

MARIST COLLEGE NORTH SHORE

POLICY STATEMENT ON CYBERBULLYING

as at July 2011

RATIONALE:

To educate, inform and protect students from cyberbullying and promote a school culture where cyberbullying is unacceptable.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE:

A **Marist school** is a centre of learning, of life, and of evangelising. As a school, it leads students “**to learn to know, to be competent, to live together and most especially, and to grow as persons**”. As a Catholic school, it is a community setting in which faith, hope and love are lived and communicated, and in which students are progressively initiated into their life-long challenge of **harmonizing faith, culture and life**. As a Catholic school in the Marist tradition, it adopts Marcellin’s approach to educating children and youth, in the way of Mary.

Our style of educating is based on a vision that is truly holistic, and that consciously seeks to communicate values. While we share such a vision with many, especially in Church circles, we use a **distinctive pedagogical approach** which Marcellin and the first Marists initiated and which was innovative in many of its aspects.

We share their intuition that “**to bring up children properly, we must love them, and love them all equally**”. From this principle, flow the particular characteristics of our style of educating: presence, simplicity, family spirit, love of work, and following the way of Mary. We seek to adopt these attitudes and values as our way of inculcating the Gospel. It is their sum and their interaction which gives our Marist style its Spirit-inspired originality.

The core foundation of our Marist school is to build positive relationships where there students feel a sense of comfort. When issues arise they are dealt with the notion of restorative practices to ensure that relationships are mended and students can work together within the community.

WHAT IS CYBERBULLYING?

Cyberbullying refers to bullying through information and communication technologies and mediums. It is also important to be aware that Cyberbullying can occur both during and after school hours. It includes but is not limited to parents, staff and students associated with the College.

Cyberbullying can include, but is not limited to, the items listed below.

Email

Sending harassing, threatening and/ or menacing messages to targets either directly, anonymously or using another person’s address or alias.

Instant Messaging (IM)

(Systems include MSN Messenger ,Yahoo & Bebo) –

Harassing and heated arguments (referred to as ‘flaming’) can occur and include obscene language in private chat rooms.

Chat Rooms/Bash boards (Real time communication facilities)

Can allow students to anonymously write anything (true or untrue) creating and adding cruel entries in a world wide forum.

Short Text Messages (SMS) –

Masquerading as another by using their mobile phone or computer to send harassing or threatening messages.

Websites/Social Networking sites –

Mocking, teasing and harassing; voting online for the ‘ugliest’ or ‘fattest’ etc and posting visuals that can be altered (this can include sexually explicit material).

POLICY IN ACTION FOR CYBERBULLYING

Our aim is to deal with incidents of Cyberbullying in a firm, positive, caring and supportive manner. Intervention may occur in the following ways:

- A student may voluntarily approach a teacher or counsellor for assistance as they have become aware of or have engaged in Cyberbullying or related behaviour.
- A student may be identified as needing help as a result of involvement in an incident requiring disciplinary action.
- School staff may approach the school executive or counsellor about concerns relating to students engaging in or being subject of cyberbullying.
- Any special programs which the school provides, eg the School’s Anti-bullying program, Restorative Justice program, should be utilised here.

Cyberbullying is presented to students within our Pastoral Care programs. Guest speakers, police school liaison officers and drama performances are just some of the initiatives employed by the College to educate, inform and discuss with students the pitfalls of cyberbullying. Students are informed of being aware of their digital footprint.

All students must sign and adhere to the **STUDENT ACCEPTABLE USE AGREEMENT FORM**. (See Appendix 1)

Monitoring of student use of school e-mail and internet facilities is a part of fulfilling our duty of care to students as well as ensuring compliance with the policy agreement.

School rules prohibit the inappropriate and threatening use of e-mail, internet and mobile phone facilities both in the school, at any school function and away from school where the behaviour seriously impacts on other students or staff at the school.

MCNS: APPROACH TO DEALING WITH BULLYING

Step 1:

Students:

Report your concern –

- Easiest to tell a friend
- Better to tell parents
- Best to tell a teacher – they can do the most about it.

Once an issue has been reported to teacher then teacher must respond immediately by discussing the issue with victim.

Step 2:

Teacher/House Coordinator: Interview with student believed to be responsible for bullying behaviour.

House Coordinator should be informed and record all incidents.

Teacher/House co-ordinator is to discuss the issue with both victim and bully. The focus is in restoring the relationship by focusing on specific behaviours, who was affected and how they were affected.

Assumption: Every boy has a right to have his inappropriate behaviour pointed out to him and a right to be heard and an opportunity to correct his behaviour.

Possible use of demerit system within the College diary to inform parents.

House Co-ordinator may engage the services of senior students to act as mentor for students experiencing bullying.

Step 3:

House coordinator to follow up and monitor the situation.

Follow-up interview

Action: *EITHER*

No further action

OR

1. Expression of concern with the student that he has not kept his deal in assisting the bullied boy as he said he would.
2. If appropriate, move to Step 2 of the Student management procedures.
3. Else, clarify expectations, and give the student a further opportunity to demonstrate goodwill.

Step 4:

Further interview. Possible actions include:

- No further action – matter resolved
- Detention
- Parent Contact
- Interview with parents
- Monitoring starting at Step 3 of student management procedures

Step 5:

If no change in bullying behaviour and issues are continuing

- Monitoring at step 4 of student management procedures.

A range of actions are available, depending on individual circumstances. These include:

- no disciplinary action required
- parental contact
- student(s) put on a contract
- student(s) required to undergo counselling
- penalty work and/detention
- suspension
- transfer
- expulsion

In cases where there is a threat made towards someone's life, criminal activity, sexual assault or overt sexual content within any technology, then the police and community services may be contacted.

