



West Moreton Anglican College

Policy & Procedure: 2.3

Anti Bullying, Anti Discrimination & Anti Racism Policy

This policy defines bullying, harassment, discrimination and racism, and outlines the College's opposition to such behaviour. It gives a general guideline of the College's response to and prevention of such behaviour.

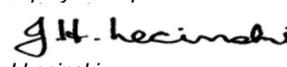
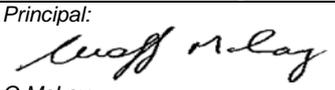
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Parent Policy

2.0	Pastoral Care Strategic Policy
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Referenced Policies and Procedures

1991	Anti Discrimination Act
1986	Australian Human Rights Commission Act
1975	The Racial Discrimination Act

1.0 Introduction

This policy identifies forms and examples of bullying, harassment, discrimination and racism. It provides a general guideline to the College's response to and prevention of such behaviour, whether psychological, verbal or physical. The College has a zero tolerance to discrimination, racism, bullying or harassment of any kind, and toward unfair treatment, which can also be in the form of silence or exclusion. It is the expectation of the College that staff, students, visitors, volunteers, parents and carers are to behave in a way that is ethical, honest, decent, proper and fair, at all times. It is College policy that staff, students and the College community are aware of the individual right to be treated with equity and fairness, and without discrimination. The College expects staff and students to model and promote ethical attitudes, languages and practices. This policy outlines steps for reporting incidents and refers to the 'Working to Prevent Bullying' brochure, which has more information on the College's anti-bullying procedures.

2.0 Anti Bullying Policy Statement and Examples

The College is opposed to all forms of bullying and is determined to provide each child with a safe, happy and secure environment where each student can take advantage of all the educational opportunities offered. Any form of bullying goes against the 'Respect and Responsibility' program for student behaviour management in the College. This program has, as its name suggests, a key foundation of respect and recognises that every individual has the right to feel safe.

The College recognises bullying as being violence, physical or psychological, conducted by an individual or a group and directed against an individual who is not able to defend themselves in the actual situation.

There are a number of different forms of bullying:

- Physical
- Verbal
- Gesture
- Extortion
- Exclusion
- Cyberbullying

Examples of bullying include:

- Persistent name calling or teasing
- Intimidation
- Punching, pushing or jostling
- Acts of extortion
- Spreading malicious gossip
- Damaging or stealing an individual's property or work
- Acts of physical or verbal assault
- Coercing a person to do something that they do not wish to do
- All forms of deliberate racism and sexism

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- Deliberate isolation of an individual
- Cyberbullying (through information and communication technologies such as mobile phones, text messages, e-mails, phone calls, internet chat rooms, MySpace and Facebook).

In all instances of bullying, students are encouraged to:-

- not feel guilty
- seek help from an adult
- be specific about the bullying behaviour

The College Community aims to create an environment of understanding and co-operation in which the victim of bullying will feel empowered to seek help and by collaboration with staff and others, confront the influence of the bully. Issues of concern, raised by staff or students will be monitored, investigated and an agreed course of action made known and recorded. Victims and the perpetrators will be offered appropriate advice and counselling.

Parents who observe a radical change in their child's behaviour should talk to their child and their Classroom Teacher (Junior School), House Co-ordinator, Deputy or Head of School or Head of School, a College Counsellor or the Deputy Principal, because such changes may be symptomatic of bullying. These changes may include a lack of confidence, withdrawal from school activities, refusing to go to school and temper flare ups. Other changes may include demands for extra money, forgetfulness, distractibility, loss of appetite, sleeplessness, wanting to change the route to school and avoidance of specific lessons.

The issue of bullying is discussed in the College's Religion and Values Education (RAVE) and Life Skills programs in Years 7, 8, and 9 and through classes and assemblies in the Junior School, as well as at assemblies and other forums in the Middle and Senior School. The Junior School has also implemented programs including 'High Five', 'Stop, Think, Do' and 'Bullying: No Way' designed to specifically teach students how to identify bullying and strategies to support students in dealing with such issues.

