ST MATTHEW'S SCHOOL

NARROGIN

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING POLICY

Ratified February 2009 – Review Date: 2010

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ST MATTHEW'S SCHOOL NARROGIN

St. Matthew's response to issues including:

- *Student Wellbeing*
- *Bullying and Harassment*
- *Child Protection*

In accordance with the:

- *National Safe Schools Framework*
- *Framework for the Development of Pastoral Care in Catholic Schools*

INTRODUCTION

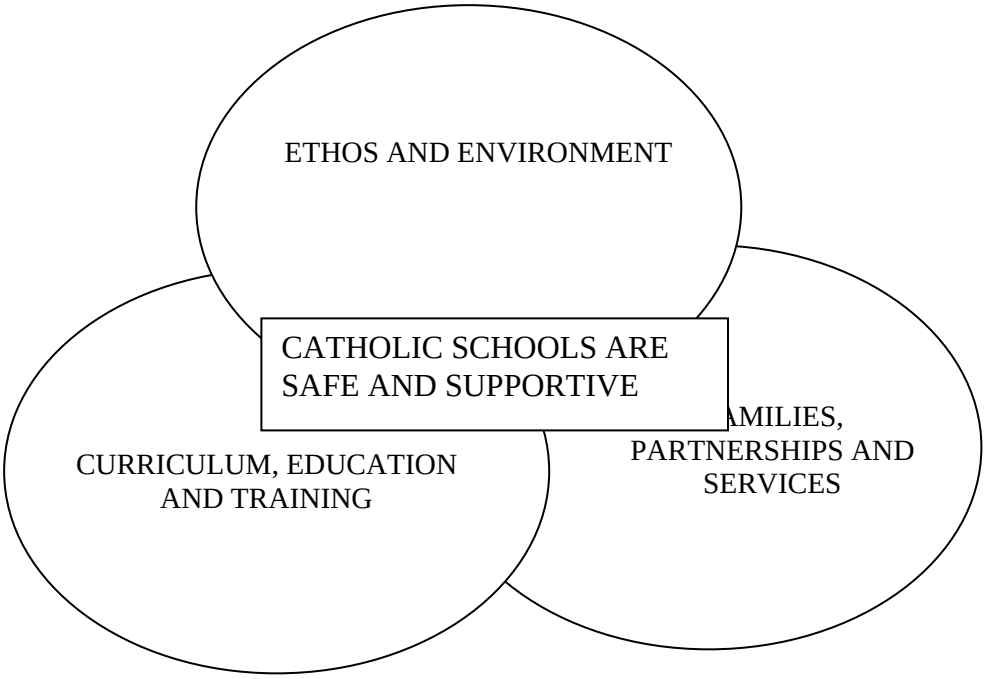
"St. Matthew's Catholic School has a deep and lasting concern to provide educational opportunities that enable each child to grow as God intends." This policy forms part of our whole-school ethos in which St. Matthew's School aims to promote the full physical, social, intellectual, emotional and spiritual development of its students.

The principles underlying this policy are in accordance with those identified by the "*Framework for the Development of Pastoral Care in Catholic School*" document, which are, as follows:

1. Catholic schools provide a safe and supportive school environment, a curriculum and a set of policies and practices based on the Gospels.
2. Catholic schools enable students to attain the beliefs, values, attitudes, knowledge, skills, practices and positive relationships which will allow them to achieve Christ's vision of the human person.
3. Catholic schools are environments where the care and development of each person takes place within the Catholic faith community.
4. Catholic schools develop policies, programs and practices that are proactive, focus on prevention and intervention and that engage, nurture and promote the wellbeing of the whole school community.
5. Catholic schools promote care, respect and cooperation and value diversity.
6. Catholic schools recognise that quality leadership underpins Pastoral Care and that policies and programs must be regularly monitored and reviewed with evidence-based practise supporting decisions and improvements.
7. Catholic schools take action to protect children from all forms of abuse and neglect.

8. Catholic schools ensure that, in providing a nurturing and safe environment, the roles and responsibilities of all members of the school community are explicit and understood and that there is a commitment to ongoing professional development and training for the whole-school community.

