PASTORAL CARE OF STUDENTS

PERSONAL SPACE POLICY

RATIONALE

In order to uphold the dignity, well-being and safety of students and staff at St Aloysius Catholic College, unnecessary contact between students is to be avoided. In accordance with the College’s policies on Restorative Practices and Pastoral Care, this policy focuses on managing risks that physical contact between students may pose and escalate into unintended harm.

PURPOSE

The Personal Space Policy aims to ensure that:

1. All students have the right to be treated with care and respect by others.
2. All students have the right to exist in a safe and secure environment, which is happy and peaceful.
3. All students have the right to be protected from contact, harassment or intimidation of a physical nature.
4. All students have the right to learn in a school, which safeguards their personal well-being, space, uniform and belongings from injury or damage.
5. All staff members, visitors and bystanders have the right to be protected from harm to their personal well-being, space and possessions that may have been caused by contact between students.
6. The College has the right to be protected from damage to furniture, equipment and property that may have been caused by contact between students.

PROCEDURES

The College will undertake a process of education of students, staff and parents to inform them of the Personal Space Policy and to define the “Hands Off” strategy that is to be implemented in line with the Policy. The “Hands Off” strategy is inclusive of:

- Physical fights or altercations
- Playful wrestling, pushing or grabbing
- Contact of a physical nature
- Extended displays of affection, such as holding hands, embracing or kissing.
Students will be involved in group sessions, workshops or assemblies that facilitate their understanding that each student has an obligation to honour and uphold the rights of their fellow students at all times and to treat them and their property with care and respect according to the Archbishop’s Charter and the ethos of the College.

In the event of unnecessary contact between students, all members of the College staff and elected student leaders have the responsibility and the authority to say “Hands Off” to the student/s involved in an incident. The Hands Off strategy involves any staff member or student leaders approaching an incident where personal space of students is at risk and to say clearly and emphatically “HANDS OFF.”

At this instruction, the student/s involved will cease contact immediately and unquestioningly, because it is the accepted procedure. No discussion or explanation is required.

Those students who do not immediately respond to the instruction must be referred, in the first instance, to the Learning Centre Coordinator and/or Campus Director without delay.

Teachers will reinforce the policy through regular class discussions about the Personal Space Policy and the Hands Off strategy.

The policy and strategy will be placed on the College website and will be made available in the Prospectus Package for new parents.

**EVALUATION**

This policy will be reviewed as part of the College’s Policy review cycle.

Implemented: April 2011