



CYBERBULLYING POLICY

June 2016

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1 AUTHORITY AND APPLICATION

Date of approval	[#Insert date of approval#]
Source of approval	TCEC
Start date	[#Insert date of Commencement#]
Date of review	Three years from approval or review/amendment approval
Date of amendments	[#Insert dates of Amendments#]
Previous policies replaced by this Policy	Cyberbullying Policy 2011

2 RELATED DOCUMENTS

This Policy should be considered in conjunction with the following related documents:

TCEC Policies and Procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child Safe Organisation • Child Safe Code of Conduct • ICT for Students • Privacy • School Grievance • Work Health & Safety
AoH Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anti-Discrimination Bullying and Harassment Policy
Applicable Laws	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Anti-Discrimination Act 1998 (TAS)</i> • <i>Australian Human Rights Commission Act 1986 (Cth)</i> • <i>Criminal Code Act 1995 (Cth)</i> • <i>Criminal Code Act 1924 (TAS)</i> • <i>Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth)</i> • <i>Police Offences Act 1935 (TAS)</i> • <i>Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth)</i> • <i>Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth)</i> • <i>Work Health & Safety Act 2012 (TAS)</i>

3 DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy:

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- **CET** is Catholic Education Tasmania; a reference to the TCEO, all Schools and Governance operating in the Archdiocese of Hobart
- **Cyberbullying** is the use of ICT to intimidate, harass, humiliate or threaten a person or group with the intent to hurt them socially, psychologically or physically
- **Cybersafety** is the safe and responsible use of ICT
- **ICT (Information and Communication Technologies)** refers to all technological tools, resources and Communication Devices used to communicate and create, disseminate, store, and manage electronic information
- **School** includes any Systemic School or College, Archdiocesan College or Congregational School or College
- **School Environment** is any physical or virtual place made available or authorised by a School for use by Children during or outside School hours, that includes:
 - School grounds, including all campuses;
 - online School environments, including email, intranet systems and Social Media platforms; and
 - other locations provided by the School for a Child's use, including locations used for School Activities and School Events
- **Social Media** refers to online services, mobile applications and virtual communities that provide a way for people to connect, network and share information including text, commentary, statements, audio, graphics, multimedia pictures, movies, and photos
- **Student** is a person enrolled at a School
- **TCEC** is the Tasmanian Catholic Education Commission, an entity with delegated responsibility from the CTC for oversight of CET in accordance with its Constitution
- **TCEO** is the Tasmanian Catholic Education Office, the operational arm of the TCEC that provides professional support, services and guidance to all Schools

4 PURPOSE

The aims of this Policy are to:

- (a) instruct and guide Students and School communities in Cybersafety;
- (b) reinforce that Cyberbullying will not be tolerated at any level;
- (c) ensure that all reported incidents of Cyberbullying are dealt with appropriately and that support is given to both victims and alleged perpetrators; and
- (d) operate with Applicable Laws and policies.

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5 POLICY

- (a) The TCEC recognises its duty to provide safe physical and emotional School Environments.
- (b) The TCEC places a high priority on the safe and responsible use of ICT to benefit Student outcomes and requires Schools to:
- (i) establish and maintain rigorous and effective School Cybersafety practices;
 - (ii) educate Students and other members of the School community about Cybersafety when using current and developing ICT;
 - (iii) maximise the opportunities ICT brings to teaching and learning programmes; and
 - (iv) put in place strategies to minimise and manage risks of anti-social, inappropriate and illegal material and activities.
- (c) The TCEC requires Schools to address Cyberbullying as a whole-of-school-community responsibility requiring educating Students, Workers and Parents/Guardians on:
- (i) the characteristics and nature of Cyberbullying;
 - (ii) the seriousness of the impact of Cyberbullying on those being bullied;
 - (iii) counter-measures and programs put in place to prevent Cyberbullying;
 - (iv) ways to report Cyberbullying incidents involving self or others;
 - (v) Cyberbullying response strategies; and
 - (vi) the illegal nature of Cyberbullying behaviour.
- (d) Cybersafety and Cyberbullying programs will reflect age-appropriate developmental stages of Students.

