POLICY  MANAGING BULLYING

VALUES:  Justice, Love, Compassion, Reconciliation, Truth, Courage, Dignity, Respect

REFLECTION MATERIAL:
Bullying:  An Effective Anti-bullying Program: Bully Proof- practical strategies for dealing with bullying in schools. (Marg Quon)
Behaviour Management Policy.

RATIONALE:
Our commitment to our students is for them to grow up to be good citizens, purposeful and wise who will contribute positively to our world. In order to achieve this we need to be able to ensure that their learning environment is safe, supported, fair and just with expectations appropriate for children to thrive and consistent with the Mission of the school, its core values and the Behaviour Management Policy. Bullying impacts negatively on children, in some cases having lifelong consequences. This policy is a partner to the School Behaviour Management Plan and is part of the overall Behaviour Management Policy.

Definition: In this school bullying is defined as unjustified behaviour that has the intent to intimidate, hurt, manipulate, exclude or react aggressively towards another a person. It is usually persistent, repeated behaviour from which the bully gains enjoyment and the victim becomes distressed. Bullying can be physical, social, verbal or psychological. It can also be in the form of cyber bullying which involves the use of internet devices or phone and message technologies.

Disagreements between people occur frequently and we must be clear about not branding every negative interaction as bullying.

POLICY :
Our Lady of Mount Carmel School is strongly committed to the values of dignity and respect, giving all members of the school community the right to feel safe at school. Therefore bullying will not be tolerated.

CONSEQUENCES:

1. Bullying will be acknowledged and addressed openly.
2. A positive school climate to promote the right to feel safe will be promoted through the School Charter and Class charters and will be the responsibility of all school community members.
3. Students, teachers and families will be aware of ways to identify and report bullying. (Appendix 1)
4. Procedures for handling incidents of bullying will be clearly set out in handbooks and handled in a climate of reconciliation. (Appendix 2)
5. Awareness of anti-bullying programs, including use of information technologies, will be an integral part of personal development programs in all year levels.
6. Parents and teachers will be aware of the signs to look for that a child is being bullied. (See Appendix 3)
7. Parents and teachers will be aware of the signs to look for that a child is at risk of becoming a bully. (See Appendix 4)
8. Inappropriate behaviour will be handled in line with the stated consequences of the Behaviour Management Plan.
9. Where appropriate and in agreement with parents or carers, counselling will be available to students and parents.

APPENDIX 1.
Ways to identify and report bullying
- Tell a friend what is happening
- Tell your parents what is happening
- Tell a teacher at school what is happening
- Tell someone you trust
- Talk to a student leader whom you know, like or trust such as your buddy

APPENDIX 2.
So that incidents of bullying can be handled within a framework of mutual respect and genuine reconciliation, the following procedures will be followed:

Procedures for handling reported incidents of bullying
- Reassure reporting person/s of the procedure to be undertaken
- Listen openly to all sides of the story and clarify the facts and feelings involved
- Speak to all participants separately to explain the process and what each person wants from it
- Bring the two parties together to confirm facts and feelings in the company of mutually agreed group of peers (2-4 students) who act as supporters and observers
- Using the technique
  - When you do………..
  - I feel ................
  - I would prefer you to .............
- Decide mutually acceptable behaviours for the future
- Make appropriate apologies
- Encourage mutual respect and confidentiality
- Explain that the first occasion in which a student is considered to be bullying another will be informal. However, serious incidents of bullying will include reporting to parents.
- Any subsequent reports will include reporting to parents of the bully
- Appropriate communication and documentation will be maintained when this policy is invoked.

APPENDIX 3
Signs that your child might be being bullied
- Bruises, scratches or cuts that are not easily explained by your child
- Torn or damaged clothing
- Damaged or missing belongings
• Headaches, stomach aches and other pains that are not easily explained or understood
• Unusual outbursts of temper
• Unexplained tears, sadness or depression.
• School work falling off in quality
• Wanting to change routines such as travel to school
• Loss of confidence
• Doesn’t want to go to school

What to do
• Talk to your child
• Let them know you care
• Help them to feel good about themselves
• Talk to your child’s teacher/school
• Report serious incidents of bullying to a member of the school leadership team

APPENDIX 4
Signs that your child might be bullying someone.

• Has difficulty seeing another person’s point of view
• Likes to win at all costs
• Is bullied by siblings or family members
• If fighting, arguing and teasing are acceptable at home
• They may have poor role modelling
• They may wish to feel powerful and in charge
• They may think they are better than others
• Has difficulty keeping or making friends
• “looks for trouble”
• Has low self esteem