

Rivermount Education Ltd



*Realising the
Potential Within*



Strength through Unity

Education for the 21st Century

Consideration of Christian Educational Principles

January 2009

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INTRODUCTION

This booklet has been prepared to provide essential information to interested teachers who are seriously considering taking up employment with either Rivermount College at Yatala or Radiant Life College in Innisfail which are governed by Rivermount Education Limited, a public company limited by guarantee.

The information contained in this booklet will also assist teachers in developing the philosophical base for all curriculum units and extra-curriculum activities throughout the Junior, Middle and Senior Schools.

The information in this document is presented under the following headings:

- Section 1** - **Mission Statement - Objectives of Rivermount College**
- Section 2** - **Educational Aims and Objectives**
- Section 3** - **Developing an Educational Philosophy**
- Section 4** - **Curriculum Issues**
- Section 5** - **Pastoral Care and the Curriculum**
- Section 6** - **Curriculum Policy Statement**

The design and implementation of the curriculum of the two Colleges are underpinned by a Christian perspective. Teachers must continually review their delivery in each subject and ensure it reflects a Bible based positive response to the challenges of a rapidly changing society. To achieve an optimistic Christian focus for all students, this curriculum evaluation and enhancement must be undertaken by each teacher as an ongoing process.

The purpose of this document is to encourage continued discussion amongst professional teachers and is in no way intended to be either judgemental or prescriptive. In a society where the prevalent philosophy amongst young people is based on post-modernism it is proper that the alternative Biblical view is considered to bring balance to the debate.

The responsibilities of teachers at the two Colleges are both pastoral and academic. Their ministry is to educate the whole child in a positive and supportive environment. It is recognised that the faith journey of each teacher is different and therefore their spiritual understanding will enrich the communities of the two Colleges. The challenge is to provide positive and encouraging Christian leadership to the community we serve rather than follow the values and morals of contemporary society.

Colin Young

Founding Principal – Rivermount College

President/CEO – Rivermount Education Limited

SECTION 1 MISSION STATEMENT

Rivermount College and Radiant Life College are operated by Rivermount Education Limited, a public company limited by guarantee. The objects of the Company as listed in this document are taken from the Memorandum of Association of the Company.

Teaching and non-teaching staff appointed to Rivermount College and Radiant Life College undertake to subscribe to these objects at all times and to the curriculum expectations resulting from these objects.

OBJECTIVES OF RIVERMOUNT EDUCATION LTD

1. To provide a holistic and integrated approach to education and other related activities where the aim is to educate and train the whole person by integrating the intellectual, spiritual, emotional, physical and social aspects of education and training from a biblical perspective based upon the following aims and objectives:
 - (a) the development of the intellectual potential of all students by promoting in students intellectual integrity, respect for truth, openness to reality and other scholarly virtues and aiming to provide the students with a mastery of the basic subjects and skills while guiding individuals towards their own levels of achievement and understanding in the main areas of human knowledge
 - (b) the promotion within any educational institution carried on or maintained by the company of a community of faith based on a belief in God and the provision of religious worship, services and teaching in conformity with the Christian faith
 - (c) the provision of opportunities for all students to develop full and effective social and personal relationships which will enhance the development of self-confidence acceptance, personal dignity, positive attitudes and emotions, optimism, self-esteem, sensitivity, appreciation of goodness, compassion and service to others
 - (d) the provision of skills and interests for students which will promote a physical fitness and which will assist them to make optimum use of their leisure time during their school and effective later adult life
 - (e) the promotion and fostering of genuine human relationships amongst students, staff, parents and others associated with the Company.
2. To provide such educational, vocational and community development courses as may be desirable to educate, teach and inform students of all ages, race or creed without distinction to the highest standard of education including but not limited to the education of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders
3. To promote develop and assist in educational, cultural, sporting and extra-curricular activities of all kinds and to disseminate information concerning any such activities including but not limited to courses having the objective of promoting a greater awareness of Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, their history, conditions and general welfare and education and the harmonious relationship and co-existence of aboriginal and non-

aboriginal people alike and the elimination of cultural alienation, racism and negative social attitudes.

The following section outlines the educational aims and objectives that have been adopted by the College based on the Mission Statement

SECTION 2 EDUCATIONAL AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Rivermount College and Radiant Life College are non-denominational Christian schools with the Bible being the integrating factor in all areas of learning and activities, recognising that God is the giver of all truth. The skills and the attitudes of the students are developed and used for the glory of God and for service to others. This involves the development of a Christian world view that equips students to live an authentic Christian life in the context of an Australian society.

The College, therefore, aims to educate the whole person, that is to integrate the spiritual, mental, physical and social aspects of training from a Biblical perspective. The College aims to be an extension of the Christian home to assist parents to give their children a well-balanced education and upbringing.

More specifically the aims and the objectives of each College are:

1. Spiritual Development

Each College seeks to:

- (1) Provide opportunities for all students to assess the place and significance of Christianity in human life, facilitating the development of a Biblical faith by which to live.
- (2) Provide opportunities for students to develop firm convictions by helping them to understand the moral and spiritual conditions of modern society, and making them aware of the importance of Christian beliefs and values in the constructive resolution of human problems.
- (3) Provide opportunities to participate in the College worship services and other Christian churches.

2. Academic Development

Each College aims to:

- (1) Provide all students access to high quality education necessary to enable the completion of school education to Year 12 or its vocational equivalent and that provides clear and recognised pathways to employment and further education and training.
- (2) Meet the learning outcomes of educationally disadvantaged students with appropriate learning support programs.
- (3) Develop the intellectual potential of young people so that every student will achieve his or her best.
- (4) Develop academic integrity, respect for truth, openness to reality and other scholarly virtues.

- (5) Develop in students the ability to think effectively, to communicate thought, to make relevant judgements, and appraising alternative viewpoints in an open and tolerant manner and in obedience to the Bible, recognising the pursuit of excellence as integral to instruction in godliness.
- (6) Provide equal opportunities for students to achieve understanding in the main areas of human knowledge and to achieve a level of mastery commensurate with their own abilities and with the particular stage of development they have reached. In particular to develop in students:
 - (a) the skills of English literacy, including skills in listening, speaking, reading and writing
 - (b) skills of numeracy and other mathematical skills
 - (c) skills of information processing and computing
 - (d) an understanding of the role of science and technology in society, together with scientific and technological skills
 - (e) a knowledge and appreciation of Australia's historical and geographical context
 - (f) a knowledge of languages other than English
 - (g) an appreciation, understanding of and confidence to participate in, the creative arts
 - (h) an appreciation of and concern for, balanced development of the global environment
 - (i) a capacity to exercise judgement in matters of morality, ethics and social justice.