Pastoral care in Catholic schools encompasses the following elements (in line with the Health Promoting Schools Framework):



FAMILIES, PARTNERSHIPS AND SERVICES

In order to effectively promote and enhance student social and emotional wellbeing and provide students with a safe and supportive learning environment, St. Matthew's recognises and values the importance of establishing and maintaining partnerships between the school community, parents, carers and appropriate agencies.

Strategies to encourage and support this partnership will include:

- Class teachers providing materials and home activities to be sent home to encourage parents to support their children to develop their social and emotional wellbeing at home.
- The School Psychologist providing support to the school community to enhance the development of social emotional learning and wellbeing.
- The School Psychologist offering support and counselling to students and their families (including those involved with or affected by abuse and victimisation) where this is deemed to be appropriate
- All parents and caregivers will be provided with a copy of St. Matthew's Social and Emotional Wellbeing Policy.

- ❖ Appropriate collaboration with key government or non-government agencies in the area of child protection.
- ❖ Recognising that adult participation is a key component of child protection, and enabling family members to reinforce safety concepts and strategies at home.

1. *Promoting and Enhancing Student Social and Emotional Wellbeing*

ETHOS AND ENVIRONMENT

Introduction

As a Catholic school, and in line with pastoral care in Catholic schools, St. Matthew's strives to provide opportunities to enable all students to attain beliefs, values, attitudes, knowledge, skills, practices and positive relationships which will allow them to achieve Christ's vision of the human person.

Positive mental health promotion is a key aspect of promoting and enhancing students' social and emotional wellbeing and relies on students having the opportunity to access curriculum from evidence-based programs which are designed explicitly to enhance their positive mental health.

Student wellbeing at St. Matthew's will be enhanced through the use of targeted curriculum programs designed to enhance social and emotional learning, the recognition and praise of positive pro-social behaviours and the modelling by all school staff of positive behaviours.

Definitions

World Health Organisation (WHO, 2001) emphasizes positive mental health as 'a state of well-being in which the individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community' (p1).

Social emotional learning is defined as "the process of developing social and emotional skills in the context of safe, caring, well managed, and engaging learning environments." (Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning, 2006)

Social and Emotional Learning Skills include the ability to:

- Recognise and manage emotions
- Develop care and concern for others
- Make responsible decisions
- Establish and maintain positive relationships
- Handle challenging situations responsibly and ethically.

CURRICULUM AND TRAINING

Programs and Strategies

St. Matthew's school ethos is to encourage and support all students to develop their sense of self-worth and social and emotional wellbeing through all teaching and learning experiences. In addition, students will be provided with opportunities to develop social and emotional skills through specific evidence-based curriculum programs.

St. Matthew's Curriculum and Program Response
To address Social and Emotional Wellbeing

Curriculum/Programs	**Year Level Targeted**								
	K	**PP**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**	**7**
PATHS									
Friendly Schools & Families Curriculum									
Making Jesus Real									

PATHS (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies)
'PATHS' is a program for promoting emotional and social competencies and reducing aggression and behaviour problems in primary school-aged children.

Research shows that PATHS: Reduces aggressive behaviour

- Significantly decreases conduct problems
- Increases students' self control, self management, and interpersonal skills
- Increases students' emotional vocabulary
- Increases students' ability to tolerate frustration
- Increases use of conflict resolution strategies
- Improves student's critical thinking skills
- Reduces depression and anxiety
- Improves academic outcomes.

Friendly Schools and Families Curriculum
The Friendly Schools and Families Curriculum assists students to enhance their social skills and develop practical strategies to identify, reduce and manage bullying. The program has a strong emphasis on building students' resilience, positive communication, self-management and social responsibility skills.

Making Jesus Real Curriculum
The Making Jesus Real (MJR) program is a values program designed for senior primary students and their parents. At its very core the program strives to develop resilience, reflection, self-belief, motivation, adaptability, reliability, team building and the capacity to listen. Furthermore, the program strives to help foster a relationship with Jesus that is real and applicable to students in their daily lives.

Ongoing Professional Development

St. Matthew's staff will be provided with opportunities to access appropriate professional development to enable them to deliver this curriculum to the students.

