monitor incidents so potential problems are identified and proactively responded to

Using the school curriculum

- Develop curriculum approaches to the teaching and promotion of positive interpersonal behaviour at the school level.
- The use of the school curriculum, including lessons on managing anger, controlling impulses as well as discussions about empathetic feelings which can reduce observable aggressive behaviour in students, especially in the early years of schooling.
- Through the teaching of conflict resolution skills encourage students to help peers affected by bullying

Proactive strategies addressing bullying

It does not help if adults simply get angry or upset, blame the victims or make them think it is not important, accuse people without knowing the facts, look for scapegoats, or demand to know all the details at once. Some initial practical steps that can be taken to address student bullying are:

- discuss as class teacher various problems with students in the classroom. It helps if students are listened to and teachers involve students in making decisions about what to do next
- maintain an anti-bullying agenda in class PD/H programs

- establish with children who are bullies and victims, what punitive measures are employed, and provide counselling for bullies, victims and other students
- work constructively with parents on matters that concern their children
- discuss our policy amongst staff, students and parents (there is always room for improvement).

Procedural Fairness - Students need to:

- feel believed and listened to
- develop trust in how staff will handle the problem
- talk more openly about what is happening
- understand there are things they can do to protect themselves, so as to regain self-confidence, and that coming to the teacher is a supportive experience in learning how to socialise and to develop assertiveness.

As a first step, it is usually best to:

- encourage the student to talk through the incident as far as he/she wants to, so as to get the basic facts
- try to keep an open mind, remembering you are hearing only one side of the incident
- respectfully ask questions
- help the student reflect on what may already have been put in place
- help the student work out a plan about what can be done next.

Staff should talk to the student about some of the things that have happened, and discuss ways of dealing with them, such as:

- not acknowledging hurtful comments
- using silent self-talk: “That’s their problem, not mine”, or, “I’m okay”, to reinforce self-confidence
- developing more assertiveness so as to face the bully without becoming scared, upset, abusive or violent
- believing that it is okay to tell someone when bullying happens —it is not dobbing, because bullying is serious and should be reported.

Also refer to: ‘Procedures for investigating incidents requiring further support or correction of behaviour’ p.10

School-based interventions for preventing bullying

The following research findings are useful for developing proactive approaches to preventing school bullying:

1. The crucial early years

The prospect of long-term success in reducing bullying among students is greater if whole-school interventions are targeted in the primary school years.

2. Whole-school commitment

A whole-school commitment to promoting an open and welcome climate is an important factor in reducing bullying behaviour among all members of the school community. Always re-assess the current awareness among students and staff about the existence and range of bullying behaviour at school.

Make known the expectations that foster belonging and empowerment for all members of the community. The ongoing development of establishing policies and procedures consistent with a bully-free school environment adds positively to the school culture.

Classroom discussions: Restorative Justice circles

An informal restorative circle provides the basis of what class meetings proceed like at St Finbar's. It is a strategy embedded in the school ethos, curriculum, playground and class expectations. Such meetings occur regularly at St Finbar's and model the use of appropriate language and include examples of questions that support reflection. (Copies of the various strategies utilised in these meetings are an attachment to this policy).

Teachers are encouraged to assist students in developing reflective thinking by incorporating such tenets in programmed activities. The principles of questions used in Restorative Justice practice are reflective; they are questions which can easily find application in the Key Learning Areas.

Teaching students how to reflect:

What happened?

What were you thinking at the time?

What have you thought about since?

Who has been affected by what you did and in what way?

What do you think you need to do to make things right?

Formal apology

The formal apology is a symbolic social contract that can mend relationships and restore personal wellbeing. As a learned negotiation process, it can help to develop empathy and show that the harmony of the group is more important than an individual's victory. Individuals are likely to require assistance to develop understanding, skills, confidence and courage in giving genuine apologies.

A successfully given and received apology involves:

- learning and acknowledging that an accepted norm has been violated
- working out the appropriate time to make the apology
- naming the specific offence to the offended person
- explaining to the offended person why the offence was committed, that the behaviour isn't characteristic of the offender, and that it won't happen again
- communicating that the behaviour wasn't intended as a personal affront (and therefore the other person can feel safe in future)
- showing genuine regret for the behaviour.

Procedures for investigating incidents requiring further support or correction of behaviour.

