MacKillop College
Policy: Bullying & Harassment
(Digital & Social Networking)

Introduction

MacKillop College is committed to providing a safe and inclusive teaching and learning environment. A key focus is to promote and develop a sense of belonging thereby affirming the dignity of all members of our community.

All forms of public digital media and social networking sites, such as but not limited to, Facebook and Twitter, can be used in ways which can harass, bully and affect others. Using these media to post content such as images or words that involve a wilful, conscious desire to hurt an individual or group, placing them under duress, constitutes bullying and harassment. These actions or words are sustained despite being expressly unwanted. Bullying involves a victim or victims and one or more bullies, and may often involve a group of bystanders or witnesses who passively participate. Harassment involves behaviour that an individual finds humiliating, offensive or intimidating.

Bullying and harassment can be overt or covert and may be perpetrated via a variety of digital media, in ways such as:

- gestures and insults
- verbal, written or visual abuse
- unwelcome and uninvited comment, attention, contact or behaviour
- third party involvement
- threat of physical injury or sexual assault
- intimidation, oppression, extortion, exclusion and vilification
- direct propositioning or subtle pressures for sexual favours
- leering or indecent exposure

Principles

MacKillop College aims to:

- promote the message throughout the school community that bullying and harassment in any form are unacceptable
- utilise the most appropriate intervention and prevention strategies to address bullying and harassment
- provide wellbeing structures to prevent bullying and harassment

Objectives

MacKillop College is committed to:

- enabling staff and students to feel safe
- educating the MacKillop community to understand the inappropriateness and impact of cyber bullying and harassment and how to respond to it
- supporting the victim
- changing the behaviour of the perpetrator
- exercising professional judgement and discretion in dealing with issues that arise outside of school in relation to cyber bullying and harassment

Implementation

Principal Commitment

The Principal is responsible for ensuring that:

- the objectives of this policy are integrated into practice
- wellbeing programs and initiatives educate about bullying and harassment
- any situations in which staff are involved in bullying and harassment are dealt with immediately with sensitivity and care

Staff commitment:

Staff are responsible for:

- being alert to the potential of bullying or harassment in the College
- developing and implementing strategies to eliminate bullying and harassment
- offering support to victims
- reducing the risk of cyber bullying and harassment through respect for student privacy
- taking steps to solve the problem by enacting College procedures involving the appropriate staff

Policy last reviewed   September 2012

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Rory Kennedy
(Principal)