Managing Aggressive or Violent Behaviour

St Kevin's

Rationale:
Employing authorities and school principals carry a duty of care for providing a safe learning and working environment for students and staff. They also have a non-delegable duty under the Occupational Health and Safety Act 2004 (Vic.) ('OHS Act') to institute measures that either eliminate risks to student and staff safety or reduce risks as far as is practicable.

Aims:
To meet the employing authorities and principal's duty of care for providing a safe learning and working environment for students and staff and institute OHS requirements with confidence, consistency and professionalism.
To recognise and safely respond to disruptive, aggressive and potentially violent behaviour before a crisis occurs.
If behaviour does escalate to violence, to have the critical skills and support structures in place to maintain the safety of everyone involved.

Implementation:
Aggressive Behaviours – Prevention
- Learning environments that are inclusive and relational and that stimulate high levels of learning engagement, connectedness, relevance, meaning and challenge have a significant bearing on the social–emotional learning of students and their concomitant behaviours.
  See the following elements of the National Safe Schools Framework (NSSF) 2011 edition: www.education.gov.au/national-safe-schools-framework-0
  Element 2: A supportive and connected school culture
  Element 6: Engagement, skill development and safe school curriculum
  Element 7: A focus on student wellbeing and student ownership.
- Strong parent and community partnerships strengthen the school's capacity to prevent and/or respond effectively to violent incidents in schools. Schools rely on parent input, support and collaboration to understand and manage a student's challenging behaviours, and links with community networks and services increase the quality and efficacy of prevention and intervention strategies.
  See the National Safe Schools Framework, 2011 edition, www.education.gov.au/nationalsafe-schools-framework-0
  Element 9, 'Partnerships with Parents and the Community'.
- A positive school culture that features respectful relationships, courteous communications and shared understandings of members' rights and responsibilities is a powerful driver of violence prevention in schools. Schools and families share responsibility for developing and maintaining relationships characterised by respect for the goodwill of the other and a willingness to engage collaboratively.
  See Elements 3, 5 and 9 of the National Safe Schools Framework, 2011 edition:
  www.education.gov.au/national-safe-schools-framework-0
  Element 3: Policies and Procedures
  Element 5: Positive Behaviour Management
  Element 9: Partnerships with Parents and the Community.

- Well-articulated school policies on behaviour expectations and management (see Student Wellbeing Behaviour Policy), if age-appropriate, pastorally driven and focused on ensuring a just and reasonable balance of individual and community rights, will assist in building and maintaining a positive school culture and a safe learning and work environment for students and staff.
- Complaints policy and procedures (Complaint Resolution Policy), when well constructed and enacted in good faith by all parties, can reduce the risk of a student's or parent's challenging behaviour escalating to aggression and/or violence.
- Training in conflict management and resolution, and in the defusing of challenging behaviours, will strengthen staff members' confidence and capacity to prevent and/or manage a student's or parent's aggression or violence.
- Individual behaviour support plans for students (see Behaviour Management Contract) who repeatedly exhibit challenging and aggressive behaviours have the potential to serve as a valuable support to staff who hold the key responsibility for the wellbeing, safety and learning of the student and all other students in their immediate care.
- Well-rehearsed emergency management plans and systems and well-constructed critical incident plans are essential in maintaining a safe learning and work environment for students and staff.

Aggressive Behaviours – Interventions
- Proactive networking and linking with external community and professional services increase the support and management options available to schools when responding to challenging student and parent behaviours and incidents.
- Pastoral and restorative principles and practices that reflect gospel values, Catholic social teaching and diocesan policies on student wellbeing ought to influence postincident decisions pertaining to an offending student's or parent's ongoing relationship with the school.
- An adequately resourced healing and recovery program must be made available to staff who have been harmed by violent incidents, with this program funded and supported pastorally by the employing authority.
- A school's incident response and emergency management procedures, when comprehensively constructed, well rehearsed and effectively implemented, can minimise the adverse short- and long-term impacts of a violent incident.
- A school's incident response and emergency management procedures, when comprehensively evaluated in the aftermath of an incident and adjusted where necessary, will reduce the risk of similar or repeated incidents in the future.

Resources to support this policy
- Safe and Sound Practice Guidelines
- Occupational Violence Information Sheet

Evaluation:
- This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's four-year review cycle
- Policy formulated December, 2017

Reviewed by SDC: December 2017	Reviewed by Staff: July 2018	Ratified by Ed Board: July 2018 (or TBA)	Next review: December 2021