

Anti-Racism Policy for Belconnen High School

Belconnen High School will work in partnership with parents and the community to allow students to live in, and contribute to, a rapidly changing society and to act as responsible, independent children, young people and self-sufficient adults who care about others and their environment.

Racism is destructive. It devalues people by failing to recognize their identity. It destroys community unity and creates divisions in society. It is the opposite of the democratic principle of equality and the right of all people to be treated fairly.

Racism is a way of thinking that gives expression to myths about other racial and ethnic groups, that devalues those groups and makes them feel inferior. It is continued by deeply rooted historical, social, cultural and power inequalities in society. (Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, 1998).

Racism has its roots in the belief that some people are superior because they belong to a particular race, ethnic or national group. The concept of race is a social structure, not a scientific one.

Racism is the expression of negative attitudes towards differences in customs, language, accent, values, religion, physical appearance and ways of living and viewing the world.

The aim of the Anti-Racism Policy of Belconnen High School is to promote an environment free of Racism. Complaints are dealt with quickly, thoroughly and confidentially. Belconnen High School follows the ACT Mandatory Procedures when dealing with incidents of racism.

We inform staff, students and parents/carers at the beginning of each school year of the Safe and Supportive School Contact Officer (SASSCO). All incidents involving Racial Harassment are referred immediately to a Safe and Supportive School Contact Officer (SASSCO).

We educate our students about racial harassment and its effect on those to whom it is directed:

At BHS, teaching about Racism includes:

- Defining and recognising Racism
- Understanding the use of power over others
- Discussing the social construct of race
- Understanding the role of violence
- Understanding appropriate/acceptable behaviours
- Understanding Legislation, policy and procedures

When a complaint is made, student/s are informed of their rights:

- Students are informed of the complaint
- Students are able to respond to the complaint
- Students are treated fairly, confidentially and impartially by an SASSCO

The staff of Belconnen High model appropriate behaviour and are trained about Racism:

- Staff are trained in recognition and identification of Racism
- Staff are aware of policy and legislation

All reports of Racism must be referred immediately to a Safe and Supportive School Contact Officer (SASSCO).