# SHORE ANTI-BULLYING, INTERVENTION AND PREVENTION POLICY

## 1. Introduction

At Shore, we aim to provide a safe and caring environment. The value and significance of each child is acknowledged, and individual differences are respected. It is an environment where each child is encouraged to take responsibility for how each other is treated. All students have a right to feel safe at school and are encouraged to speak up if they are being victimised or see it happening to others.

## 2. What is Bullying?

Bullying is repeated, hostile and unjustifiable behaviour which causes fear, distress or harm to another. It can be perpetrated by an individual or group towards another individual who is unable to effectively resist. can Bullying has occurred regardless of whether harm to the victimised student was intentional or unintentional.

### 2.1 Forms of Bullying

**a) Physical -** hitting, punching, choking, pushing, tripping, kicking, holding down, spitting

**b) Verbal -** teasing, using offensive names, ridiculing.

**c) Social -** lying, spreading rumours, humiliation, playing a nasty joke, repeatedly mimicking someone, deliberate exclusion, rude gestures

**d) Psychological -** repeatedly using words or actions which cause another person psychological harm. Stand over tactics like intimidating, taking someone's food, money or property, ganging up, damaging property, manipulating people and stalking a person.

**e) Cyberbullying -** is the misuse of power within a relationship to repeatedly threaten or harm another person using technology. Cyberbullying behaviour may include:

- abusive texts and emails
- hurtful messages, images or videos
- imitating others online
- excluding others online
- humiliating others online
- spreading nasty online gossip and chat creating fake accounts or 'avatars' to trick someone or humiliate them.

Cyberbullying can occur on internet services, social media and electronic services that enable communication including, but not limited to, instant messaging, chat services, email communications, online

games, SMS and MMS. It can be verbal or written and can includes images, videos and/or audio. \These behaviours can also be an indicator of child abuse and other harm.

Bullying can be illegal if it involves intimidation, stalking, physical violence, threats of violence or damaging property. Students and staff should refer to the Shore Appropriate Use of ICT in order to gain understanding and consequences of the misuse of technology.

**2.2 Signs of Bullying**

A child who is being bullied may:

- Develop feelings of negative self-worth
- Develop feelings of helplessness
- Feel frightened for his or her safety
- Feel embarrassed, angry or unfairly treated
- Disconnect socially from peers and become more withdrawn
- Project anger onto others
- Have difficulties with concentration, school work or sleep
- Want to avoid going to school
- Develop mood difficulties

## 3.  What Bullying is not

The following negative social behaviours can be confused for, but are not necessarily, bullying.

a)  **Mutual Conflict Situations** which arise where there is disagreement between students but not an imbalance of power. Mutual conflict situations need to be closely monitored as they may evolve into a bullying situation.

b)  **One-Off Acts** (of aggression or meanness) including single incidents of loss of temper, shouting or swearing do not normally constitute bullying.

## 4.  Bullying Prevention Strategies

At Shore, we focus on educating the students and staff about what bullying is and ways to handle it. This is done explicitly, including for cyberbullying for older students, and it is also incorporated in teaching in Christian Studies, PD/Health, classroom activities, at parade, at assemblies, the character education program and positive behaviour expectations in the Shore's Student Code of Conduct.

Each year, a selection of year groups of students are surveyed to gather information about bullying behaviours and patterns. In addition, incidents are recorded as they are reported. It is important to have data on the prevalence and nature of bullying within the student body and to follow up with appropriate strategies that support victimised students and bullying students.

**4.1 Other measures Shore engage are –**

- A structured curriculum and peer group support system, that provides age-appropriate information and social and emotional competencies relating to bullying (including cyberbullying) and bullying prevention, to students over the course of the academic year.

- Education, training and professional development of staff in bullying prevention and response strategies.

- Appropriate sharing among staff of information about cyberbullying incidents.

- Regular provision of information to parents/guardians, to raise awareness of bullying as a 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 relating to bullying directly at Shore.

- Promotion of a supportive environment that encourages the development of positive relationships and communication between staff, students and parents/guardians.

- Promotion of responsible bystander behaviour amongst students, staff and parents/guardians.

- 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.

- Students are supported by their teachers, pastoral care staff and the Shore leadership team when they report a bullying incident and during the processes that follow the submission of the report.

- Regular risk assessments of bullying within Shore are undertaken by surveying students to identify bullying issues that may ordinarily go unnoticed by staff.

- Records of reported bullying incidents are maintained and analysed, in order to identify students who persistently intimidate or bully and/or students who are persistently bullied and to implement targeted prevention strategies where appropriate.

- Statements supporting bullying prevention are included in student communications.

- Education of staff, students and parents/guardians on health conditions to promote understanding and to reduce stigma and fear.