CYBER SAFETY

The following are some basic tips in order to be Cyber smart:

- 1) No sexually suggestive photos, videos or nicknames
- 2) No surnames
- 3) Do not mention your school or sporting clubs you may be involved with.
- 4) Set your profile to private

The following are some sites that may help both parents and students to make good choices to keep you Cyber safe:

www.cybersmart.gov.au

www.hectorsworld.com.au

www.acma.gov.au/cybersafety

www.netalert.gov.au

www.bullyingnoway.com.au

www.kidshelp.com.au

STUDENT ACCEPTABLE USE AGREEMENT FORM

(RE: electronic devices (eg laptops, mobile phones etc) and services – including cybersafety expectations)

POLICY STATEMENT –

The use of electronic devices and access to e-mail and internet services (school devices and services) in Catholic Education

Office (CEO) Sydney schools are provided to students in order to support their educational and administrative needs. These

school devices and services are necessary educational tools and **must be used in a responsible manner.**

This policy can never

anticipate all possible advances and uses of technology and therefore students who are unsure about their usage should seek

clarification from a teacher as soon as possible.

This Policy is intended to inform parents and students of **our school's expectations when students are using the devices and**

services provided by the school and when using their personal equipment to communicate to or about members of the

school community. If a student acts in a way that is against the contents of the policy, he or she will be subject to consequences

according to the school's Pastoral Care Policy and if necessary offending material may be supplied to the police. **The school**

reserves the right to capture, store and review all internet browsing and emails across our school network. Devices may

be taken or accessed if it is believed that:

There has been or may be a breach of the school rules or policy

There may be a threat of harm to a student or others or system security.

STUDENTS ISSUED WITH SCHOOL OWNED LAPTOP COMPUTERS

The Australian Government has funded schools to purchase laptop computers for the personal educational use of some

secondary students while enrolled at the school. Students and their families who receive a laptop computer have the following

additional responsibilities:

To care for the laptop to the best of their ability

To keep the laptop secure and protect it from any malicious damage.

To bring the laptop to school each day in readiness for use in the classroom – this includes having the battery charged

and electronic files effectively managed.

To replace or repair any damaged, lost or stolen laptop at their own cost

To return the laptop computer (and any inclusions such as power cords and carry case) in good order when leaving the

school

CYBERSAFETY REQUIREMENTS

This policy addresses the particular use of these technologies that has come to be referred to as

'Cyberbullying' (See No 4

below). The school will investigate and take action where this kind of bullying occurs in school **and** outside of school when it

causes significant harm to the relationships between students and or teachers, or is criminal in nature.

1. When using the school devices and services students will:

ensure that communication through internet and email services is related to learning.

keep passwords confidential, and change them when prompted, or when known by another user.

use passwords that are not obvious or easily guessed.

log off at the end of each session to ensure that nobody else can use their e-learning account.

promptly tell their teacher if they suspect they have received a computer virus or spam (i.e. unsolicited email) or if they

receive a message that is inappropriate or makes them feel uncomfortable.

seek advice if another user seeks excessive personal information, asks to be telephoned, offers gifts by email or wants to

meet a student.

- ensure that copyright permission is gained before electronically publishing the works or drawings of others.
- Always acknowledge the creator or author of any material published.
- keep personal information including names, addresses, photographs, credit card details and telephone numbers, of themselves or others, private.
- ensure that school services are not used for unauthorised commercial activities, political lobbying, online gambling or any unlawful purpose.

School
crest

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2. When using the school services or personal mobile phones (or similar personal equipment) students will not

- disable settings for virus protection, spam and filtering that have been applied by the school and not attempt to evade them through use of proxy sites.
- allow others to use their personal accounts.
- deliberately use the electronic identity of another person to send messages to others or for any other purposes.

enter 'chat' or 'social networking' internet sites without the permission of a teacher.

- use unauthorised programs or intentionally download unauthorised software, graphics or music that are not associated with the learning activity as directed by a staff member.
- damage or disable computers, computer systems or networks.
- disclose personal information about another person (including name, address, photos, phone numbers)
- distribute or use information which is copyrighted without proper permission.
- take photos or video of members of the school community without their consent.

3. When using school services students will never knowingly initiate or forward emails or other messages containing:

- a message that was sent to them in confidence.
- a computer virus or attachment that is capable of damaging recipients' computers.
- chain letters and hoax emails.
- spam, eg unsolicited advertising material.

4. When using school services or non school services students will never send or publish either through internet sites, email or mobile phone messages:

- unacceptable or unlawful material or remarks, including offensive, abusive or discriminatory comments.
- threatening, bullying or harassing material or make unreasonable demands.
- sexually explicit or sexually suggestive material or correspondence.
- false or defamatory information about a person or organisation.
- the school name or crest without the written permission of the Principal.

Students need to be aware that all use of internet and email services can be monitored and traced to the accounts of specific users.

The misuse of school services may result in disciplinary action which includes, but is not limited to, the withdrawal of access to services.

Policy Update

This policy will be updated as necessary. All attempts will be made to adhere to the above policy, but particular circumstances

(such as technological advancements) may require the Principal to depart from the stated policy.

AGREEMENT

I/we have discussed this policy with my/our child and we agree to uphold the expectations of the school in relation to the use of electronic devices and services both at school and, where relevant, outside of school. We understand that a breach of this policy will incur consequences according to the school's Pastoral Care Policy and that we will be responsible for replacing or repairing a school issued laptop computer that may be damaged, lost or stolen.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

(Parent/s or Caregiver/s)

I have read and discussed this policy with my parent/carer and I agree to be a cybersafe student and always uphold these rules both within and outside of school.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

(Student— not required for children under 10 years of age)

Signed: _____

Date: _____

(Tutor)