No Blame Approach

(To be followed for low to medium student infringement: dealt with by teacher)

The No Blame Approach provides a way of encouraging empathy as well as dealing with individual bullying or harassment behaviours. The teacher acts both as facilitator and intermediary between the parties.

Here is the No Blame Approach sequence:

1. Meet the victimised person to provide support, explain the proposed process and collect material on the impact of the bullying or harassment.
2. Consult with teachers who know the peer group well to establish a balanced group consisting of the main perpetrator and supporters, friends of the victimised person, and two assertive peers who have not attempted to prevent the bullying or harassment.
3. Convene a structured meeting of this group (without the targeted student present) to develop shared responsibility without blaming, to elicit suggestions for solving the problem, to encourage shared action and to establish a subsequent meeting (possibly in two - three days) to discuss progress. (Note: The victimised person does not attend this group meeting.)
4. Support the victimised person through daily meetings to check progress.

Method of shared concern

(To be followed for medium to high student infringement for students aged 9 and over: This method is not intended for younger children under 9 years. Dealt with by teacher, requires note taking and may involve a member of the Leadership Team. Principal requires notification of the issue and the student/s)

The method enables the teacher to establish shared concerns and encourage shared solutions to the problem. It includes initial individual meetings with perpetrators as well as a final meeting of all parties.

This is the method of shared concern sequence:

1. Gather preliminary information to understand the problem.
2. Meet each of the perpetrators individually to encourage acknowledgment of the situation and to develop constructive responses and a plan to change the behaviour.
3. Meet the person being bullied or harassed.
4. Meet perpetrators individually to review progress of their agreement.
5. Following positive signs of change, hold a meeting of all perpetrators to reinforce the changes made and prepare for the next meeting.
6. Hold the final combined meeting(s) which has the option of including all involved as a public demonstration that the behaviours have ceased.

Restorative Justice conference

(This strategy is utilised at the higher level of student infringement; it becomes the procedure for a formal meeting. It is to normally include a member of the Leadership Team. Notification is required for the Principal and parents/carers)

This more formal, scripted meeting has a convener and is attended by the offender, those who have been harmed by his or her actions. After more serious events other participants such as parents/carers and supporters of the main parties can be included. Training is required to conduct conferences. The conference process establishes the gravity of the offence and its impact on others in a way that enables offenders to face up to their actions and make a sincere apology. The ensuing conference agreement, negotiated to the satisfaction of both parties, enables the student to make amends to 'the offended' and rejoin the school community, while the shared decision making fosters culturally appropriate practices, support for behavioural change and socially just outcomes for participants.

Bullying can take many forms, for example:

Verbal – name calling or 'put downs', threats, teasing (this may also be extended to written form through email or SMS)

Physical – being punched, tripped, kicked, or having belongings stolen or damaged

Social – being ignored, excluded, or having rumours spread

Psychological – often less obvious than other forms of bullying, this can include being given dirty looks, being stalked and being made feel manipulated or intimidated

****Legal information**

1. Preventative measures

Non legal remedies use options outside the formal legal system and may include:

- Asking the bully to stop
- Telling the bully to stop
- Asking someone else to tell the bully to stop
- Making formal complaints to the school authorities

Legal remedies:

- Where the bullying has involved a crime, such as assault, remedies may include a lawyer's letter, a police warning, a request to police to prosecute and an application for victim compensation.
- Victims of crime may also sue for damages at common law. (Assault is defined as physical contact with body or implement without consent, whether implied or tacit. Sexually motivated assault may incur a number of criminal charges.)

2. Damages under negligence

Schools have a duty of care towards their students. If this duty is breached and reasonably foreseeable damage ensues, then the victim may be eligible for damages under negligence. Given the serious and lasting effects of bullying, these damages may be considerable and the duty of care wide ranging.

3. Contractual relationships

Non- government schools may also be liable for a breach of a contractual relationship to provide a safe environment for students.

4. Statutory obligations

Students and school staff are subject to the provisions of anti-discrimination legislation and child protection legislation. This includes sexual and racial harassment. Bullying can fall into these categories and students 16 years of age come under the statutory provisions of anti-discrimination legislation.

School violence can be dealt with through existing legal processes to some extent. Serious assaults can be referred to the police and students may be able to pursue a civil action against schools that have failed to protect them from harassment.

Children with ongoing challenging behaviour

Psychological research reports that challenging behaviour can often be turned around when salient others 'catch' students doing a desired action. As the adult speaks positively to the student they add an explicit reason for the comment describing their observations.