Evaluation

Regular monitoring and evaluation of these strategies and programs will be conducted

FAMILIES, PARTNERSHIPS AND SERVICES
Please refer to page 3 of this document.

2. Bullying and Harassment

ETHOS AND ENVIRONMENT

Introduction

St. Matthew's community recognises that all members of our community have the right to be treated with respect and courtesy. All students and school staff have a fundamental right to learn and teach in a safe and supportive environment. Gospel values such as honesty, justice, integrity, compassion and love must be apparent in all situations where behaviour issues are concerned. Any behaviour that takes away from the Gospel values of the school, including bullying, racism, injustice and harassment, must be addressed. Central to our mission is the commitment to the development of each individual to their full potential, which can only be achieved in an environment where acceptable standards of behaviour are apparent. St. Matthew's School does not tolerate bullying, harassment or violence.

Definitions

1. Bullying
In accordance with the *"Dealing with Bulling and Harassment"* Document of the *Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia*, Bullying is defined as follows:

Bullying involves:

- a desire to hurt
- hurtful behaviour (physical, verbal or relational)
- an imbalance of power
- an unjust use of power
- typically repetition
- Incident/s which is experienced by the target of the aggression as oppressive, and by the perpetrator as enjoyable.

In addition, Bullying can be characterised as: causing distress, not only at the time of the attack but also by the threat of future attacks; and, an imbalance of power (that is inappropriate and where there is an intention to hurt).

Its nature can be:

- Physical – hitting, slapping, punching, pushing throwing objects or stealing.
- Verbal - mean and hurtful name-calling, hurtful teasing, put-downs, threats (spoken, written or electronic) or racism.
- Social – ignoring, deliberate exclusion from a group or activity, hiding or ostracizing.
- Psychological – threatening and/or obscene gestures or looks, stalking, spreading rumours or damaging possessions. *(Mind Matters, 2000)*

2. Cyber bullying

"Cyber bullying involves the use of information and communication technologies such as e-mail, mobile phone, pager text messages, instant messaging, defamatory personal Web sites, and defamatory online personal polling Web sites, to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour by an individual or group, that is intended to harm others" (*Bill Belsey, 2004*).

3. Harassment

Harassment is any unwanted, unwelcome or uninvited behaviour which makes a person feel humiliated, intimidated or offended. Harassment is recognised as one form of bullying. (*Adapted from Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia's Policy, Harassment in Schools, 1998*).

4. Violence

Violence involves incidents where a person is threatened, physically assaulted or where property is deliberately damaged by another person. It is an extreme use of force often resulting in injury or destruction. Violence does not necessarily involve an imbalance of power.

Rights and Responsibilities at St. Matthew's

Rights

- Every person has the right to feel safe.
- Every person has the right to be treated with respect and fairness.
- Every student has the right to learn.

Responsibilities:

Every person within St. Matthew's school community has the responsibility to:

- treat others with respect and dignity
- refrain from hurtful behaviours
- allow others to express themselves, share opinions and ask questions
- contribute to a positive learning environment
- maintain a clean, safe environment
- respect the property of every member of the school community

Responsibilities in relation to incidents of bullying:

The Leadership Team have the responsibility to:

- support, promote, enact, maintain and review the bullying response procedures
- follow the process outlined in the 'Flowchart to Address Bullying Behaviour'

All Staff have the responsibility to:

- be familiar with the bullying response procedures used at St. Matthew's

All Teachers have the responsibility to:

- be models of caring and tolerant behaviour
- listen to and act upon reports of bullying and inform the Leadership Team
- protect the person being bullied from further harm
- act to stop the behaviour recurring
- record identified bullying incidents

Management of Bullying and Harassment Behaviours

The processes to prevent and manage all forms of bullying and harassment behaviour at St. Matthew's have the following objectives:

- To create a school environment where all students, staff and parents feel safe and welcome;
- To create a climate where all members of the community are encouraged to talk about bullying and ask for help.
- To create a supportive school environment which encourages socially appropriate behaviour through the use of positive behaviour management;
- To actively prevent and intervene to avert bullying and violence incidents at school;
- To provide students with problem solving strategies to assist them to resolve conflicts as they arise.