3.0 Student Responsibilities and Reporting of Bullying

If a student feels they are being bullied they are encouraged to talk to their parents, a teacher, their House Tutor, House Co-ordinator, a Head of School or Deputy Head of School, the Deputy Principal or the Principal.

A conscious decision must be made to be involved in any incidences of bullying, students should always try to take some form of preventative action if present when a bullying incident occurs. Students who witness bullying should report the incident to a member of staff.

Students may utilise a variety of mechanisms to report bullying which include talking to their teacher, emailing a specific person or by emailing the saynotobullying@wmac.com.au address. The Deputy Head of Middle School

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receives these emails and forwards any Junior or Senior Student reports of bullying to the relevant Head or Deputy Head of School.

4.0 Bullying Intervention

Once a staff member is made aware of an allegation of bullying, the victim and the alleged bully will be interviewed along with any witnesses to the alleged bullying.

If this is a first offence (and a minor infringement) then a no blame interview will be set up between the bully and the victim (as long as the victim feels comfortable for this to occur). During this interview the alleged bully at the discretion of the Head of School may be asked to sign an anti-bullying contract in which they acknowledge their actions and indicate that all bullying will cease.

If the bullying incident is a second or subsequent offence or a first offence of a more serious nature, consequences including detention or suspension may be put in place. A consequence will be implemented through the 'Respect and Responsibility' program resulting in the review of the student's behaviour level. In the interest of restorative justice, an apology letter will be written to the victim of the bullying.

Both the victim and the bully will be offered counselling at the College.

5.0 Staff Responsibilities Regarding Bullying

Students will often need reminding of the expectations regarding bullying. It is the responsibility of staff at the College to model appropriate behaviour at all times.

The Head of Department RAVE and the Heads of Junior and Middle Schools will need to regularly check that students are receiving appropriate lessons on anti-bullying in their RAVE and Life Skills classes. The Heads of Middle and Senior Schools should ensure that appropriate forums are held to address the issue. For example, this could be either through assemblies or through presentations by companies. The Head of Junior School is to ensure the various programs previously listed progress as planned.

The bullying survey should be conducted on an annual basis, early in the second semester.

6.0 Working to Prevent Bullying

All College staff and students are expected to adhere to this policy. These protocols will be distributed to all teachers and information pertaining to students will be disseminated at regular appropriate intervals. For more information on the College's anti-bullying procedures please refer to the 'Working to Prevent Bullying' brochure.

7.0 Anti Discrimination Definition

Discrimination is treatment or consideration of, or making a distinction in favour of or against, a person or thing based on the group, class or category to which that person or thing belongs, rather than on individual merit.

Subject to the specific exemptions detailed in state and federal anti-discrimination laws, discrimination on the following grounds is against the law:

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- sex (gender)
- relationship status (including same sex relationships)
- pregnancy
- parental status
- breastfeeding
- family responsibilities
- age
- race
- physical impairment
- religion
- political belief or activity
- trade union activity
- lawful sexual activity (to mean a lawfully employed sex worker)
- gender identity
- sexuality
- association with, or in relation to, a person identified based on any of the above attributes

8.0 Anti Discrimination Policy Statement

The College is an equal opportunity organisation, which is committed to providing an environment that is safe for its staff and students.

It is College policy to treat all staff and students on their merits, in an environment free of discrimination and harassment. The College does not tolerate any form of discrimination.

If a student or staff member feels that they have been discriminated against they should contact one of the following designated anti-discrimination officers in the College who have been nominated to give advice and/or investigate complaints:

- Head of Schools (for students)
- Deputy Principal (for staff)

Staff and students may be asked to put their complaint in writing. The Head of School or Deputy Principal will carefully investigate the complaint and will report back to the relevant student/parent or staff member, within 14 days, the result of his or her investigation.

False and/or malicious complaints may lead to legal action being taken against the complainant.

With regard to staff, disciplinary action may be taken against anyone who discriminates against others and may involve a formal warning, counselling, demotion or dismissal, depending on the circumstances.

With regard to students, disciplinary action as per the College's behaviour management or morals policy may be taken against a student who discriminates against another person.

9.0 Employment

9.1 *Job descriptions*

The College keeps a handbook that clearly states the duties for all categories of employees in the College. This includes the position responsibilities and to whom the person is responsible.

