

“Serve Him in Others”

## ST JOSEPH’S COLLEGE

### **SEXUAL HARRASSMENT POLICY**

#### **Policy Statement:**

Each community member should feel safe within the College environment. Each community member should be respected regardless of gender.

#### **Definition:**

Sexual Harassment is a form of abuse. It is any form of unwelcome sexual gesture. This form of abuse encompasses a wide range of physical and verbal behaviours which erode the dignity of an individual by degrading the sexuality of the individual. Sexual harassment may be implicated (eg. stares, gestures) or explicit (eg. touching, fondling, sexual proposition) in nature. It may take the form of an isolated incident or a series of incidents. It is unlawful under the Queensland Anti-Discrimination Act 1991 to sexually harass another person in any area of activity, including employment, education and the provision of services.

#### **Rationale:**

Sexual harassment undermines the rights of the individual, and diminishes the very values our mission statement seeks to promote. A sexual harassment policy should provide a prevention mechanism and also act as a resolution mechanism.

#### **Gospel Values:**

Dignity, respect, community, peace, justice, dialogue, conflict resolution/forgiveness.

#### **Consequences:**

- ❖ Each person can grow towards his/her fullest human potential and use his/her gifts to contribute to the school and the wider community.
- ❖ All members have the ownership of prevention and elimination of sexual harassment.
- ❖ When the leadership team becomes aware of an issue of sexual harassment but no complaint has been made it has the responsibility to intervene.

#### **Consequences:** *as a result of breaching this policy*

- Consequences may include an apology, counselling, mediation/resolution, compensation, disciplinary action, misconduct proceedings or even suspension or expulsion.

#### **Procedures:**

- ❖ All members of our community should be made aware of the Sexual Harassment Policy.
- ❖ Two teachers, one male and one female, are to be elected as Sexual Harassment Referral Officers for a period of two years with the option of another two years. Their names should be displayed.

- ❖ These Officers should develop a programme to meet requirements of the Policy.
- ❖ All complaints of sexual harassment should be referred to one of the Sexual Harassment Referral Officers.
- ❖ Sexual Harassment Referral Officer/s should make the complainants aware of options and resources available to them.
- ❖ Cases of sexual abuse by an employee of the church are to be referred according to Protocol procedure.
- ❖ Each case of sexual abuse is treated in the context of the situation.

### **Guidelines:**

While it is impossible for the policy to state every situation which may arise or every possible solution, a general procedure should be followed.

- ❖ Consultation by complainant with Sexual Harassment Referral Officer.
- ❖ If it is the choice of the complainant, person-to-person mediation may follow where both parties feel comfortable though one/all of the following processes:
  - Mediation with Counsellor;
  - Mediation with Counsellor, Leadership Team;
  - Mediation with Counsellor, Leadership Team, Anti-Discrimination Legal Officer.

### **PARAGRAPH APPENDIX:**

In terms of the Queensland Legislation, sexual harassment is defined as follows:

When a person subjects another person to an unsolicited act of physical intimacy; makes an unsolicited demand or request (whether directly or by implication) for sexual favours from the other person; or makes a remark with sexual connotations relating to the other person; or engages in any other unwelcome conduct of sexual nature in relation to the other person, **and** the person engaging in the conduct does so with the intention of offending, humiliating or intimidating the other person; **or** in circumstances where a reasonable person would have anticipated a possibility that the other person would be offended, humiliated or intimidated by the conduct.

(Sections 118 and 119 Anti-Discrimination Act 1991)

November 2012