Individual behaviour contracts may need to be established that support safety and learning.

Records should be kept by the teacher that describe the procedures and will be useful when meeting with parents and other professionals.

Class teachers should inform Module Leaders of these students and their contracts. Module Leaders are also able to offer support with procedures, resources and documentation that may be required.

Any violent incident requires the completion of a particular incident report with the assistance of a member of the Leadership Team.

Further support resources exist in the school for:

- Developing an Anti-bullying program
- Dealing with oppositional behaviour
- Developing resilience in students
- Developing the collaborative learning group
- Elements whole school positive behavioural support
- Marist Education Centre

Other support resources exist at these recommended internet sites:

- <http://ceo-web.parra.catholic.edu.au/bullying/>
- www.nabc.org.au (National Coalition Against Bullying - NCAB website)
- www.reachout.com.au (Reach Out! a service that inspires young people to help themselves through tough times)
- <http://cms.curriculum.edu.au/mindmatters/index.htm> (Mind Matters)

BYSTANDER BEHAVIOUR

Following are some suggestions for teachers desiring to encourage positive bystander behaviour.

Reference: Rigby, K (2004 Stop the bullying: a handbook for schools (Revised Edition) Melbourne, ACER.

- Recognise that teachers typically have little or no direct influence over what bystanders do. Their expectations often count for very little.
- Children's attitudes to victims and what they think their friends expect of them can influence their intentions to intervene to help a victim of school bullying.
- The good intentions can be translated into helpful action once the child has the confidence and skills to do make the effort.
- The teacher may:
 - encourage feeling of empathy towards the victims
 - help children to appreciate the positive feelings and good intentions many of their classmates have towards victims
- To achieve the above the teacher may gather information from the class indicating what students think they would do as bystanders observing bullying behaviour. Positive responses can be facilitated or read out, and discussed.
- Subsequently, the teacher can:
 - discuss what actions bystanders might reasonably take when they see someone being bullied.
 - if possible, rehearse interventive actions through role play in class.
- In discussing possible actions with children, it is important to acknowledge the risks and fears associated with intervening and help them to develop good judgment on when and how to act.
- Consider how parents can be involved. They may be encouraged to support their children in discouraging those they see bullying others. At the same time, they need to be reassured that their children are not expected to take unreasonable risks.
- It is important to check on how effectively children have been able to discourage bullying when they see it. Continual feedback from students is helpful. There is here an excellent opportunity to conduct useful action research.

Ken Rigby 2004

Further explanation of No Blame Approach

Developed by George Robinson (Educational Psychologist) in Britain.

This approach takes the view that bullying is an interaction which establishes group identity, dominance and status at the expense of another. It also takes the view that it is only by the development of 'higher values' such as empathy, consideration and unselfishness, that the bully is likely to relinquish his/her behaviour and function differently in a social setting. If the preventative policy depends upon policing the environment, forbidding behaviour, encouraging the victims and punishing the perpetrators, then no lasting change is likely to occur. Instead of 'bullying the bullies', the following strategies establish shared concerns and shared solutions to reconcile differences and encourage more equitable behaviour. *(The Sheffield Project, UK, achieved a 75% success rate with the method of shared concern. It was found that multiple strategies are needed for those students who persistently bully others. The strategy has been used effectively in Australian schools).*

Focus is on:

- **solving** the problem rather than punish the bully.
- **changing** the bully's behaviour
- **not blaming** the bully for their behaviour. The idea is that when the bullies are not being blamed for what they've done, they stop feeling threatened and can be part of finding a solution. Those who were bystanders are supposed to be able to see that by doing nothing, they were condoning the bullying.

The Process:

1. Interview the victim

- In the first place, the student who has been bullied is interviewed. Initially the focus is on supporting them and congratulating them on 'telling'. Don't try to get to the bottom of the incident(s) straight away. Discuss how it feels to be bullied and the feelings associated with being bullied. Reinforce the notion that they have done nothing wrong. It is not necessary to focus on the explicit details of the incident(s) but rather who was involved and their feelings surrounding the bullying.
- Tell the student who has been bullied you are going to work with the bully/bullies and some other students from the class group or from the school to get them to understand the effect their behaviour or lack of support is having on one of their classmates. You might ask them if there is someone they admire or look up to that they would want to be part of this group.
- Get them to spend time putting down their feelings on paper. You might ask them to draw a picture or write a poem about the effect bullying has had. Or you might get them to start a diary. This part can be done that night rather than in the initial interview. Explain to them that you will share these feelings with the group in an effort to stop the bullying.