9.2 *Selection Criteria for Appointment and Promotion*

The qualities sought in an employee for a specific position are reflected in all job descriptions and refer to (at least) qualifications, skills, abilities, knowledge and experience. Once an employee is engaged then the same criteria apply in relation to promotion.

9.3 *Interviews*

The position selection criteria form the basis upon which questions are asked during interviews.

9.4 *Relevant exemptions*

In relation to employment, legislation provides an exemption in the following areas:

- where there is a genuine occupational qualification required;
- in educational institutions with a religious purpose;
- where job capacity is restricted by impairment and special terms are imposed;
- where special services or facilities are required by people with disabilities that would impose unjustifiable hardship on the school; or
- where special circumstances or impairment would cause unjustifiable hardship.

Some exemptions are absolute, some are not.

10.0 Enrolment

10.1 *Prospective Students*

West Moreton Anglican College does not discriminate in:

- failing to accept a person's application for admission as a student;
- the way in which a person's application is processed;
- the arrangements made for, or the criteria used in, deciding who should be offered admission as a student; or
- the terms on which a person is admitted as a student.

10.2 *Current Students*

The College does not discriminate:

- in any variation of the terms of a student's enrolment;

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- by denying or limiting access to any benefit arising from the enrolment that is supplied by the College; or
- by treating a student unfavourably in any way, in connection with the student's training or instruction.

10.3 Relevant Exemptions

Legislation provides an exemption in the following areas:

- in relation to sex or religion if a school operates wholly or mainly for students of a particular sex or religion;
- where selection criteria for an educational program are based on a minimum qualifying age;
- in relation to impairment where people with disabilities require special services or facilities that would impose unjustifiable hardship on the College.

Some exemptions are absolute, some are not.

10.4 Students with Disabilities

When there are available places and a student with a disability seeks admission, particular care is taken to ensure that the application is properly considered.

In considering the application the following procedures are followed:

1. The application is discussed with the parents or care-givers and the student (depending on the age of the student).
2. Detailed notes are kept of this meeting and of all subsequent conversations and meetings.
3. The Principal or Registrar speaking with the parents or caregivers will advise them in an open, honest and straightforward manner of the services and facilities available within the College and an inspection of the College's facilities will be offered at the earliest opportunity.
4. The parent's or care-givers views on the additional services and facilities that the student needs will be obtained with verification of this information sought where necessary.
5. The student seeking enrolment will be observed in his or her present setting and staff in attendance will be consulted to ascertain the assistance the student is currently receiving. Advice will be sought about the services and facilities that may be required in the future.
6. The learning support teacher, or a child psychologist if appropriate, will be involved at an early stage of the process. Formal assessment of the student may be conducted.
7. Any additional services and facilities that may be required will be quantified and costed.
8. It may be necessary to engage an occupational therapist, building consultant or architect to obtain detailed costing of modifications that may be needed.

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9. It may be appropriate to obtain reports from any medical practitioners or other professionals involved in treating or assisting the student.
10. Enquiries will be made to determine if additional funding might be available from the Commonwealth or State Governments. This additional funding may be in the nature of recurrent or capital funding.

If the student requires additional services and facilities because of the disability and the provision of these services and facilities by the College would cause unjustifiable hardship, the enrolment may be refused by the Principal on that basis. Before this step is taken, the family seeking enrolment will be given advice about the College's preliminary view and offered the opportunity to comment.

11.0 College Responsibilities Regarding Anti Discrimination

- Treat seriously and investigate promptly any reports of discrimination;
- Investigate all reports impartially and, as far as is possible, confidentially;
- Through the Deputy Principal, ensure training is provided for all employees and volunteers in both their rights and obligations, and the College policies and procedures relevant to discrimination issues;
- Ensure that students are aware of their right to equitable treatment;
- Ensure that people who make complaints or witness an instance of discrimination are not victimised in any way;
- Guarantee that no employee will be disadvantaged in their employment conditions or opportunities as a result of lodging a complaint.

12.0 What is Racial Discrimination?

Racial discrimination is when someone is treated less fairly than someone else in a similar situation because of their race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin.