3. Physical Development

Each College aims to:

- (1) Develop the physical capabilities of each student to the optimum level.
- (2) Provide a comprehensive range of recreational and sporting activities which will develop skills and interests enabling students to make optimum use of available leisure time during their school and effective later adult life.
- (3) Develop a positive attitude to fitness, hygiene, health and maintenance of physical well-being by providing experiences that enable students to:
 - (a) choose behaviours which promote a healthy lifestyle
 - (b) make informed rational decisions as to their involvement in skilful physical activities

- (c) develop, through the rigorous demands of sport and physical training, discipline, confidence, fairness and other positive character traits necessary in the pursuit of excellence.

4. Social and Emotional Development

Each College aims to:

- (1) Develop the individuality of each student as a unique person gifted by God by providing opportunities to:
 - (a) develop in students feelings of sensitivity, appreciation of beauty and goodness, compassion and service to others
 - (b) develop in students a sense of self-discipline based on their own capabilities and worth in God's sight and on the rights and worth of other individuals and society as a whole
 - (c) create in students awareness for the need of discipline and correction in an atmosphere of love and understanding, recognising the right of a student to be respected as a person who has the responsibility to respect authority of parents school, church and state.
- (2) Develop a comprehensive pastoral care and extra-curricular program which will contribute to the personal development of each student by providing opportunities to promote meaningful social relationships which will enhance in students the development of self-confidence, optimism and self-esteem.
- (3) Assist students to achieve their full potential using their God-given talents, skills and abilities in order to:
 - (a) respond to the current and emerging economic and social needs of the nation, and to provide those skills which will allow students maximum flexibility and adaptability in their future employment and other aspects of life.
 - (b) provide appropriate career education and knowledge of the world to achieve effectively the transition from school to work
 - (c) promote in students a love of learning and workmanship and a desire to continue learning beyond the formal completion of their Secondary schooling.
- (4) Develop knowledge, skills, attitudes and values which will enable students to participate as active and informed citizens in our democratic Australian society within an international context.
- (5) Assist students to appreciate the richness and diversity of their cultural heritage, including the particular cultural background of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people; and minority ethnic groups.
- (6) Promote a close relationship with the local community by:

- (a) promoting the active role of parents in the education of their children and to provide a high correlation between home and school values
- (b) fostering genuine human relationships among students, staff, parents and other community members associated with the College
- (c) promoting citizenship and responsibility by encouraging students to be actively involved in their local church and community activities
- (d) making available to the local community the physical resources of the College, particularly for the use of the under-privileged youth and Indigenous population of the area.

The following section highlights some of the important considerations in developing a Christian Educational Philosophy.

SECTION 3

DEVELOPING AN EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

This section highlights some of the important aspects teachers need to consider and embrace in developing an educational philosophy that will underpin the curriculum of Rivermount College and Radiant Life College.

1. STATEMENT OF BELIEFS

In our endeavours to develop a well-balanced Biblical Educational Philosophy based on the doctrines and beliefs of Christianity as found in the Bible, it is important to list briefly the main traditional beliefs held by Christians.

A summary of the orthodox beliefs held by Rivermount College and Radiant Life College, include a belief in:

- (i) God the Father, Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth
- (ii) the deity of the Lord Jesus Christ, His virgin birth, crucifixion, resurrection, Ascension and His second coming in glory to judge the living and the dead
- (iii) forgiveness of sins by the Grace of God through personal faith in Christ alone, and regeneration by the Holy Spirit who is the giver of all life
- (iv) the holy universal church, the community of saints, of which Christ is the Head
- (v) the resurrection of the body and life everlasting

Contemporary Society and Post-modernism

Teachers in the 21st Century would be naïve to think that this Christian Creed would be generally embraced by young people in contemporary society. **On the contrary, the prevalent worldview held by our students is likely to be based on post-modernism.**

The main emphasis of post-modernism lies in the assumption or belief that evolution and progression ended with social history and that contemporary society is instead based upon the decline of absolute truths and the rise of relativity. Central to the post-modernist theory is the belief that there are no absolute or single truths about the world, rather every aspect of the universe and its elements has an infinite number of answers, each being equally as valid as each other.

Contemporary society clearly reflects the embracing of post-modernism as evidenced in the following key areas:

Knowledge: The post-modernist is greatly concerned with epistemology, the study of what knowledge is. This is evidenced in the continual quest of academics and researchers in refuting that a single paradigm exists. A post modernist society accepts

that academic knowledge is fragmented and divided and welcomes the great variety of perspectives that hold no absolute answers or universal consensus.

Personal Relationships: For the post modernist, relationships are determined by the extent to which the individual is able to please others, be it individuals and/or communities. This suggests that the views and opinions of others is a far more important determinant of self gratification and satisfaction than following the teachings of the Bible and pleasing God.

Truth and Values: Given that the post-modernist is concerned primarily with the views of others, it suggests that there is no objective or absolute truth, rather all truth is subjective and defined by the group or community. Consequently, what constitutes societal values is determined by the community's subjective interpretation of what is acceptable.

Authority: The post-modernist rejects traditional authorities as historical and prefers to follow the subjective interpretations of the community or group to which they have identified with emotionally. That there can be a higher order, capable of controlling and organising 'all things', is contrary to the post modernist belief.

Pluralism & Spirituality: Fundamental to the post modernist view is the notion that 'all religions lead to the same place and all are valid paths to salvation'. The acceptance of a single spiritual belief refutes the acceptance that there exists a single or absolute truth. As with all human beings, the post-modernist seeks spiritual power, knowledge and wholeness or oneness with a higher consciousness or an unknowable universal force or spirit. Which one is chosen is irrelative as long as it fulfils the basic need for spirituality and is acceptable to the individual's chosen lifestyle. As such, all religions are equal and acceptable.

Faith and view of the Future: For the post modernist, faith is based on feelings, imagination, mysticism and ultimately group consensus. Its definition and acceptance is ultimately open to subjective interpretation.