At St Matthew's suspected or alleged bullying behaviour will be addressed through non-punitive/ restorative approaches in the first instance. Students who have been identified as displaying bullying behaviour will be managed using strategies outlined in the 'Flow Chart to Address Bullying Behaviour" *(See Appendix 1).*

At St. Matthew's students affected by bullying will be offered counselling and/or support to promote their recovery and to develop skills to prevent re-occurring victimisation.

To create a supportive school environment which encourages socially appropriate behaviour students' pro-social skills will be enhanced through; the use of targeted curriculum programs designed to enhance social and emotional learning, the recognition and praise of positive pro-social behaviours and the modelling by all school staff of positive behaviours. Positive reinforcements in the classroom and playground for students who are displaying responsible and considerate behaviour will include; class based rewards, golden-slips (acknowledging positive playground behaviour),'happy' interviews with the Principal and merit certificates

CURRICULUM AND TRAINING

In order to assist students to recognise and regulate their own behaviour, several curriculum programs will be taught to students in Years K – 7. These are the programs and strategies outlined in the "Promoting and Enhancing Student Social and Emotional Wellbeing" section of this policy and include 'PATHS' Curriculum, 'Making Jesus Real' Curriculum and 'Friendly Schools and Families' Curriculum.

All members of the school community are provided with ongoing and relevant professional development to enhance their skills in recognising and responding appropriately to inappropriate behaviour (including bullying incidents).

Evaluation
Regular monitoring and evaluation of these strategies and programs will be conducted

FAMILIES, PARTNERSHIPS AND SERVICES
Please refer to page 3 of this document.

3. Child Protection

ETHOS AND ENVIRONMENT

"The Catholic Education Commission of Western Australia (CECWA) acknowledges that a goal of the Catholic school is that students should learn about their value as human persons from the time they enter a Catholic school community. This principle must influence every level of the school's life so that students learn about their own dignity and value as a human person. The care and attention they receive from all within the school should help them realise these fundamental principles" (Child Abuse Policy Statement, CECWA, 2003).

St. Matthew's school recognises that teachers play a very significant role in the lives of children in their care, and in this role they are key people in the detection and reporting of child abuse.

Definition

Child abuse is the long term and/or short term maltreatment of a person under the age of 18 years of age. It is the result of action or inaction which results in harm or injury to the child.

Child abuse may be categorised as follows:

- Physical abuse
- Emotional neglect
- Sexual abuse
- Physical neglect
- Exposure to family violence
- Emotional abuse

Principles

In addressing the issues related to Child Protection, St Matthew's follows the following principles:

- The best interests of the child or young person must be the paramount consideration.
- Every child and young person has a right to be protected from abuse.
- Child protection is the responsibility of individuals, families, communities and the society as a whole. This is best achieved through a collaborative approach.
- Children have the right to be heard and to be believed.
- If anyone has a concern regarding the safety of a child, it is their responsibility to

make a report.
- Ultimately, child abuse affects everyone. Early detection is a key to reducing child abuse in our community.

The Catholic Education Office requires that school staff follow set procedures in the reporting of child abuse, as outlined in the following documents:
- "Catholic Education Office Policy Statement on Child Protection"
- "Catholic Education Office Child Maltreatment Notification Procedures." *(See Appendix II)*

At St Matthew's, all paid staff, student teachers, volunteers and others working with children will be screened in accordance with state government Working With Children requirements.

CURRICULUM AND TRAINING

It is the responsibility of all members of the St. Matthew's school community to be able to:

- Recognise and respond to indicators of child abuse and neglect
- Understand the effects of abuse and neglect on the development of children and young people
- Comply with mandated and agreed policies and procedures related to child protection
- Keep themselves safe.