2. Assemble and meet with the group

- Assemble a balanced group. Make sure you consult with teachers who know the peer group well before assembling the group. Try to have the student who has perpetrated the bullying behaviour, his/her main supporters, one or two bystanders who have been friends with the student who has been bullied in the past, as well as two dominant assertive class members who have abdicated their responsibility to stop bullying behaviour. 6-8 students have been found to be a good number to work with.
- Convene a meeting of the group. **Do not include the student who has been bullied.** Allow at least 30 minutes.
- Explain there is a problem in the class/school/group. Explain that (student's name) is very unhappy and tell of his/her feelings. You may share the feelings of the person who has been bullied by reading out the written work of the person who has been bullied. **Don't apportion blame!** Discuss the concept of group responsibility if necessary stating that the group are responsible and can do something about it. Allow the group to discuss why the person feels the way they do. **Don't ask why the student who perpetrated the bullying did it!** They will most likely be unable to explain and may become more demotivated, alienated or anti-social if challenged. The focus is on raising levels of empathy.

- Each member is encouraged to suggest ways the student who has been bullied may be helped to solve the problem of the bullying. Each pupil in the group then carries out their own solution. For example, a student who has been excluded from activities with other students may now have someone to play with and another may accompany him on other occasions to make sure there is no bullying. The teacher gives some positive responses but there is no need to solicit promises of improved behaviour.
- Tell the group that you will re-convene in a day or two to discuss progress and that you are leaving it up to them to support the student who has been bullied. The teacher ends the meeting by passing responsibility over to the group to solve the problem.
- Next meeting the teacher discusses with each student how things are going. This allows the teacher to monitor the bullying and keeps the participants involved in the process.

3. Support the student who has been bullied

On a daily basis meet informally with the student who has experienced the bullying to check progress. Don't ask them to do anything different. If they had personal skills or resources to deal with the bullying problem they would have already dealt with it. Also often they are made to feel more helpless if asked to adopt strategies that may not work.

Other Considerations:

- Many parents may see the no blame approach as 'soft'. If a school decides on this method, its working needs to be clearly explained to parents because some will undoubtedly see it as the bully getting off scot-free. It is important that the school has a clear, written policy on its anti-bullying procedures that parents are familiar with so they can see where this approach fits in with other strategies.
- Separate stopping the bullying behaviour from addressing specific incidents such as assaults. The No-Blame Approach deals with the behaviour, specific violent acts need to be dealt with formally in accordance with the law.
- Avoid labelling the participants. Talk of victim and bully will reinforce the power imbalance that is already an essential part of the bullying relationship. Bullying is a behaviour not a personality.
- Don't assume once the process has been followed, it is completely dealt with. Follow up is necessary after the initial sessions if the process is to be successful.
- Students who show evidence of some pathology or disturbed or maladapted behaviour should be helped in other ways. The approach is planned to stop bullying not treat pathology. Other more specialist interventions may be required.
- Some students that experience bullying behaviour may display behaviours that appear to provoke bullying. This should not be implied as a responsibility to stop the bullying behaviour themselves. They may be given assistance in other ways to help with social skills, friendship skills and assertiveness.

Further explanation of the Pikas method of Shared Concern

Proposed by the Swedish psychologist, Anatol Pikas. The method is not intended for younger children under 9 years.

The idea is to bring each person to a sense of being an individually responsible person, able to correctly perceive the consequences of the bullying action and to acknowledge real concern for the person who has experienced bullying behaviour. The method assumes that students are not really comfortable with their behaviour but are enmeshed in the group and would be glad to break free. Believes attempts to deal with bullies using an accusatory approach and harsh punishment often result in actually strengthening group resolve to continue with the bullying and to do so in ways which make it difficult to detect. Also believes bullying is very rarely carried out by only one person only but is a by product of group activity.