A society that embraces post modernism demands continual inner adaptation to cultural transformation. Acceptance of a status quo is declined as being historic; rather society is constantly in a state of change away from the 'modern'.

The tenets of post-modernism were expressed succinctly by Steve Turner in his well known poem "Creed"

Creed

by Steve Turner

*We believe in Marxfreudanddarwin
We believe everything is OK
as long as you don't hurt anyone,
to the best of your definition of hurt,
and to the best of your knowledge.*

*We believe in sex before, during, and after marriage.
We believe in the therapy of sin.
We believe that adultery is fun.
We believe that sodomy is OK.
We believe that taboos are taboo.*

*We believe that everything is getting better
despite evidence to the contrary.
The evidence must be investigated
And you can prove anything with evidence.*

*We believe there's something in
horoscopes, UFO's and bent spoons;
Jesus was a good man
just like Buddha, Mohammed, and ourselves.
He was a good moral teacher
although we think His good morals were bad.*

*We believe that all religions are basically the same--
at least the one that we read was.
They all believe in love and goodness.
They only differ on matters of
creation, sin, heaven, hell, God, and salvation.*

*We believe that after death comes the Nothing
Because when you ask the dead what happens they say nothing.
If death is not the end, if the dead have lied,
then it's compulsory heaven for all
excepting perhaps Hitler, Stalin, and Genghis Khan.*

*We believe in Masters and Johnson.
What's selected is average.
What's average is normal.
What's normal is good.*

*We believe in total disarmament.
We believe there are direct links between warfare and bloodshed.
Americans should beat their guns into tractors
and the Russians would be sure to follow.*

*We believe that man is essentially good.
It's only his behaviour that lets him down.
This is the fault of society.
Society is the fault of conditions.
Conditions are the fault of society.*

*We believe that each man must find the truth that is right for him.
Reality will adapt accordingly.
The universe will readjust.
History will alter.
We believe that there is no absolute truth
excepting the truth that there is no absolute truth.*

*We believe in the rejection of creeds,
and the flowering of individual thought.*

Post-modernism was preceded by Modernistic philosophies which reflect the “progressive” humanistic philosophies of the 19th and 20th Centuries.

To demonstrate the stark contrast of Biblical Christianity and Secular Humanism the following section will summarise the opposing views held on important worldview issues such as the view of man, view of the world and the value system of each philosophy.

2. CHRISTIANITY AND SECULAR HUMANISM

The beliefs held by the Founders of Rivermount College and Radiant Life College are considerably different to the main doctrines held by secular Humanism on which much of modern educational theories and practices are based.

The main differences between Biblical and Secular Humanistic education are on the opposite ends of the educational spectrum and can be summarised as follows:

VIEW OF MAN:

Humanism is a system of belief that advocates the wisdom of man, rather than the wisdom of God. Education based on humanism is not founded on the Word of God, but rather on man who determines the goals of life and values of right and wrong.

Whereas the humanist provides his own power of motivation, the Bible-believing Christian knows that man is created in the image of his Creator. The Bible teaches that man is an intelligent spiritual being created by an intelligent God. Man has the ability to know something of the nature and will of the Power which created, sustains, and orders the universe.

For the humanist there is no meaning apart from man's own experience. Man is isolated in the universe, and therefore, man is the measure of all things. Man must seek his own pleasure and happiness apart from God. Knowledge is the result of man's interaction with the environment. The idea that God is the beginning of all wisdom is foolishness to the humanist philosopher.

The nature of man and the beliefs held regarding creation or evolution determines how we view life and the world.

VIEW OF THE WORLD:

The Humanist perspective:

The humanist believes that everything is subject to change and that nothing will endure forever. The existence of man is explained by the 'theory of evolution.' The universe therefore, has no meaning or purpose. Every person must determine his or her own goals and find a reason for living. The individual alone is responsible to determine what is right or wrong.

The Christian perspective:

A Christ-centred educational philosophy maintains that everything was created by God. The God of the Bible is self-contained and self-sufficient. God is spirit, infinite, eternal and unchangeable in His being. Everything created possesses meaning, or is meaning. Nothing created exists by itself or for itself. Everything that is created finds its destiny, its final end or goal in the Creator.

Contrary to the humanist, the Christian holds the view that reality is permanent and unchangeable. "I am the First and the Last" says the Lord Jesus Christ, "the same yesterday, today and forever."

The Christian takes God as his final reference point for all human predictions. In this regard the Christian Faith stands squarely opposed to all forms of non-Christian thinking. Man was created to love and honour the Creator and to have personal fellowship with God. ***This has tremendous implications for the value system that must be promoted at a Christian College.***

VALUE SYSTEM:

The Humanist perspective:

According to the secular humanist, values are relative and changeable. Values change because circumstances change. The humanist therefore, has no absolute values which act as a continual guide. To the humanist all moral principles are liable to change in the course of man's development and the varying situations of time and place. There is no moral precept that can be universally binding, irrespective of the circumstances. The individual must work out his own values; no higher authority has the right to impose values on another person.

In humanistic education, the student must be shown how to set personal values which may be different from other individuals. The individual student must learn to find the criteria to determine a value system based on personal reflection and experience.

It is no surprise that even students from Christian homes are confused and highly influenced in an educational institution that is based on humanism.

The Christian perspective:

The Christian faith begins with the presupposition of the absolute truth of the Christian position. We know, as Christians, the goal of human life from the Word of God. ***The Christian knows that the criteria by which man must live can be found in the Bible.*** A Christ-centred College must support and promote the Gospel values as taught by Jesus Christ. These values are positive, life-changing and provide meaning to life.

Some of these Biblical core values are:

- Honour, respect and reverence your Creator
- At all times practise humility and honesty
- Be generous and show mercy
- Don't be a hypocrite – practise what you preach
- Don't be self-righteous and judgemental
- Don't hold grudges but forgive and accept forgiveness
- Show kindness and compassion to everyone, even your enemies
- Have faith in God, be positive and have good manners
- Above all be fair and just and merciful, and to walk humbly with your God:

As a Christian school we have the privilege to prepare our students for a rewarding and God-honouring life. Yes, our stand will be a lonely one in a society where standards of morality and human relations are often very different. But with God's grace we will

succeed and we must endeavour not to become dogmatic and condemning in our attitude and practice. At our schools the **Spirit of the Law** must prevail rather than the **Letter of the Law**.

3. PARENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Christians know that the Bible clearly places the responsibility for education with the parents. ***The school, therefore, must be an extension to the home, so that that child is educated and formed to the will of God.***

The Bible also teaches that the teacher cannot redirect the heart of the child; only the Spirit of Christ can turn a person towards God and sanctify the individual's life. The true character of Christian education does not depend on whether or not the child's spirit is regenerated, but it depends solely on whether or not the instruction and guidance given is in keeping with God's revelation in scripture.

A CHRIST-CENTERED CURRICULUM:

The primary aim of education must be to assist the home in helping the child to love and honour a personal Creator to enjoy Him forever. A Christ-centred curriculum will help the student to come to a clearer understanding that Christ has a claim over all life - at home, at school, at work and in all aspects of community living.

Christianity cannot be put in separate compartments. Jesus Christ is King over every area of the Universe. ***The Word of God takes the central place in education. It is without question, the core of the curriculum.***

Having made the Bible the core of the curriculum, there is little danger in studying secular literature, or making use of teaching techniques developed by non-Christians. The Christian does not consider that the non-Christian is denied all knowledge that God has revealed in nature.

To the contrary, every true Christian understands that whatever truth may be found in non-Christian literature belongs to the Master, because Jesus Christ is the Truth. All truth belongs to God and it is the duty of every Christian to search for it diligently and apply it to the Glory of God.

Society today is tired of educational jargon and platitudes. ***The existence of Rivermount College and Radiant Life College can only be justified if students and parents are honest in their commitment to Christian principles of education and living.*** Hypocrisy or lip-service to a set of beliefs is unacceptable. Christianity is not a set of doctrines but a way of life that brings hope, joy and freedom.

The Lord looks at the heart and attitudes of the individual student. To God the Christian carpenter who is obedient to the will of God is as important as the popular evangelist who is called by God to preach the Good News in foreign countries.

Christian teachers are responsible to develop the intellectual potential of each student, so that he or she will always achieve the best in service of Jesus Christ. This means

that some students will need to be encouraged to develop their academic potential and ability.

A Christian school has the responsibility to support the home in matters of morality. Christian teachers at our schools need not be afraid to overtly teach standards of morality in curriculum, standards of morality that are based on the values God has given us in the Bible.

4. CONFLICT OF VALUES

Christian parents are no longer prepared to accept the underlying value system of the education programs provided by many schools. The contemporary values that are being re-enforced in many Australian classrooms directly affect the personal worth and dignity of each individual student.

Our society today faces a major conflict. It is not a political conflict between liberalism and socialism, but a conflict between those who acknowledge that God our creator is in control and directs human destiny, and those who have rejected God and his revelation in the Bible and rather direct and control their own lives.

This is a conflict between those people who believe in order, discipline, good government and the family unit and those who have rejected all supernatural revelation and scorn the idea of maintaining and promoting traditional values. It is a conflict between orthodox Christianity and Humanism - humanism being the belief that man is the centre of all things and needs no assistance from the God revealed in Scripture.

Unfortunately it is a sad reflection on the Christian churches that this conflict is not fully realised or understood. Maybe Christians are too busy in their own affairs to realise that Australia faces a major crisis.

Many unchurched Australians are aware of this conflict and are keen to do something about retaining the traditional values which were once the very foundation of our society. They understand that our young people today are growing up in a society that is manipulated by forces set to destroy the very fabric of our society.

Humanistic teaching penetrates the home through literature, television, the media, information technology, music and through personal interaction. We live in a world today that condones the murder of millions of unborn babies, promotes promiscuity and undermines the family. Society no longer protests about the devastating effects of teenage alcoholism, pornography and human relations that are totally contrary to the teachings of the Bible.

Parents are searching for an environment where Biblical values are both taught and practiced in a loving, caring relationship. Instead educational institutions at large are teaching that values are changeable and depend very much on the prevailing circumstances and the needs of the individual. What is wrong today may be acceptable tomorrow.

It is, therefore, no surprise that our teenagers are totally confused and constantly in conflict trying to reconcile the teachings of the home and the Bible with those teachings that are diametrically opposed to it.

Rivermount College as well as Radiant Life College was founded so that all parents can benefit from a Christ-centred curriculum for the education of their children.

5. RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CHURCH AND SCHOOL

The Bible clearly teaches that the local church has a definite mandate to impart truth and knowledge to the people of God. Responsibility for Christian education, one could say, is the joint responsibility of the church and the family.

To provide a comprehensive curriculum at high school level is normally beyond the economic means of the local church group. By supporting a non-denominational Christian College some of these resource problems are minimised.

It is anticipated that the various local church leaders are willing to contribute positively to the Christian tone of the school. In order to develop greater tolerance in students, Pastors and other church leaders are invited to visit the school frequently and to address the students at school assemblies and to participate in the religious education program.

Rivermount College and Radiant Life College are non-denominational Christian schools and as such do not promote any particular Church doctrine other than that outlined in this document and implied in our Educational Philosophy. Neither are we an ecumenical church school.

Our mandate is to provide Christ-centred education for the children of the local community and beyond.

6. CHRISTIAN TOLERANCE AND COMPASSION

We do not pretend that there are no differences between the various Christian church denominations in the local district. Our resolution is to promote an increased sensitivity and tolerance to each other, so that our children can always hear, understand and respond to those who hold different views on specific Christian doctrines and beliefs, other than those contained in our Statement of Faith. Particular reference is made here to the diverse views held on such issues as the mode of baptism, speaking in tongues, the second coming of Christ and Church government as well as others.

The Principal or Head of College is responsible to ensure that specific teachings on any controversial issue will not be promoted or encouraged by the teaching staff.

The College fully respects and supports the local church's responsibility and right to teach their specific view on any Christian doctrine and belief. The staff of the College will make every attempt to encourage students to develop a love for their own church and to be involved actively with their own church activities.

We certainly do not seek to ignore differences between churches, but we trust that parents together with the staff of the two Colleges create an atmosphere which promotes a loving tolerance in these areas. This hopefully will lead to a situation where the individual student refrains from proselyting his or her views in the school environment. This aim can only be achieved with the full support of each individual family and church group.

