

Counter Bullying Policy

Policy Statement on Bullying Behavior

It has been a particular emphasis of Swan Christian College to work diligently to provide a safe and nurturing environment that encourages students to respect themselves and others.

The College aims to develop a community in which everybody feels valued, safe and where individual differences are valued, understood and accepted. It is the responsibility of all community members to develop and maintain this environment.

Swan Christian College does not tolerate bullying or harassment in any form. Respect for others is expected from all members of the College community.

What is Bullying?

Bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons (www.bullyingnoway.gov.au).

Examples of Bullying Behaviour

	Direct	Indirect
Verbal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insulting language • Name calling • Ridicule • Cruel teasing or taunting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Persuading another person to insult, ridicule or tease another person • Spreading rumours • Anonymous phone calls • Offensive text messages and emails, putting harmful content on social media
Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Striking, kicking • Throwing objects • Using weapons 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliberately and unfairly excluding someone (also verbal) • Removing and hiding things
Gestures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Threatening gestures • Staring at someone 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repeatedly turning away

(Dr Ken Rigby)

Behaviours that do not constitute bullying include:

- mutual arguments or disagreements (where there is no power imbalance)
- not liking somebody or a single act of social rejection
- one-off acts of meanness or spite
- isolated incidents of aggression, intimidation or violence.

However, these conflicts still need to be addressed and resolved.

Cyber bullying refers to bullying that is carried out through information and communication technologies (www.bullyingnoway.gov.au).

All members of the Swan Christian College community have a right and responsibility to report bullying to a member of staff or a trusted adult, whether it happens to them or somebody else. All reports are taken seriously.

What can you do if you are a witness to bullying?

- don't become involved in any kind of bullying
- stand up for the victim if it is safe to do so
- invite the victim to sit with you and join your group
- talk to a member of staff, friend or parent.

What can you do if you are being bullied?

- do not retaliate with physical or verbal aggression
- ignore if possible, people who bully like to see that they can upset you
- calmly tell them to stop, or say nothing and walk away
- use humour, if this is easy for you to do
- try to avoid situation in which bullying is likely to happen
- talk to a member of staff or parent.

College Approach to Dealing with Bullying Reports

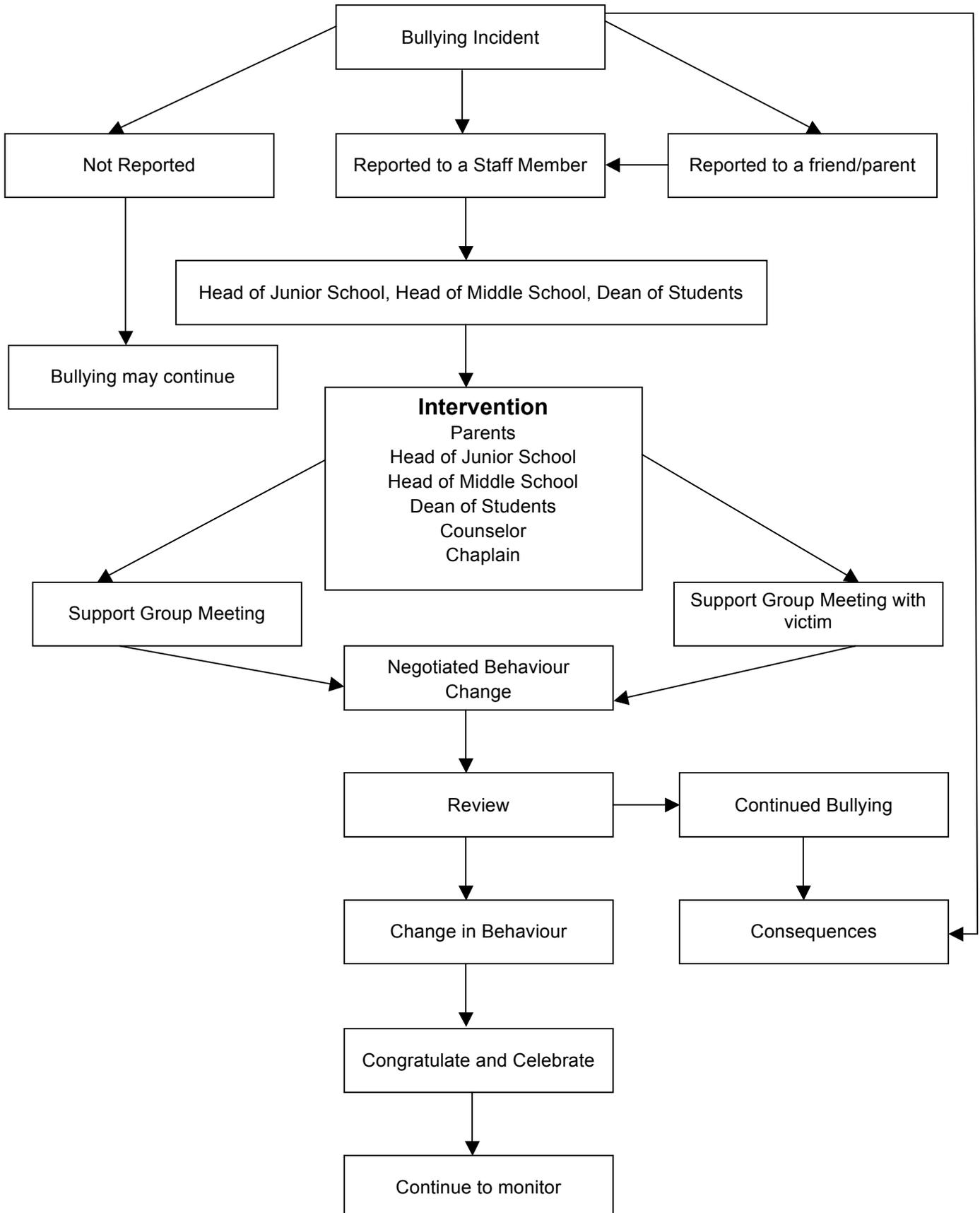
When dealing with reported cases of bullying the College initially uses an approach that is based upon the support group method. The approach was developed by Barbara Maines and George Robinson, and addresses bullying by forming a support group of 'bullies' and/or bystanders. Without apportioning blame, it uses a problem solving approach, giving responsibility to the group to solve the problem and to report back at a subsequent review meeting. This method has proven to be highly successful in preventing bullying from continuing (Department of Education and Child Development, Victoria). All bullying reports will be assessed by either the Head of Junior School, Head of Middle School or Dean of Students.

Consequences

If a student has been found to be bullying and does not change their behaviour after the *Bullying Resolution Process* has been undertaken or if the incident is deemed to be severe, then one or more of the following consequences may be applied:

- detention
- formal written apology
- community service
- ICT ban
- in-school suspension
- loss of good standing
- withdrawal from a particular class or classes
- exclusion from a particular area of the college grounds
- out of school suspension
- expulsion.

Bullying Resolution Process



References

Australian Government, (2013), *Bullying. No way!*, Canberra, viewed 10 January 2014.
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Rigby K. (n.d.) *School Bullying – Vodcast One: The nature of bullying and how schools can respond.*
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