

# MacKillop College



## Policy: Bullying & Harassment

### Introduction

Bullying is a willful, conscious desire to hurt another person or put that person under stress. Bullying and harassment can take the form of gestures, insults, physical injury or intimidation, oppression, extortion, exclusion and vilification. Bullying involves a victim, one or more bullies and often a group of bystanders who witness but do not participate or intervene in the harassment.

### Objectives

- To educate the MacKillop College community to understand the inappropriateness of bullying and harassment
- To arbitrate to a mutually satisfactory position between bully and victim
- To support the victim
- To ameliorate the behaviour of the bully
- To enable staff and students to feel safe at MacKillop College
- To ultimately eliminate bullying and harassment

### Principles

- Staff should be alert to the possibility of bullying and, when it is detected, use the most appropriate of the available intervention strategies
- Strategies should be developed to prevent bullying
- The pastoral care support structure should be used to support victims. This may involve counselling, assertiveness training and programs to develop self-esteem
- Appropriate disciplinary procedures should be implemented to eliminate bullying situations
- Staff should model appropriate skills in cooperation and assertiveness
- The message that bullying is unacceptable should be delivered not merely through Rules, but through the curriculum, sporting and extra-curricular activities and the Education in Faith Program. By increasing the self-esteem of students we can reduce the likelihood of their becoming victims or bullies
- Any individual who is being harassed must clearly tell the person(s) to stop what they are doing or saying because they do not like it
- If the harassment persists then the victim who is being harassed should report the incident to someone who is in a position to take some action
- The person who is doing the harassing will be approached and will be required to give both written and verbal details of the incident. In the interview the person would be made to understand the seriousness of harassment and they would need to suggest things that they can do to resolve the situation. It will be made clear that any subsequent incident of harassing the person who filed the report or anyone else in the school will be considered a second offence. Organising or encouraging friends to gang up on the victim is also considered a second offence
- Second Offence: If, after being reported for a harassment incident, an individual continues this type of behaviour with the same or any other person, or organises friends to harass, this is considered a second offence. The harasser will be interviewed again and will be required to give both written and verbal accounts of the incident. Where it can be shown that there has been a second offence, the student's parents will be notified and will be requested to attend an

interview with staff members and the Deputy Principal. The student will be placed on time-out for a period of time decided by the staff members and the Deputy Principal; this would depend on the circumstances of the incident. During this time out period the student will complete set 'Behaviour Management Work' to help them recognise that harassing other people is not acceptable and to enable them to relate to others in a more positive and appropriate manner. There would need to be some acknowledgement by the student and parents that this type of behaviour is unacceptable and that measures would be taken to ensure that the behaviour would not be a repeated

- Third Offence: If the student, by their continued actions, shows that they are unwilling to cease harassing others they, and their parents, will be required to attend an interview with the Deputy Principal and the Principal. The consequences at this level would be that the student would be required to undergo counselling to address the problem. Furthermore, negotiation with the Principal will take place in regards to the students continued enrolment at the College

## **Implementation**

### **Principal commitment**

The Principal is responsible for ensuring that:

- That the objectives of this policy are integrated into practice
- The Principal is the ultimate arbiter in disciplinary and Pastoral Care matters and will deal with serious and /or intractable bullying problems
- The Principal will deal with any situations in which staff are involved in bullying or harassment.

### **Staff commitment**

All staff are responsible for:

- Teachers should be alert to bullying in the classroom or playground. They should stop it and refer the matter to the Homeroom Teacher
- Homeroom Teachers should be informed of any bullying involving members of their class. They take steps to solve the problem, involving other staff and support personnel as appropriate
- The Student Welfare Coordinator may offer support and training to victims and assists in the management of persistent bullies
- The Deputy Principal (Students & Staff) is responsible for developing strategies for eliminating bullying and for ensuring that staff are familiar with these strategies
- The Deputy Principal (Students & Staff) and Level Coordinators/Team Leaders support and coordinate efforts within each year-level to detect and eliminate bullying. They may deal directly with bystanders, bullies and victims. Where appropriate the students involved will be referred for further help.

## **Review Date**

*This Policy will be reviewed in:*            January 2009

Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Rory Kennedy  
(Principal)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_