Families that do not attend Church regularly will not be disadvantaged as members of the College community, provided that parents of these students are fully aware of the centrality of the Bible in our education program and are aware that all students are exposed daily to the positive influences of a Christian staff and the teaching of biblical values.

Teachers are challenged to communicate gospel values to all students in words and actions without creating an environment where 'being religious' is the expected mode of behaviour.

CHRISTIANITY IS TO BE PRESENTED AS A WAY OF LIFE

SECTION 4 CURRICULUM ISSUES

Rivermount College and Radiant Life College take full advantage of current opportunities to introduce responsible curriculum reform and innovation to ease the transition from school to full community life. Particular emphasis is placed upon the need for as wide a curriculum as circumstances will allow in order to cater for the range of student abilities and aptitudes.

It is recognised by both Colleges that many school leavers today are ill-prepared for a world of high youth unemployment, accelerating technological change and that uncertain social and moral standards are more the rule than the exception.

1. CURRICULUM DESIGN:

The curriculum is designed to prepare students for life in an Australian society where the fundamental rights of the person are recognised and where discrimination, whether based on sex, race, or ethnic origin, is considered unacceptable. In implementing this curriculum both Colleges will meet prescribed standards with respect to curriculum, school organisation, teachers' qualification, and physical environment.

The curriculum is designed to assist the individual growth and development of each student and to prepare them for life in general with full participation in society, including participation in a skilled and adaptable workforce, by:

- (a) maximising the general competencies of Primary and Secondary students in areas such as literacy, numeracy and inquiry skills, and increasing student participation and retention in key subjects such as English, Mathematics, and Science, Humanities and Languages
- (b) improving the participation and achievement of students who are educationally disadvantaged as a consequence of ethnicity, Aboriginality, socio-economic circumstances, geographical location or physical or intellectual disability
- (c) broadening the educational experiences of girls, especially in ways which increase their subsequent education, training and employment options
- (d) encouraging the individual student to appreciate the environment, the cultural heritage and the arts, through disciplined inter-action of the mind, body and materials
- (e) enhancing the individual student's future employment opportunities and equipping him or her with the necessary skills for recurrent education throughout his or her lifetime
- (f) assisting the individual student to consider values of society and to develop a personal set of Christian values.

The curriculum offered by both Colleges will enable young Australians in the 21st Century to gain a far greater sophistication about politics and political systems, about the economy and finances, and about law and forms of Government as well as international affairs and multi-cultural interactions.

At Middle School and Senior School levels, education normally involves the study of separate subjects and therefore the school size and organisation must allow for an adequate range of subjects to be offered. Both Colleges are designed to have multi-streams at each year level to ensure that all students have satisfactory opportunities to interact with fellow students who are at a similar stage of development.

2. THE BIBLICAL MANDATE

As indicated earlier, it is clear that a sound Christian College must teach all those subjects which are necessary to help students become better stewards of God's creation.

Man has been given a clear commandment by the Lord to manage the earth and to care for all other living creatures. After sin entered this world and God destroyed the earth by the Flood, this mandate was renewed with Noah and his family and God added clear instructions on how man was to relate to others in society. ***Our Creator's plan is that the earth is a place of harmony and peace beginning with each one of us - our destiny is on earth to live fruitful, meaningful and abundant lives. It is only when we embrace this plan that we will find our purpose and destiny.***

A Christ-centred education, therefore, includes instruction in all Physical Sciences, Biology, Technology and all Social Science subjects, such as History, Geography, Economics and others.

Students are given a solid grounding in all of these traditional subjects. As teachers and parents we are responsible to equip our children for worthwhile vocations in a society which is more and more dominated by rapid technological and social changes. To this end we have no reservations in implementing a comprehensive academic curriculum which is based on the requirements of the State Educational Authorities and Tertiary Institutions. We must always strive for academic excellence.

Teaching methods and practices used are in keeping with modern developments, but are only implemented after careful testing has shown positive results. Students have only one opportunity to receive a sound Secondary education. They must not be used as guinea-pigs with the future depending on the success or otherwise of some untested academic theory.

Although the content of the State curriculum forms the core for all the subjects, the content is taught from a distinctly Christian perspective, which honours God as the Creator and Sustainer of all life.

As Christians we see all of life as religion. Whatever we do must be done to the glory of God. Christian education does not mean to add a few Bible texts to our subject content. It means that all content and factual knowledge must be taught from a perspective that is consistent with God's revelation in the Bible. Every subject must be permeated with Christian principles and practices that are Bible-based. In certain subjects such as

Science and History, this might mean a considerable variation of perspective from what is taught by non-Christian teachers.

In other subjects such as Design and Technology as well as Information Technology and Manual Arts, the differences may not be so obvious. However, the attitudes towards the subjects and the intrinsic values of these subjects will differ greatly from those who consider these subjects merely as a means to an end - the end being material possessions.

Whatever subject is taught at a Christian College the ultimate purpose must be to use this knowledge or skill to the glory of God.

SECTION 5 PASTORAL CARE & THE CURRICULUM

The Pastoral Care Program implemented at Rivermount College and Radiant Life College allows all teachers to have daily contact with students to motivate and encourage them to live balanced, happy and meaningful lives.

The College is committed to educate and develop the **whole** person - mental, social, physical and spiritual - based on Biblical principles in a genuine, caring and disciplined environment.

Teachers must genuinely attempt to develop attitudes which are unselfish and non-materialistic. Positive attitudes which recognise the importance of all people, respect for authority, honesty and obedience are essential.

Through education we can work together to develop Christ-like qualities such as compassion and mercy, the desire to care for each other, the ability to listen to one another, to be tolerant of other peoples' views and convictions. ***We are interested in practical Christianity that is a way of life.***

To do this we need to develop and promote a Biblical value system that will change lives. We are interested in changing behaviour and attitudes. If parents are not noticing changes in their children then we must ask if Rivermount College is justified.

Australia as a nation will need to change - it can only change if our young people have a real purpose for living and able to rediscover the true joys of life. We need young people who have self-esteem, believe in themselves and accept others for what they are. We need young people who act in a natural manner - without hypocrisy of any kind.

Parents need to realise that the education their teenage children receive today will largely determine the adults they will become in a few years time. During the teenage years, foundations are laid and developed which will determine the kind of husband or wife, or what type of parent a teenage child will become.

Slowly, but surely, we will succeed in developing a sensitive and tolerant attitude amongst a small but growing group of citizens who believe that it is more important to build bridges than erect impregnable fences.

