BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY

Including CYBER BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

PURPOSE:
That the students of Roma Mitchell Secondary College have a safe, supportive and respectful teaching and learning environment that promotes student wellbeing.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES:
- Affirm the rights of all members of the school community to feel safe and be safe at school
- Acknowledge that being safe and supported at school is essential for student wellbeing and effective learning
- Accept responsibility for developing and sustaining safe and supportive learning and teaching communities that also fulfill the school’s child protection responsibilities
- Encourage the active participation of all school community members in developing and maintaining a safe school community where diversity is valued
- Actively support young people to develop understanding and skills to keep themselves and others safe
- Commit to developing a safe school community through a whole-school and evidence-based approach

DEFINITION OF BULLYING:
Bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons. Cyber-bullying refers to bullying through information and communication technologies such as the internet and mobile phones.

Conflict or fights between equals and single incidents are not defined as bullying.

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved including bystanders.

DEFINITION OF HARASSMENT:
Harassment is behaviour that targets an individual or group due to their identity, race culture or ethnic origin; religion; physical characteristics; gender; sexual orientation; marital, parenting or economic status; age ability or disability that offends, humiliates, intimidates or creates a hostile environment.

Harassment may be an ongoing pattern of behaviour, or it may be a single act.

Violence is the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against another person(s) that results in psychological harm, injury or in some cases death.

Violence may involve provoked or unprovoked acts and can be a single incident, a random act or can occur over time. This may constitute an assault, which is a police matter.

BULLYING AND HARASSMENT:
- May involve hitting, kicking, pinching (physical); name-calling, teasing, threats (verbal); notes, graffiti, text messages, sending filmed or photographed images, comments on social networking sites (visual/written); stand-over tactics, gestures (psychological); rumours, putdowns (social exclusion); physical, verbal or nonverbal sexual conduct (sexual).
- May be done directly (e.g. face to face) or indirectly (e.g. via the internet or mobile phones)
- Involves the misuse of power and may be motivated by jealousy, distrust, fear, misunderstanding or lack of knowledge
- Has an element of threat
- Can continue over time
- Is often hidden from adults
- Will be sustained if adults or peers do not take action.

Note: Under recent amendments to the South Australian Equal Opportunity Act 1984 it is unlawful for a student 16 years of age and over to sexually harass another student or staff member.

Under regulations 40 and 41 of the Education Regulations 1997, principals can suspend or exclude a student who acts in a manner that threatens the safety or wellbeing of a student or member of staff, or
another person associated with school. These regulations do not preclude an event that occurs outside of school hours or off site. Principals can therefore use these procedures with a student enrolled at their school if the principal believes, on reasonable grounds, that the student has acted in such a manner, even if this behaviour occurred outside of school hours or off site.

Police officers also have the power to confiscate a mobile phone where any image held on the phone is possible evidence of a crime. The phone may be kept by SAPOL until the action comes before a court. Where DECD staff reasonably suspects that a student has used a mobile phone to record a crime, the phone should be confiscated and handed to SAPOL without the staff member opening the video message to view it. Opening the video message may compromise evidence.

Responding to bullying and harassment:
- The student may deal with the bullying or harassment personally without reporting it.
- The student may seek confidential advice from a support person (teacher/counsellor, parent, or friend).
- The student may report the incident(s) of bullying / harassment.
- Refer to Grievance Procedures and Bullying and Harassment Policy | Guidelines for Students: What to do when you are being bullied or harassed.

Process Guidelines for reported bullying and harassment:

1st Reported Incident
- Formal warning; Counselling; Written notification to parent / carer

2nd Reported Incident
- Withdrawal; Detention; Mediation; Suspension

3rd Reported Incident
- Suspension; Exclusion

NB. Staff will endeavour to handle all reported incidents of bullying and harassment discretely.

Ratified: TBA
Review date: TBA
BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY

Guidelines for Students: What to do when you are being bullied or harassed

STUDENT ACTIONS:

1. Tell the person who is offending to stop

2. If the person does not stop; move away

3. If the bullying / harassment continues tell the nearest member of staff

STAFF ACTIONS:

1st Reported Incident

Formal warning; Counselling; Written notification to parent / carer

2nd Reported Incident

Withdrawal; Detention; Mediation; Suspension

3rd Reported Incident

Suspension; Exclusion

NB. Staff will endeavour to handle all reported incidents of bullying and harassment discretely.