

# PROMOTING THE PEACE (ANTI-BULLYING POLICY) - 2009

## RATIONALE

At Red Bend Catholic College we take pride in our Marist Catholic heritage which offers our students care and guidance and which is a *'sign and the bearer of the love of God for the young'*. These are values that are extended to every person in our College community. Therefore all students and staff have the right to work and relax in dignity and safety.

Our Preventative System of education obliges us to develop and maintain proactive and caring approaches in the management of relationships throughout the College. A policy that educates our students, their families and our staff will promote healthy and positive relationships. Where bullying or harassment occurs it is our responsibility to intervene with procedures, which are consistent and recognise the right to natural justice of all parties. All Bullying and Harassment procedures should be created with the aim of changing attitudes as well as behaviour.

We will strive to work in the spirit of the Gospel of John, which entreats *'Just as I have loved you, you love one another. By this everyone will know you are my disciples'*.

## AIM

The **Promoting the peace Policy** will be implemented and guided by Red Bend Catholic College's Catholic Marist heritage. This policy will provide a framework for education in our school community regarding the various forms of Bullying and the impact it can have on adolescents and adults. **Promoting the peace** will provide processes, which will enable the school to ascertain levels of bullying in our community. It will outline procedures for individuals to report issues of concern and resolve conflicts in a safe and just manner. The policy would initially be reviewed after one year and from then on reviews will be conducted biennially.

## BULLYING DEFINITION

Bullying is a behaviour, intentional or unintentional which can be defined as the repeated or isolated attack, physical, psychological, social or verbal in nature, by those in position of power, which is formally and situationally defined, with the intention of causing distress for their own gain or satisfaction. Bullying impacts on; the bully, the victim and the onlookers. There are four main parameters of bullying: it is deliberate; it is repetitive; it involves an imbalance of power; and it may be verbal, physical, social or psychological. Bullying can include many different types of behaviour. Such as:

1. Physical violence and attacks
2. Verbal taunts, name-calling and put-downs
3. Threats and intimidation
4. Extortion or stealing of money and possessions
5. Exclusion from the peer group
6. Electronic

## RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

All members of the College Community including students, staff and parents have rights and responsibilities.

## **RIGHTS**

1. Feel safe, secure and be treated with respect in the school environment;
2. Have property treated with respect;
3. Gain assistance and support when involved in a bullying issue;
4. Have issues and concern dealt with in a professional and confidential manner.

## **RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Honour the College's commitment to the Red Bend Catholic College Code of Conduct
2. Contribute to a safe school environment by modelling appropriate anti-bullying behaviour in daily relationships.
3. Disclose any concerns about bullying to someone who can be trusted such as a school coordinator, counsellor, teacher or friend.
4. Display respect, tolerance and courtesy when interacting with all members of the College community.
5. Attempt to understand and value the different physical and emotional needs of others.
6. Inform families about any areas of concern, which relate to the pastoral welfare of their son/daughter.
7. Provide confidentiality for the victim and person responsible for bullying whenever possible.
8. Apply the procedures of the Red Bend Catholic College **Promoting the peace Policy** to all parties in a fair and unprejudiced manner.
9. All people should be proactive to avoid/eliminate all forms of bullying.

## **PROMOTING THE PEACE PROCEDURES**

Step one is predicated on the philosophy that students often engage in bullying in an unconscious or unintentional way; not realising the harm and distress they cause others.

### **INITIAL REPORT OF HARASSMENT**

- ▶ Any individual who believes that they have been bullied should report the incident to a trusted person and/or the Principal, their House Coordinator, Deputy Principal or Anti-Bullying Coordinator. In the case of a trusted person they will report the incident to one of the above people.
- ▶ The House Coordinator or Deputy Principal will interview the people involved to collect information about the incident. Normal natural justice processes of the school will apply throughout the investigation.
- ▶ With the exception of minor cases, the Deputy Principal will always be notified.
- ▶ Once sufficient knowledge and understanding has been gained, parents will be notified.
- ▶ The House Coordinator or Deputy Principal will decide on the most appropriate of the following actions:
  - Counselling/support for the victim;
  - Counselling harasser re: the consequences/implications of bullying for victim;

- Incident reports/reflections written by all parties;
  - Reconciliation meeting involving students or the broader Community Conference Model (see Appendix);
  - Warnings and/or sanctions for the perpetrator;
  - Discreet staff monitoring and student feedback of the situation;
- ▶ Students involved will sign a conduct agreement, which will be countersigned by parents during an interview at the College.
  - ▶ The harasser will be required to undertake a course in counselling conducted by his year level coordinator, Deputy Principal and/or counsellor.

#### **ON-GOING HARASSMENT**

A student who fails to learn from the educative processes laid out in step one is deemed to be a repeating bully.

- ▶ The investigative procedures of step one are repeated.
- ▶ Any students deemed to be a repeated bully will have their parents notified and will be suspended for 2-5 school days.
- ▶ Other sanctions associated with Red Bend Catholic College Discipline Procedures will apply at the discretion of the Principal and / or the Deputy Principal.
- ▶ Re-entry to Red Bend Catholic College will be conditional on parent and student attendance at a meeting a Discipline Welfare Conference Group convened by the Deputy Principal.

#### **INTRACTABLE SITUATIONS**

- ▶ The investigative procedures of step one are repeated
- ▶ Any students deemed to be a persistent bully will have their parents informed that they are a student whose enrolment is at Risk at Red Bend Catholic College.
- ▶ At risk students may be placed on Principal's Review.
- ▶ Further instances may result in the student's loss of his/her enrolment at Red Bend Catholic College.

#### **RESTORING WELL BEING**

- ▶ When a student has been bullied they can sometimes experience a lack of confidence in their ability to integrate into the social environment of the school.
- ▶ House Coordinators or an appropriate teacher will monitor the student to make sure there are no ongoing concerns.
- ▶ Counselling support will be offered to assist the student to confidently apply appropriate strategies to either change behaviour (in the case of bullies) or build self-esteem (for those bullied).

- ▶ Where appropriate access programs within the community, which develop resilience in adolescents.

**REVIEWING POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

- Promoting the peace Policy will regularly be reviewed by means of student, parent and teacher consultations. It will then be reviewed on a regular basis.