The College is a school community where learning is facilitated in a cooperative Christian environment aimed at nurturing and developing the spiritual, physical, mental and emotional growth of each individual student.

It is essential therefore that everyone associated with the College appreciates the importance of cooperating in a Christian community with a common concern for the well-being of all and the promotion of Biblical standards of morals and behaviour.

To achieve this, a comprehensive pastoral care program has been implemented at the various levels of studies and maturity.

1. PASTORAL CARE PROGRAM

The basis of this program will be a close relationship between students and teachers. In Primary classes the pastoral care group will be the normal class group.

In the Middle and Seniors Schools, students will be placed in groups of approximately 18 to 24 students with one teacher who will be responsible for the personal needs, interests and academic progress of each student in his or her group. Senior students will be encouraged to become actively involved in the pastoral care program of the younger students.

The purpose and aims of the Pastoral Care Program are:

GENERAL AIMS:

1. Pastoral Care teachers are to provide pastoral care to the individual students in their groups and to provide a link with the home environment, as well as to develop a personal relationship with parents or guardians and to contact them at regular intervals.
2. Pastoral Care teachers are to take a personal interest in each student and become familiar with their aptitude, background and career prospects. Teachers are to encourage and motivate students, highlighting their special virtues, abilities and skills and providing help and counselling in areas of specific problems so that each student has the opportunity to live a full and satisfying Christian life.

SPECIFIC AIMS:

1. Concern for the spiritual and social development of the student by:

- (a) ensuring that positive encouragement and confidence is given at every appropriate opportunity to assist the development of a healthy and biblical sense of self-image and optimism
- (b) providing opportunities for individual counselling and offering encouragement or admonition where appropriate
- (c) assisting students in setting realistic goals and to assist them to monitor their progress towards these goals.

2. Concern for the academic development of the student by:

- (a) developing within each student a genuine desire to learn, both at school and as a life-long challenge
- (b) reinforcing the work of the subject teacher by regularly checking the homework diary
- (c) consulting with specialist teachers as particular problems arise
- (d) providing help and advice on study problems and exam preparation

- (e) arranging for homework in cases of prolonged absence from classes.

3. Concern for the involvement of the student in the school community by:

- (a) ensuring that all students participate in extra-curricular activities such as sporting and cultural pursuits
- (b) familiarise students with the Code of Behaviour.
- (c) regularly reinforcing routine matters such as good manners, respect, cleanliness, punctuality and self discipline.

2. CODE OF BEHAVIOUR

Rivermount College and Radiant Life College are school communities where learning takes place in a co-operative Christian environment which fosters the spiritual, physical, mental and emotional growth of each individual student.

It is, therefore, most important that every parent, student and teacher associated with the College appreciates the importance of co-operating in a Christian community with a common concern for the well being of all, and for the promotion of Christian standards in morals and behaviour.

To achieve this aim the Code of Behaviour forms an integral part of the Educational Philosophy and Pastoral Care Program of the College.

1. CO-OPERATION AND RESPONSIBILITY

The College expects each student to co-operate fully by taking the responsibility for his or her own progress through diligent preparation for, and participation in, all classes he or she attends.

This requires showing concern for the need of others to pursue their studies without interference, behaving appropriately at College, both in and outside the classroom, and respecting the authority of all teachers and other members of staff.

2. PERSONAL APPEARANCE AND UNIFORM

The College requires the uniform to be worn to all College functions and sporting fixtures unless the students are otherwise directed. The uniform must be clean and in good repair at all times. Students are expected to wear the appropriate hat to and from school and when out of class students must take personal responsibility for appropriate sun protection, e.g., use of sunscreen lotions.

The College requires boys' hair to be trimmed **conservatively** at reasonably frequent intervals, so that it does not grow below or onto the collar. Hair should be trimmed above the ear. Only conservative styling is acceptable. No jewellery of any kind is permitted.

The College expects girls' hair to be tidy, tied back from the face and conservatively styled. Dyed hair or make-up, including nail polish, is not allowed. Plain sleepers or studs are allowed for girls. No other jewellery is to be worn.

A full explanation of the College position on hair styling is included in separate statements developed by each school community.

3. PERSONAL CONDUCT

It is essential that students develop respect for themselves as individuals and as students of the College. The College therefore requires students to conduct themselves at all times in a manner which will enhance their reputation and that of others at the College. Offensive behaviour including bullying, the use of bad language, smoking, use of alcohol or illegal drugs, gambling, stealing or causing injury to another, will not be tolerated. Breaking the law may result in offenders being asked to leave the College.

4. RESPECT FOR PROPERTY

Since real concern for others shows itself in the proper and thoughtful treatment of their property, students are expected to gain permission to use other people's property. This applies regardless of whether the property belongs to an individual, the College or the community. Students must not bring to school valuable items, other than those required for academic and extra-curricular activities.

5. PARTICIPATION

The College offers a wide range of courses, cultural activities and sporting pursuits. Students are obviously unable to participate in all of these activities but they should take part in as many as possible and they should encourage the involvement of their peers. All students are expected to attend the major annual events of the College, e.g. Speech and Prize Giving Night, Foundation Day, College plays and concerts, sporting championships and other functions held from time to time.

6. COMMITMENT

When a student joins a College team, group or society, he or she must accept all the commitments involved in that membership. All students are expected to take part in inter-school sporting competitions and attend all team-training sessions outside class hours. An irresponsible attitude only shows lack of respect for others involved.

7. ATTENDANCE

The College expects students to recognise that there are certain legal responsibilities involved in their attendance at the College. In particular, a student may not leave the grounds for any purpose during the College day without obtaining special leave from the Principal or from those staff members to whom such authority has been delegated.

Except in the case of illness, a student must be in attendance on all days on which the College is open unless leave of absence has been requested in writing and permission granted in advance by the Principal. When a student is absent, the College office must be notified by 8.30 am on the morning of the absence.

After any absence from the College, a student must produce a note signed by a parent or guardian, for his or her Pastoral Care teacher which will be appropriately filed.

Students who are late to College in the morning must report to the office to obtain a 'late pass' which is presented to their teacher. Under no circumstances is a student to be admitted to class without their late pass.

8. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In matters which are not specifically covered by the above Code of Behaviour or any other College regulation, students of the College will observe the principles contained above regarding the dignity of others, the respect for others and for their property, and of mutual co-operation within the College community.

It is anticipated that the Code of Behaviour may be subject to improved changes from time to time.

3. ANTI-SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY FOR STUDENTS

Policy Statement

Rivermount College and Radiant Life College are committed to providing all staff and students with a working and learning environment free from sexual harassment. All staff and students are required to honour and support this commitment.

The sexual harassment of staff and students is unlawful under the Federal Sex Discrimination Act 1984. This Act explicitly prohibits:

- a) *the sexual harassment of an adult student or potential adult student by staff/teachers* or other adult students** and*
- b) *the sexual harassment of staff/teachers by adult students or other staff/teachers.*

Sexual harassment is unacceptable and will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken in any proven instance of harassment.

Definition of Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is any unwelcome and uninvited comment, attention, contact or behaviour of a sexual nature, that an individual or witness finds humiliating, offensive or intimidating. It can be verbal, physical, written or visual.

Sexual harassment has nothing to do with mutual attraction or consenting friendships.

Examples of Sexual Harassment May Include:

- the distribution or display of offensive pictures or written material
- repeated unwelcome requests for social outings or dates
- offensive comments about a person's physical appearance, dress or private life
- jokes, intrusive questioning, messages or telephone calls of a sexual nature
- direct propositioning or subtle pressure for sexual favours
- leering, patting, pinching, touching or unnecessary familiarity
- indecent exposure, sexual assault or rape
- spreading rumours about someone's sex life

Sexual Harassment May Occur:

- between students
- between staff and students - from a staff member to a student or from a student to a staff member.
- between staff members

Sexual Harassment can cause:

- poor study performance
- academic results which do not reflect ability or effort
- absenteeism due to stress
- loss of self confidence or self-esteem
-

How Do I know if My Behaviour Is Causing Offence?

Sexual harassment is often unintended! If you are not sure about your behaviour, you can:

- carefully watch the effect of your actions and words on other people and consider whether they are really appreciating your behaviour or just pretending to because they are embarrassed.
- check your behaviour and language by asking if it is offensive or inappropriate.
- stop behaving in that way.
- apologise, if you are in doubt.
- always treat other people as equals rather than as possible objects of sexual attention.
- discuss your behaviour with someone who has an understanding of the issues.

What Can You Do If You Are Being Sexually Harassed?

If you believe that you are being sexually harassed, you can:

- tell the person who is harassing you that you don't like it and that you want it to stop.
- talk it over with your friends or your parents.
- talk it over with a teacher you feel comfortable with or one of the people named below.

Staff/teachers or students who believe that they are sexually harassed should make it known that the comments, attention, contact or behaviour is unwelcome and offensive. If the sexual harassment continues, or if you are unable or unwilling to handle the matter you should contact the designated staff members of the College.

Remember, everyone has the right to be treated as a worthwhile individual; everyone has the right to an education free from harassment.

Victimisation:

A person is victimised if threatened, harassed, harmed or subjected to any form of detriment. In relation to sexual harassment it is against the law to victimise a person who:

- has made a complaint
- intends to make a complaint
- acts as a witness
- intends to act as a witness
- supports a victim
- intends to support a victim

Note:

* staff/teachers may refer to prospective employees, current employees, contract workers, partners, commission agents or other members of the school community.

** adult student refers to a student 16 years and over.

4. ANTI-SEXUAL HARASSMENT POLICY FOR STAFF

Policy Statement

Rivermount College is committed to providing all staff and students with a working and learning environment free from sexual harassment. All staff and students are required to honour and support this commitment.

The sexual harassment of staff and students is unlawful under the Federal Sex Discrimination Act 1984. This Act explicitly prohibits:

- a) the sexual harassment of an adult student or potential adult student by staff/teachers* or other adult students** and
- b) the sexual harassment of staff/teachers by adult students or other staff/teachers.

Sexual harassment is unacceptable and will not be tolerated at Rivermount College under any circumstances. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken in any proven instance of harassment.

Definition of Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is any unwelcome and uninvited comment, attention, contact or behaviour of a sexual nature, that an individual or witness finds humiliating, offensive or intimidating. It can be verbal, physical, written or visual.

Sexual harassment has nothing to do with mutual attraction or consenting friendships.

Examples of sexual harassment may include:

- the distribution or display of offensive pictures or written material
- repeated unwelcome requests for social outings or dates
- offensive comments about a person's physical appearance, dress or private life
- jokes, intrusive questioning, messages or telephone calls of a sexual nature
- direct propositioning or subtle pressure for sexual favours
- leering, patting, pinching, touching or unnecessary familiarity
- indecent exposure, sexual assault or rape
- spreading rumours about someone else's sex life

The Staff/Teacher Role

As employees, all staff/teachers have a duty to ensure that any sexual harassment brought to their attention or personally witnessed, is addressed as soon as possible.

Legal precedents indicate that the onus rests with the employer to take all reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment and victimisation through proactive education.

Liability

The employer (individual or company) could be held liable when

- they perform the act personally
- a senior official representing the mind and will of the organisation performs the act
- or an act is performed by a person who provides terms and conditions of employment or supervises day to day activities.

Vicarious liability extends only to employment relationships. This means educational institutions are not vicariously liable for the unlawful behaviour perpetrated by their students, but remain liable for sexual harassment of a student by a staff member. ***

It could however be argued that an educational institution could be responsible for the sexual harassment of students by students under the general education provisions of the Act [21 (2) (c)] - by "subjecting the student to any other detriment" There is no case law in this area. ***

If the education institution is not active in attempting to prevent sexual harassment, does not adequately address complaints of sexual harassment, or does not institute disciplinary action where it finds there has been sexual harassment and it continues, then liability may follow. ***

Religious schools while exempt from most employment provisions under the Federal Sex Discrimination Act 1984 are covered by the sexual harassment provisions in this Act in relation to employment and education.

Sexual Harassment May Occur:

- between students
- between staff and students - from a staff member to a student or from a student to a staff member.
- between staff members

What to Do If You Are Sexually Harassed

Staff/teachers or students who believe that they are being sexually harassed should make it known that the comments, attention, contact or behaviour is unwelcome and offensive. If the sexual harassment continues, or if you are unable or unwilling to handle the matter you should contact:

Staff that become aware of a student who is being harassed are also required to bring this matter to the attention of those designated to deal with such matters.

