Policy Statement

ANTI-HARASSMENT

Date January, 2008

Aim
To reduce the incidence of harassment at St Martins Lutheran College and to provide a procedure for dealing with harassment should it occur.

Rationale
Harassment affects a person’s well being, self-confidence, work and relationships with others. It is totally against the ethos of the College and may also be against the law. We believe that all members of the school community have equal right:

- To be treated fairly by fellow students and staff (and therefore we all show respect for each other).
- To feel safe and secure (and therefore we will support and encourage others in their work).
- To learn and grow towards their full potential (and therefore we will support and encourage others in their work).
- To feel valued, accepted and cared for as unique individuals (and therefore we will listen to each other, encouraging self expression, and we will accept each other as we are).
- To have their own property (and therefore we will respect and protect the property of others).

Implementation
The following grievance procedure is to be covered at the beginning of each school year in all classes. The policy and grievance procedure are an essential part of orientation of staff and students.

Acting against harassment
If you are guilty of harassment, stop now!

If you witness harassment you can do something about it and thereby protect others.

- Change your friendship group if it becomes involved in bullying or hurting others.
- Report harassment, so that both bullies and victims can receive help.
- Speak out against bullying as witnessing bullying without comment provides support for the bully.

If you are being harassed, you can take action.

The aim of the following procedure is to stop harassment by helping you to resolve the situation with the harasser. It is best if the harassment can be stopped by working it out, through discussions, repentance, forgiveness and acceptance to restore positive relations.
**Options**

**Act alone:**
- You may choose to do nothing, however, harassment could continue.
- Approach the person who is harassing you and request that the offending behaviour stops.

**Share the problem:**
- Discuss the situation with a friend, parent, brother, sister, teacher, principal or anyone with whom you feel comfortable.
- Discuss the situation with the Chaplain

**What next?**
- You may simply wish to discuss the situation with one of the contact people listed above.
- If you wish, they will help you to consider appropriate action.
- You may wish to approach the person who is harassing you with one of these people or
- They may approach the harasser on your behalf.
- It may be useful to keep a written record of the incidents that occur and give a copy to the contact person. This will help you both clarify the issue and explain to the harasser that his/her behaviour is unacceptable.

**Remember**
Confidentiality will be respected at all times unless you say otherwise.
You may stop or start at any point in the grievance procedure. In all cases the person dealing with the complaint will not take any action without your permission.
Students may involve parents at any stage.

Solving the problem at school level is often easier and more efficient. However it must be realised that this anti-harassment policy is not just a school-based matter. It is based on the Federal Sex Discrimination Act, 1984. Consequently, ongoing harassment may lead to the involvement of the police if the problem cannot be resolved at the school level.

**Outcomes of harassment**
St Martins Lutheran College views harassment as a serious matter and offenders will be dealt with under the College behaviour management policy. However, the primary aim of any intervention will be to restore positive relationships, to heal hurt and to establish a renewed understanding of our life together in a Christian community.

**Definitions**
Harassment is ongoing and deliberate activity which negatively affects a person’s well being, self confidence, work or relationships with others. It is totally against the ethos of St Martins and may also be against the law. Harassment can be face to face, in writing, via a third person or through electronic means. Harassment can include bullying, racism and sex based harassment.

**Bullying includes:**
- Physical bullying such as pushing, hitting, spitting, damaging the property of others.
- Verbal bullying, such as repeated ‘put downs’, name calling, ridiculing, threatening or spreading rumours.
- Gesture bullying, such as making rude or threatening signs
- Extortion bullying, such as demanding money, food or other belongings.

**Racial harassment includes:**
Deliberate or repeated racist comments, gestures, or any other conduct which hurts people based on their nationality, country of origin, colour of skin, ancestry or any related beliefs or behaviours.

**Sex-based harassment includes:**
- Sexist harassment – behaviour which insists that gender stereotypes be maintained and exercised in the school or work place.
- Sexual harassment – sexual behaviour which is deliberate, uninvited, unwelcome, and usually repeated and which is perceived by the recipient to be embarrassing, offensive, demeaning or compromising.
- Sexual assault – a term which covers a number of criminal offences.

Harassment of any kind is unwanted and unwelcome.

**References**
SMLC behaviour management policy

**Review Date and Specifications**
To be reviewed January 2010