

Marist College North Shore

Anti-Bullying Policy

As at July 2011

RATIONALE:

To educate, inform and protect students from bullying and promote a school culture where bullying is unacceptable and students feel a sense of welcoming.

DEFINITION:

Bullying is any behaviour that intentionally hurts, threatens, frightens, excludes or harasses any other person either physically, verbally or emotionally.

This may be in the form of name calling, swearing, teasing, intimidating, isolating, pushing, hitting, humiliating or stealing.

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 inculturating 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.

AIMS:

- To build awareness of the unacceptable nature of bullying.
- To build capacity within students with the core Catholic value of RESPECT as our guide.
- To implement and maintain a whole school approach to address bullying issues.
- To build self –esteem and a sense of self-efficacy.
- To empower students to be proactive in problem solving with bullying issues.

POLICY IN ACTION:

Students:

- Students are made aware that bullying is unacceptable behaviour and that there are procedures that put in place to deal with issues.
- Information in diaries
- Issue of bullying is discussed at Assemblies
- Guest speakers are invited to the College to discuss issues
- College High Notes has occasional strategies listed for parents and students
- The College invites theatre companies to perform interactive performances to promote the concerns that arise with bullying
- Students participate in surveys on the occurrences and issues relating to bullying.
- Vertical Tutor groups allow peer mediation and support to occur.
- Year 7 are involved in Peer Support programs to assist with integration into College and a means of support to dealing with Bullying issues.

Staff:

- Staff should be active in identifying and eliminating bullying behaviour while on playground supervision, in corridors, in classroom, at sporting venues and all other activities that students are involved in at school.
- Teachers should immediately address bullying behaviour with students of concern.
- Teachers should report incidents or suspected incidents to a House Co-ordinator for early intervention.
- Teachers should support the programs designed to assist with eliminating bullying.
- Staff are in-serviced on strategies to assist with dealing with bullying issues and eradicating bullying.

Parents:

- Inform the College by contacting your son's House co-ordinator if you suspect any form of bullying.

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, which 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.
- Parental Interview with Deputy Headmaster and Headmaster.

STRATEGIES AND INFORMATION REGARDING BULLYING

Information for Students/Staff and Parents regarding Bullying

How can we Help?

Parents:

1. Watch for signs of distress in your son, unwillingness to attend school, a pattern of headaches, missing equipment, requests for extra money, damaged clothes or bruising.
2. Take an active interest in your son's social life and acquaintances.
3. Advise your son to tell a trusted teacher or maybe their House Coordinator. If possible, allow your son to report and deal with the problem himself. He can gain much self-respect through taking the initiative and dealing with the problem without Mum and Dad's involvement, but this is not always possible.
4. Inform your son's House Coordinator or Tutor if bullying is suspected.
5. Do not encourage your son to hit back.
6. Communicate to your son that, as a parent, your involvement will be appropriate so that the problem is not aggravated and so that retribution will not be visited on the child.

Staff

1. Be observant for examples of distress or suspected incidents of bullying.
2. Report suspected incidents to the relevant House Co-ordinator.
3. Take steps to help victims and remove source of distress, without putting victim at further danger and risk.
4. Listen to students (individually and in groups) and be sympathetic to the reports of possible bullying.
5. Make efforts to remove occasions for bullying by active patrolling during supervising duty.
6. Arrive at class on time and move promptly between lessons.
7. Be sympathetic to the needs of the victim and the alleged bully, and don't be too quick to judge guilt.
8. Be alert to situations of bullying, in their own actions, or in those of their colleagues.

What Can Students Do About Bullying

YOU SHOULD NEVER BE AFRAID TO SPEAK TO SOMEONE ABOUT THE PROBLEM. IF YOU DON'T REPORT IT, WE CANNOT HELP YOU!

1. If bullying occurs, it is important to tell somebody straight away. If you don't feel comfortable telling a teacher, speak to a Senior student that you know or someone you trust (eg: Peer Support Leader). He can speak on your behalf.
2. Try to ignore it and not show that it upsets you. If the harasser is not rewarded by your response, the bullying may stop.
3. Be with someone when the bully is around.
4. Stay away from the bully – avoid contact.
5. Avoid reacting by making negative comments. Do not hit back, swear or become upset.
6. Stay positive; don't let it get you down.

If you see others being bullied

1. Report the incident to your House Co-ordinator.
2. Refuse to be present in any bullying situation. Your presence contributes to the crime against the victim.