

Bold Park Community School Mutual Respect Policy



This Mutual Respect Policy applies to Bold Park Community School [BPCS].

This statement outlines the school's policy on how it applies Mutual Respect principles to create a safe learning environment concerned with the well being, belonging and dignity of all members.

BPCS may, from time to time, review and update this Mutual Respect Policy to take into account new laws and technology, changes to schools operations and practices and to make sure it remains appropriate to the changing school environment.

OVERVIEW

The BPCS Mutual Respect Policy is at the heart of Bold Park Community School and is based on the consideration of mutual respect being a fundamental principle of democracy. Mutual respect refers to holding a proper regard for the dignity of each person where each member has the opportunity to both contribute to and benefit from the common good, through a diversity of viewpoints.

POLICY

BPCS is committed to providing a safe and supportive environment where all members of the community are valued and respected. All community members are to interact with each other in a respectful manner that promotes the ethos of the school.¹

The implementation of this policy enables BPCS to make clear statements about its expectations relating to acceptable behaviour of all member of its community.

OBJECTIVES

- BPCS will provide a safe and welcoming environment.
- BPCS staff will have the necessary skills and confidence to educate students in mutual respect.
- BPCS staff and students will have the support to manage disputes, differences of opinion, and diverse perspectives respectfully, assertively and equitably for all parties involved.
- BPCS makes clear statements to its community that it will not tolerate, nor support in any way, certain behaviours such as discrimination, harassment or bullying .(See associated policies)

¹ Refer to Bold Park Community School Philosophy Document

MUTUAL RESPECT IMPLEMENTATION AT BPCS



SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

BPCS has a safe, welcoming environment that promotes:

- mutual respect for all members of the school community.
- a sense of belonging and empowerment of all members of the school community.
- collaboration and negotiation.

LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

Learning opportunities within the school provide student with:

- an understanding of the nature of mutual respect.
- development of interpersonal, communication and problem solving skills, such as negotiation, mediation, conflict resolution and assertiveness.
- developing self-confidence and enhanced self-esteem.
- acquiring the ability to understand, respect and care for others.
- acquiring the ability to consider multiple view points.
- an understanding of personal safety issues.
- an understanding of the nature of discrimination, harassment and bullying behaviours.

HOW DOES THIS APPLY TO STAFF AND PARENTS?

BPCS staff and parents are to interact with all members of the community in a respectful manner where tolerance and understanding are the focus of any interaction.

HOW DOES THIS APPLY TO STUDENTS?

This policy is used to assist the students to develop appropriate behaviours and autonomy in their interpersonal and social relationships. It is designed to provide them with strategies to use when disagreements arise and to establish boundaries and expectations around how others treat them. It is envisaged that this learning is lifelong.

BPCS supports students to deal directly with issues that arise or if a student feels uncomfortable within the school environment, in a mutually respectful manner through the following process:

1. Talk directly to the other student/s involved and say, “I don’t like it when you do that, please stop”, or similar
2. If the other student/s persists then they are asked to inform a staff member of the behaviour.
3. The staff member will then assist the student/s to deal with the issue utilising their judgment on the required level of adult intervention (See Behaviour Management and Guidance Policy, Bullying and Harassment Policy).

Staff explicitly scaffold the language, negotiation, and perspective taking skills required to reach peaceable resolutions in an age appropriate manner at both an individual and class level. By supporting students in addressing situations of dispute, disagreement or potential harm:

1. Students develop skills to manage their own space and what happens to them instead of needing to seek authority from an adult. This self-management is essential to the development of a positive self-esteem.
2. The other student/s may not be aware that their behaviour is causing distress and will usually stop the behaviour immediately if informed and the relationship/s then continues uninterrupted and a situation does not escalate.
3. By facilitating self-management in the playground, a playground culture develops that is fair and self-regulating. Respectful behaviour becomes the most frequently occurring behaviour even when an adult/staff member is temporarily not to hand.

HOW DOES THIS APPLY TO FAMILIES?



This approach in developing appropriate behaviour and managing social interactions is aimed at providing students with lifelong skills in this area of interpersonal relationships. This is only achieved by giving the students the strategies and opportunities to influence their environment. We hope that parents will understand that while the students are still learning, inappropriate behaviour, disagreements and disputes will occur from time to time. Families and the school need to remind the students of the importance of mutual respect and appropriate behaviour frequently.

Parents should seek advice from teaching staff in how to deal with incidents that have arisen during school hours, which their child/ren have discussed with them at home. Parents or guardians are encouraged not to deal directly with the other student/s or their parents without the support of teaching staff. The resolution of any dispute requires understanding of what occurred prior, during and after the dispute, the perspective of the other party/ies involved or witnessing.

HOW DOES THIS APPLY TO ADULTS DEALING WITH EACH OTHER AT BPCS?

While adults bring a multitude of learned behaviours from various environments that may not necessarily fit into the BPCS Mutual Respect Policy, it is expected that all adults will model the behaviour of mutual respect.

While BPCS acknowledges these challenges, it still expects that all adults will interact with each other in an open, mutually respectful manner. As such, if an adult has an issue or concern with the school or another adult, we ask that in the first instance, they approach the appropriate person with the concern and communicate it respectfully.

If a BPCS member feels that they have not resolved an issue and would like to pursue this further, they should refer to the BPCS Disputes & Complaints Policy and seek the appropriate channel of communication.

As with the students, unless a problem is brought to a person directly, sometimes the party involved may not even realise a problem exists.

All parents and/or guardians of children enrolled at BPCS are to interact with all staff and other families in a mutually respectful manner, in keeping with the spirit of this policy.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

Staff who wish to discuss their situation or lodge a dispute or complaint are encouraged to do so. The situation may be discussed with:

- appropriate Team Leader; or
- the Principal of School.

Formal complaints regarding workplace harassment can be lodged with the Principal and will be treated in strict confidence.

POLICIES RELATING TO MUTUAL RESPECT

- Acceptable Use of I.T.
- Anti-Bias Policy
- Behaviour Guidance
- Bullying and Harassment
- Child Protection
- Discrimination – Disability, Racial and Sexual
- Disputes & Complaints
- Duty of Care
- HR
- Occupational Safety and Health

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

- Criminal Code
- Discrimination Act 1991
- Equal Opportunity Act 1984
(*under sexual discrimination or harassment*)
- Human Rights Act 2004
- Industrial Relations Act 1979
- Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984
- Occupational Safety and Health Regulations 1996
- Racial Discrimination Act 1975
- School Education Act 1999
- School Education Regulations 2000
- Sex Discrimination Act 1984
- Workplace Agreements Act 1993
- Workers' Compensation and Rehabilitation Act 1981



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