6 CYBERSAFETY

Cybersafety, as the safe and responsible use of ICT, also encompasses issues of privacy and information protection, respectful communication and knowing how to deal with online issues such as Cyberbullying, prohibited online conduct, sexting, identity theft and predatory behaviours.

7 CYBERBULLYING

- (a) Cyberbullying is facilitated by electronic communication such as email, short message service (SMS), multimedia messaging service (MMS), instant messaging (IM), chat rooms/bash boards, blogs, social networking sites, gaming sites etc.
- (b) Cyberbullying can take many forms, including (but not limited to):
- aggressive online communicative behaviour, such as abusive/harassing/threatening/hurtful messages/emails/chat/images/videos;
 - humiliation of others online;
 - impersonation of others online;

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- exclusion of others online.
- (c) While Cyberbullying may have similar characteristics to real-life bullying, it also differs in the following ways:
- It is invasive and can be difficult to escape for it can occur 24/7 and target a person wherever they are.
 - It can involve harmful material being widely and rapidly disseminated to a large audience at the 'press of a button'.
 - It can provide the bully with a sense of relative anonymity and distance from the victim so there is a lack of immediate feedback or consequences of actions.

8 COVERAGE

This Policy covers and applies to all Workers, Other Persons and Students.

9 REQUIREMENTS

- (a) Schools, Governance and the TCEO must communicate and implement this Policy within their area of responsibility.
- (b) Principals/Managers/Supervisors are required to promote and champion this Policy within their area of responsibility and take reasonable steps to ensure that any potential breaches of this Policy are taken seriously and acted upon immediately and appropriately.
- (c) Workers and Students are required to comply with this Policy and Applicable Laws.
- (d) Parents/Guardians agree to support this policy as a condition of enrolling their Child in a CET School.

10 OBLIGATIONS AND ACCOUNTABILITIES

10.1 Schools, Governance and the TCEO

Schools, Governance and the TCEO are responsible for:

- (a) implementing this Policy within their area of responsibility;
- (b) where appropriate, establishing School-specific policies on Cybersafety and Cyberbullying provided that any such policies do not conflict with this policy; and
- (c) implementing a sustained curriculum approach to address Cybersafety and Cyberbullying.

10.2 Principals/Managers/Supervisors

Principals/Managers/Supervisors are responsible for:

- (a) developing and implementing safe and supportive learning environments where Students feel safe, are treated with respect and protected from harm;
- (b) maintaining a School culture where bullying is less likely to take place and Students feel comfortable reporting safety issues;

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- (c) implementing reliable and effective strategies to minimise, manage and report risks;
- (d) ensure all members of the School community are familiar with the School's response to prohibited online conduct and Cyberbullying;
- (e) appropriately responding to incidents of Cybersafety issues and Cyberbullying, including contacting the Police where incidents include possible criminal behaviour;
- (f) keep accurate records of incidents and their management;
- (g) provide support to:
 - (i) any Student who is experiencing bullying;
 - (ii) any Student who exhibits bullying behaviours; and
 - (iii) any bystanders.

10.3 Workers

Workers are responsible for:

- (i) promoting the safety and wellbeing of Students in all School Environments so that Students are treated with respect, protected from harm and feel safe;
- (ii) modelling appropriate online behaviour at all times;
- (iii) supporting Students to develop awareness, understanding and skills to keep themselves and others safe;
- (iv) ensuring that Students know who they can talk to if they are feeling unsafe; and
- (v) taking all reports of suspected Cyberbullying seriously and following the School's response and reporting procedures.

10.4 Parents/Guardians

Parents and Guardians are expected to support the TCEC and their School in relation to policies and procedures as agreed in the terms and conditions of enrolment of their Child.

10.5 Students

Students are required to comply with this Policy and must not use ICT or Social Media in an unacceptable manner.

11 BREACH OF POLICY

- (a) Students who breach this Policy may be subject to sanctions.
- (b) Workers who breach this policy may be subject to disciplinary action and/or termination of employment or services.
- (c) Cyberbullying and/or prohibited online behaviour may result in the School involving the police, other government/regulatory agencies and/or Social Media agencies.

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