Racial discrimination can also occur when a policy or rule appears to treat everyone in the same way, but actually has an unfair effect on more people of a particular race, colour, decent or national or ethnic origin than others.

The Racial Discrimination Act 1975 aims to ensure that people of all backgrounds are treated equally and have the same opportunities. Other relevant legislation includes human rights, equal opportunity and anti-discrimination regulations.

13.0 What is Racial Hatred?

Unlawful, racially offensive behaviour can include public acts based on the race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin of a person or group of people ,which are likely to offend, insult, humiliate or intimidate.

14.0 Anti Racism Policy Statement

West Moreton Anglican College:

- rejects racism in all its forms, direct and indirect, overt and covert;

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- values, affirms and responds to the cultural and language diversity in Australian society via our curriculum, teaching and organisational practices.

All College staff and students are expected to adhere to this policy. These protocols will be distributed to all teachers and information pertaining to students will be disseminated at regular appropriate intervals.

15.0 Anti Racism Staff Expectations

- model and promote anti-racist attitudes, language and practices;
- assist in implementing programs that address the College's anti-racism policy
- inform the College community of the policy, anti-racism education programs and grievance procedures; and
- monitor and assist in reviewing the College's planning, practices and procedures for incorporation of strategies to further implement this policy.

16.0 Anti Racism Student Expectations

- model and promote anti-racist attitudes, language and practices;
- assist in implementing programs that address the College's anti-racism policy;
- assist in reviewing the College's planning, practices and procedures for incorporation of strategies to further implement this policy.

17.0 Respect and Responsibility

An indiscretion in this area would contravene the College's 'Respect and Responsibility' program. This approach to behaviour management is based upon the right of the individual to be treated with respect. Should a student be found to be demonstrating racial discrimination then consequences as per the 'Respect and Responsibility' program will apply, appropriate to the relevant sub-school, age of the student and the specific incident as it is presented. Consequences could involve the student being issued with a detention and being required to write an apology to the victim.

18.0 What May or May Not Constitute Unlawful Offensive Behaviour

The following information from the Australian Human Rights Commission is worth noting. Further details can be found at the commission's website www.hreoc.gov.au

Unlawful offensive behaviour that is based on racial hatred might include:

- writing racist graffiti in a public place
- making racist speeches at a public rally
- placing racist posters or stickers in a public place
- making a racially abusive comment in a public place eg shops, workplaces, parks, public transport

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- offensive racist comments in a newspaper or other publication.

If you feel that you been insulted or abused because of your race, it is important to check the following before making a complaint:

Did it happen publicly?

The act must have occurred within sight and hearing of other people, (although other people do not have to be present) or in a place to which the general public is invited or has access. If the act happened in a private telephone conversation or in a private place such as someone's home, it is not unlawful.

How serious was it?

The act must have, when considering all the circumstances, caused a person or a group of people to feel offended, insulted, humiliated or intimidated. If the act was relatively trivial, it is probably not unlawful. Is it an acceptable type of free speech and therefore legal?

What racial hatred is not

The racial hatred provisions state that the following things are not unlawful if "done reasonably and in good faith":

- an artistic work or performance – for example, a play in which racist attitudes and expressed by a character.
- an academic publication, discussion or debate – for example, discussing and debating public policy such as immigration, multiculturalism, or special measures for particular groups.
- a fair and accurate report on a matter of public interest – for example, a fair report in the media of an act of racial incitement or racially offensive conduct.
- a fair comment if the comment is an expression of a person's genuine belief.

19.0 Taking Action against Racial Hatred

If you have been the target of racially offensive behaviour there are a number of things you can do about it:

- talk directly to the person or organisation responsible for the behaviour;
- seek the assistance of an organisation which represents your racial, ethnic or national group e.g. a migrant resource centre or an Aboriginal legal centre;
- for complaints about media stories or broadcasts, complain to the Australian Broadcasting Authority; the Advertising Standards Council for advertisements; or the Press Council for newspaper stories. You can also complain to an editor or manager within the media organisation.

20.0 Other Relevant Documents

- Working to Prevent Bullying – A Guide for Families & Students, WestMAC brochure