Focus is on:

- * ensuring the person who has been subject to bullying can feel safe in knowing that something will be done so that the bullying stops
- * ensuring the person or people who are showing bullying behaviour (and who may in fact be in the same friendship group as the person they have bullied) will not get into trouble, but will have the opportunity to develop empathy and responsibility.
- * ensuring all people maintain their right to feel safe. This means:
 - a) the person who is being bullied
 - b) the person or people who are bullying
 - c) the person or people who are bystanders to the incident

It seeks to do all this without punishing and blaming so that we are not modeling or reinforcing bullying behaviour. "Bullying the Bully" is reinforcing the power imbalance and modeling that bullying is acceptable.

The Process

Stage 1: Meeting with group members

- Individual meetings with each student involved (7 - 10 minutes).
- Begin with the ringleader.
- "The victim" is the last to be interviewed.
- It may even be appropriate to interview bystanders who watched but did nothing.
- There should be no interruptions and the best set up is with intervener and group member sitting side by side. The manner of the interviewer should be calm, matter of fact, not angry. Interviewer should not interrogate, blame or humiliate the group member.
- The behaviour is raised eg "Peter has been having a rather miserable time lately. What do you know about this?" or "It sounds like Anna is having a miserable time at school?" The group member will usually want to talk about the situation and may blame the person being bullied. The interviewer does not take sides or seek to establish objective facts about the bullying, but continues to convey empathy for the victim.
- Once a problem has been acknowledged, not necessarily involving an admission of responsibility, the emphasis shifts to constructive action. Eg "Well I think we've talked enough. What can we do?" If ideas are not forthcoming the interviewer can suggest.eg. "I have an idea. Would you like to hear it?"
- An agreement is reached about what the group member will do to help solve the problem and a further meeting is arranged.
- The group member is relieved at not being blamed or punished and has taken a step towards being an individual.

Stage 2: Meeting with the person who has been bullied

- The intervener must be highly supportive, especially initially, treating the matter as a problem involving some responsibility on the part of the victim. The intervener gives the victim an opportunity to talk about how things have been going.
- The intervener is supportive but must make a judgement about whether the victim is contributing to the problem. If so the intervener explores with the victim what he or she can do to improve matters.
 - An agreed plan of action is devised and a future meeting arranged.
 - Focus is on exploring what the victim can control and is responsible for and what they can't control.

Stage 3: Further Meetings with Group Members

- It is essential that the intervener meets again with the group members individually after about a week to ascertain progress. The length of the meeting will be determined by whether progress has been made. If no progress has been made and they show no concern for the victim, continue to meet with members individually. If progress has been made, arrange a meeting with all group members except the victim present.

Stage 4: Further Meeting with all the Group Members

- The first meeting is without the victim being present.
- The intervener might ask, “How have things been going?” The intervener acknowledges that progress has been made and offers support and congratulations where agreements have been honoured and notes any problems that have arisen.
- The intervener asks “What should we do next?” If it is suggested that they meet the victim, preparation is important and the intervener asks “How should we prepare ourselves to meet?” And gain agreement that each group member will have something positive to say to the victim.
- The issue of meeting the victim might not arise but there will still be a need for the group to meet again and/or for progress to be monitored.
- The focus is on developing a shared concern for the victim.

Stage 5: Optional Joint Meeting of Group Member(s) and Victim

- Meeting with the victim would only occur if victim freely accepts the idea. The intervener could explain that the group members have positive things to say and the victim need only listen.
- When the group members have made positive statements the intervener facilitates reconciliation.
- There should be some discussion about what happens when agreements are not met.
- There should be follow up to see how things are going.

Other Considerations:

- It has been reported to be successful by those who use it.
- It is very time consuming.
- Requires group work skills outside the range and experience of many teachers. Training and experience are necessary to use it effectively.
- Not all bullies show any concern for their victims.
- It is more successful with adolescents.
- Many parents may see the shared concern approach as ‘soft’. I think if a school decides on this method, its working needs to be clearly explained to parents because some will undoubtedly see it as the bully getting off scot-free.
- Separate stopping the bullying behaviour from addressing specific incidents such as assaults. The shared concern approach deals with the behaviour, specific violent acts need to be dealt with formally in accordance with the law or regulations.
- Students who show evidence of some pathology or disturbed or maladapted behaviour should be helped in other ways. The shared concern approach is planned to stop bullying not treat pathology. Other more specialist interventions are therefore necessary for these types of students.
- When deciding whether to use this method consideration needs to be given to the circumstances in which it would be appropriate and the degree of support from the school community, particularly staff. It requires a high level of commitment by the school community if it is to be implemented successfully.