ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

Rationale

Marymede Catholic College is committed to the creation and maintenance of an environment that is free from bullying.

Aim

- To educate staff and students about bullying and its consequences.
- To communicate the understanding that bullying will not be tolerated at Marymede Catholic College.
- To deal with bullying promptly and effectively.
- To work towards the creation of an environment that is free from bullying behaviour.

Definition of Terms

Bullying is:

- The wilful conscious desire to hurt, threaten or frighten someone else;
- A repetitive attack which causes distress not only at the time of the attack, but also by threat of future attacks;
- Characterised by the dominance of the powerful over the powerless in whatever context.

Bullying may be verbal, physical or psychological in nature.

**Verbal Bullying:**
May include name calling, offensive or threatening language, picking on people, ridiculing people behind their backs, racist insults or sexual innuendo.

**Physical Bullying:**
May include fighting, pushing, shoving, invasion of personal space or damaging other people’s possessions.

**Psychological Bullying:**
May include circulating personally offensive notes or materials, graffiti, repeated exclusion from a peer group or making unacceptable and nuisance telephone calls.

Any such bullying may have a range of harmful long-term effects on both the bully and the victim.

Procedure

It is expected that all adults and student members of the College community report incidents of bullying or harassment.
**Students:**
Students should report any bullying or harassment to any person who is a member of the College staff, parent or fellow student with whom the student feels confident or comfortable. In turn, this person should report the incident to the relevant homeroom teacher. If they are unavailable, students should speak to the relevant Head of School, relevant Deputy Principal of School or the Principal.

**Parents:**
Parents should notify their child’s homeroom teacher or relevant Head of School or relevant Deputy Principal of any incidents that they feel can be construed as bullying or harassment and which should be addressed by the College.

**Staff:**
All staff and students are to acknowledge that the prevention of bullying is part of College Policy.

Staff should watch for early signs of distress in students and report all incidents or suspected incidents to the homeroom teacher or the relevant Head of School or relevant Deputy Principal.

The staff member is responsible for offering the victim immediate support and help and should ensure that all accessible areas of the school are supervised at breaks, between lessons and before and after school.

**Immediate Action:**

A. Incidents of bullying or harassment of a student by another student will be initially investigated by the relevant homeroom teacher, who will report to the relevant Head of School or relevant Deputy Principal. This information may be reported to the Principal.
B. Any bullying report will be documented.
C. Any bullying or harassment by a student may involve the following procedures:
   - Interview and possible sanctions from the school e.g. detention, suspension;
   - Parents or guardians notified;
   - A formal meeting of parents or guardians and a member of staff i.e. homeroom teacher, relevant Head of School or relevant Deputy Principal;
   - Conduct card;
   - Counselling.

Marymede Catholic College will continue with programs and strategies aimed at the prevention of bullying.