

# Anti-Sexual Harassment 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.

Sexual harassment is unacceptable because it erodes students' rights, lowers their morale and self-esteem, is potentially psychologically damaging and interferes with the effectiveness of the learning environment.

Sexual harassment has occurred if a person makes an unwelcome sexual advance or an unwelcome request for sexual favours to another person. It also has occurred if a person engages in any conduct of a sexual nature which leads to someone feeling offended, humiliated or intimidated.

Sexual harassment is not about sexual attention, but about one person having power over another. A person (or group) engages in sexual harassment of another to establish or maintain a position of power over the other.

The term "sexual harassment" may involve three elements. These are harassment due to gender, sexual harassment and sexual assault.

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

We inform staff, students and parents/carers at the beginning of each school year of the Safe and Supportive School Contact Officer (SASSCO). We educate our students about sexual harassment and its effect on those to whom it is directed.

## **Teaching about Sexual Harassment at BHS includes:**

- Defining and recognizing sexual harassment
- Understanding that some people harass others to have power over them
- Discussion of sexual harassment of males/females
- Discussion of sexual harassment of others because of their sexuality
- Understanding the role of violence
- Understanding appropriate/acceptable behaviours
- Understanding Legislation, policy and procedures

## **When a complaint is made those named in the complaint are informed of their rights:**

- They are informed of the complaint
- They are able to respond to the complaint
- They are treated fairly and confidentially and impartially by the SASSCO.

## **Belconnen High School staff model appropriate behaviour. All staff are trained about sexual harassment:**

- Recognition and identification of sexual harassment
- Knowledge of Policy and legislation
- Understanding the issues related to gender equity

**All reports of Sexual Harassment must be referred immediately to the Safe and Supportive Schools Contact Officer.**