## 5. Reporting Bullying

Students and their parents/guardians are sometimes reluctant to pursue bullying incidents, for fear that it will only make matters worse. A key part of the Shore's bullying prevention and intervention strategy is to encourage reporting of bullying incidents as well as providing support and assurance to students who experience bullying (and parents/guardians) that:

- bullying is not tolerated within Shore
- their concerns will be taken seriously
- Shore has a clear strategy for dealing with bullying issues.

### 5.1 Reporting Bullying Incidents to Shore

Bullying incidents can be advised to Shore verbally (or in writing) through any of the following avenues:

a) informing a trusted teacher
b) informing a member of the Shore Counselling Team
c) informing a student's year co-ordinator
d) informing the Deputy Headmaster or the Headmaster.

**5.2 Complaints to the eSafety Commissioner About Cyberbullying Material Targeted at a Child**

Where Cyberbullying Material is targeted at a child under the age of 18 years, a complaint can be made to:

a) the provider of a social media service, relevant electronic service, designated internet service (as defined in the Online Safety Act 2021 (Cth)) -see The eSafety Guide for information about providers
b) the eSafety Commissioner under section 30 of the Online Safety Act 2021 (Cth).

Complaints to the eSafety Commissioner can be made through the online portal by the child, their parent or guardian, or an adult authorised by the child to make the complaint. The eSafety Commissioner has the power investigate the complaint and to issue a removal notice.

For the eSafety Commissioner to investigate cyberbullying, the harmful content must have first been reported to the service or platform used to send, post or share it – at least 48 hours before it is reported to eSafety.

**5.3 Cyberbullying Material**

Cyberbullying material that is provided on a social media service, relevant electronic service, designated internet service (as defined in the Online Safety Act 2021 (Cth)) that an ordinary person reasonable person would conclude is likely to:

a) be intended to have an effect on a particular child; and
b) have the direct or indirect effect on the child as seriously threatening, seriously intimidating, seriously harassing or seriously humiliating the child,

can be the subject of complaint to the eSafety Commissioner under section 30 of the Online Safety Act.

## 6. Responding to Bullying

Bullying behaviours vary enormously in their extent and intent and, as a consequence, each incident needs to be dealt with on its facts. In all circumstances Shore :

a) takes bullying incidents seriously
b) takes seriously, and monitors single incidents of conflict or fights between students, that do not ordinarily amount to bullying, for signs of ongoing behaviour, which may be an indicator of bullying
c) provides assurance to the student being bullied that they are not at fault and their confidentiality will be respected

d) ensures that teachers, pastoral care and Shore Leadership Team support the student being bullied through the reporting process and the corresponding investigation and resolution processes
e) engages a Student Council, or similar, to instigate anti-bullying initiatives
f) ensures that student leaders support the Shore's anti-bullying policy and promote anti-bullying behaviours
g) takes time to properly investigate the facts including discussing the incident with the student being bullied, the student who was bullying and any bystanders
h) keeps parents and guardians of both the student who was bullied and the student who did the bullying, informed of the situation as and when appropriate to do so
i) takes time to understand any concerns of individuals involved
j) maintains records of reported bullying incidents
k) will escalate its response when dealing with students who persistently bully and/or for severe incidents, even if these are not necessarily repetitive
l) considers whether the behaviour gives rise to concerns that the student exhibiting the behaviour and/or the student subject to the behaviour may be experiencing child abuse or other harm, and, if so, follows Shore's procedures for Responding to and Reporting Child Safety Incidents or Concerns.

**6.1 Methods Shore may take when responding to bullying :**

a) The "Method of Shared Concern" Approach (Pikas). This is a non-punitive multi-stage strategy that addresses group bullying. It facilitates the emergence of a solution to a bully/ victim problem through the use of a series of interviews and discussions with the parties involved.

b) The "No Blame" Approach (Maines & Robinson) The no-blame approach is a whole-school approach. It relies on group dynamics and the empathy of the group members. The method puts the emphasis on the effects of bullying on the victim's feelings and emotions, rather than on the ins and outs of what occurred.

These approaches may be used to intervene in group or relational bullying situations. They are only appropriate during the initial stages. They are not appropriate for persistent or severe bullying incidents. When bullying is more severe, Shore will engage further actions which involve -

a) notification of/consultation with parents/guardians
b) offering counselling to students who persistently bully/students who are persistently bullied
c) implementing effective follow up strategies
d) disciplinary action, at the Headmaster's discretion, including suspension and expulsion of students who persistently bully, or in cases of severe incidents.

## 6. Policy Implementation

Shore introduces the standards of this policy through a combination of:

a) staff training
b) student and parent/carer education and information
c) involvement of external bodies and authorities as and when appropriate
d) effective incident reporting and recording procedures
e) effective management of bullying incidents when report

f) the creation of a 'no-bullying' culture within the Shore community

g) effective record keeping procedures

h) initiation of corrective actions where necessary.