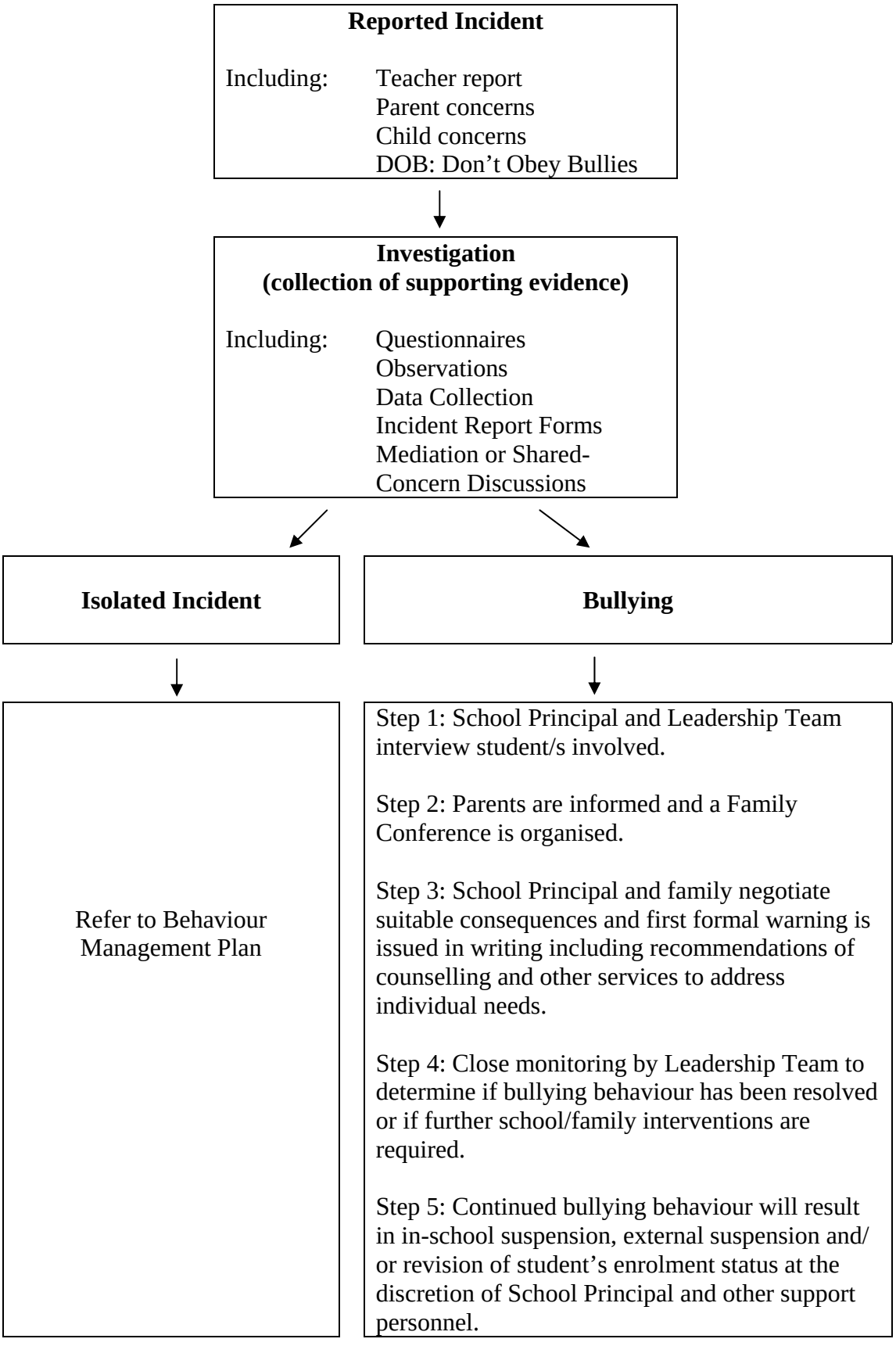
In accordance with these objectives, all new staff will receive professional development in the area of Child Protection (including how to recognize and respond appropriately to signs of abuse or neglect) and more specifically in the area of Mandatory Reporting requirements.

It is recognized at St. Matthew's that learning and teaching programs must provide opportunities for children to develop social, emotional and personal resilience skills in order for them to recognise their emotions and respond appropriately to certain situations. Students will learn these skills in the curriculum programs outlined in the 'Promoting and Enhancing Student Social and Emotional Wellbeing" section of this policy and include 'PATHS' Curriculum, 'Making Jesus Real' Curriculum and 'Friendly Schools and Families' Curriculum.

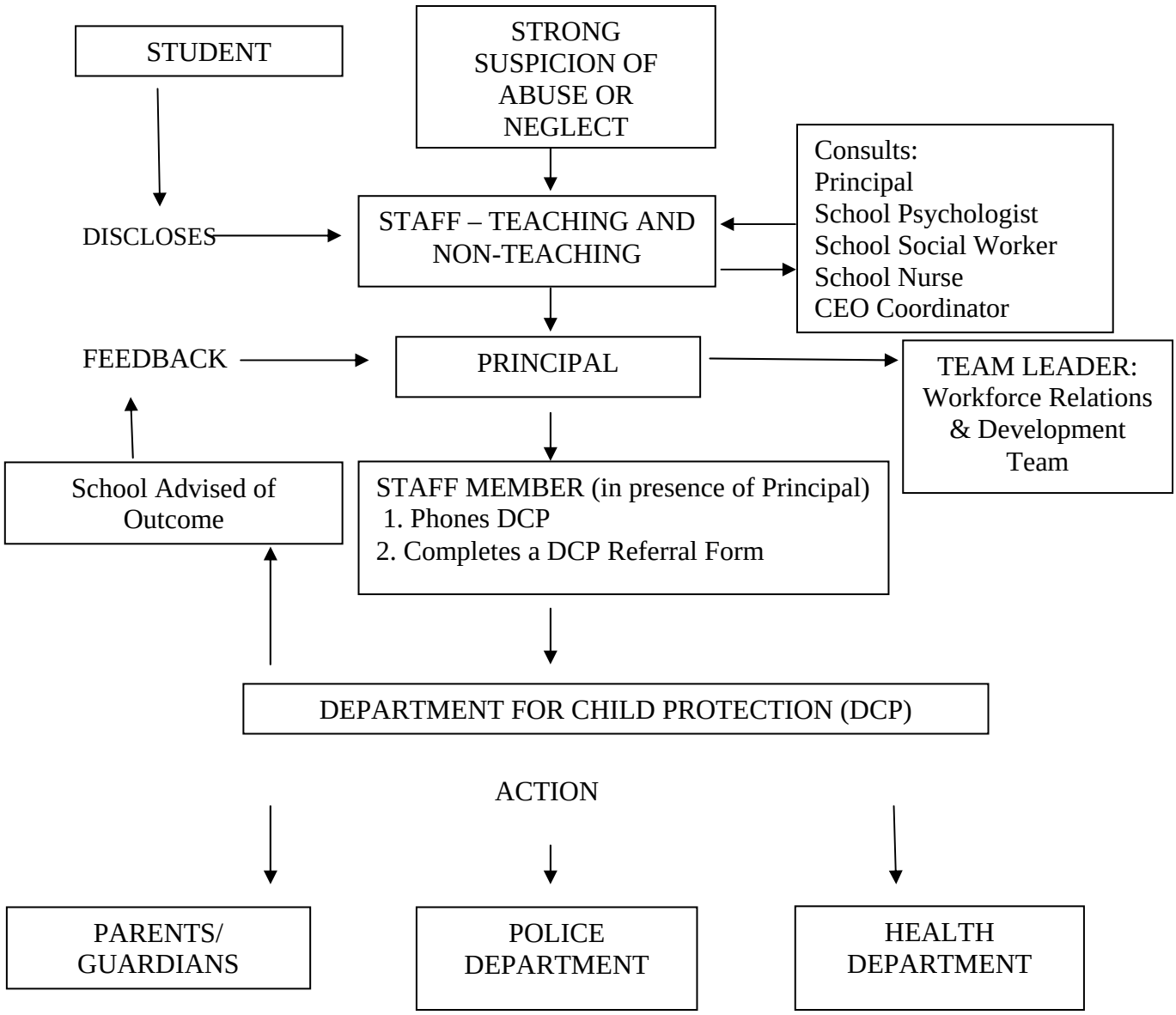
FAMILIES, PARTNERSHIPS AND SERVICES

Please refer to page 3 of this document.

Appendix I: Flow Chart to Address Bullying Behaviour



Appendix II- "Catholic Education Office
Child Maltreatment Notification Procedures."



This flow chart will be modified appropriately to address mandatory reporting procedures as necessary.