Victimisation

A person is victimised if threatened, harassed, harmed or subjected to any form of detriment. In relation to sexual harassment it is against the law to victimise a person who:

- has made a complaint
- intends to make a complaint
- acts as a witness
- intends to act as a witness
- supports a victim
- intends to support a victim
- staff/teachers may refer to prospective employees, current employees, contract workers, partners, commission agents or other members of the school community.

Note:

** adult student refers to a student 16 years and over.

*** "Sex Discrimination Act 1984 - A Guide to the 1992 Amendments" produced by the Sex Discrimination Commissioner, Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, September 1993

4. ANTI-BULLYING POLICY FOR STUDENTS

Policy Statement

Rivermount College and Radiant Life College are committed to providing all staff and students with a working and learning environment free from harassment of any type, including bullying whether physical or emotional. All staff and students are required to honour and support this commitment.

Bullying of any nature is unacceptable and will not be tolerated under any circumstances. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken in any proven instance of bullying.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is the most malicious and malevolent form of anti-social behaviour practiced in our society. We have all witnessed bullying in some form. Bullying behaviour occurs at all levels of schooling, with both boys and girls being perpetrators and victims.

“Bullying is the willful, conscious desire to hurt another and put him or her under stress.”

Examples of Bullying may include:

- pushing, punching or physically handling another
- name calling
- teasing and taunting
- intimidation
- exclusion from activities
- exclusion from friendship groups
- spreading of malicious rumours
- maiming
- assault with a weapon
- racist comments

Bullying May Occur:

- between students
- between staff and students - from a staff member to a student or from a student to a staff member.
- between staff members

Anyone may be bullied, both boys and girls may be victims and may be perpetrators, although this type of behaviour is more prevalent in boys and generally declines as students get older.

Boys tend to use physical methods of bullying whereas girls tend to use psychological methods.

Often bullying focuses on vulnerable children who are regarded as different.

Consequences of Bullying:

Victims of bullying are often more anxious and insecure than students in general.

They are often cautious, sensitive and quiet. They may have a negative view of themselves and their situation. They often look upon themselves as failures, stupid, ashamed or unattractive.

Factors which may indicate bullying could include

- reluctance to attend College
- poor study performance
- academic results which do not reflect ability or effort
- absenteeism due to stress
- loss of self confidence or self-esteem
- a unexplained change in behaviour patterns

What Can You Do If You Are Being Bullied?

If you believe that you are being bullied, you can:

- tell the person who is bullying you that you don't like it and that you want it to stop.
- speak with your friends or your parents.
- talk it over with your PC or class teacher or a teacher with whom you feel comfortable, or a delegated staff member.

Staff/teachers or students who believe that they are bullied should make it known that the behaviour is unwelcome and offensive. If the bullying continues, or if you are unable or unwilling to handle the matter you should speak to your class or P.C. teacher who will listen to you and will thoroughly investigate the matter. If you would rather talk to a staff member away from your class, you should speak to one of the people listed in the staff and student handbook of each College.

Remember, everyone has the right to be treated as a worthwhile individual; everyone has the right to an education free from bullying

What will happen when you speak to a staff member about bullying?

- 1) The teachers will listen to what you have to tell them. They will write down what your complaint is and ask you questions about the behaviour about which you are complaining. The teachers will probably ask questions about behaviour which may have occurred before this incident so as to get some background information.
- 2) The teacher will interview the perpetrator of the bullying by themselves, and talk about what effect their behaviour is having on you. They will try and find out if there is a reason why this behaviour is taking place.
- 3) The teacher may then wish to talk to both the perpetrator and the victim together so that each of you can express your feelings and reasons.

- 4) The teacher will then try to have you both propose solutions to the problem, so that you both feel as if the bullying will cease.
- 5) The teacher will then make an appointment to speak with you again approximately one week later to assess the situation. The teacher will then talk with all people concerned about the current situation.

If, after initially having the problem dealt with by a teacher, the bullying continues either in the same form or a different form, it is essential that you tell the teacher of this. Do not wait for one week before bringing this to someone's attention.

Victimisation

At Rivermount College it will not be tolerated if victimisation occurs to a person who:

- has made a complaint
- intends to make a complaint
- acts as a witness in any complaint
- intends to act as a witness in any complaint
- supports a victim in any complaint
- intends to support a victim in any complaint about bullying which is brought to the attention of the staff.

Students should feel confident that no victimisation such as threats, harassment or harm of any type will occur if a case of bullying is reported to staff.

5. ANTI-BULLYING POLICY FOR STAFF

Policy Statement

Rivermount College and Radiant Life College are committed to providing all staff and students with a working and learning environment free from harassment of any type, including bullying whether physical or emotional. All staff and students are required to honour and support this commitment.

Bullying of any nature is unacceptable and will not be tolerated at Rivermount College or Radiant Life College under any circumstances. Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken in any proven instance of bullying.

Definition of Bullying

Bullying is the most malicious and malevolent form of anti-social behaviour practiced in our society. We have all witnessed bullying in some form. Bullying behaviour occurs at all levels of schooling, with both boys and girls being perpetrators and victims.

“Bullying is the willful, conscious desire to hurt another and put him or her under stress.”

Examples of Bullying may include:

- pushing, punching or physically handling another
- name calling
- teasing and taunting
- intimidation
- exclusion from activities
- exclusion from friendship groups
- spreading of malicious rumours
- maiming
- assault with a weapon
- racist comments

Bullying may occur:

- between students
- between staff and students - from a staff member to a student or from a student to a staff member.
- between staff members

It is important to recognise that behaviour in many cases is learned from adults with whom our children come in contact, peers and role models portrayed in the media. Adults in many cases exhibit behaviour such as excessive shouting, sarcasm, physical behaviour or the use of psychological ‘advantages’ which in fact in some circumstances may contribute to a climate of acceptance of certain types of bullying. As models for our children or our students it is imperative that we examine and if need be modify our own behaviour if we are to create an environment free from bullying and harassment.

Males tend to use physical methods of bullying whereas females tend to use psychological methods.

Often bullying focuses on vulnerable people who are regarded as different.

Consequences of Bullying:

Victims of bullying are often more anxious and insecure than other people in general. They are often cautious, sensitive and quiet. They may have a negative view of themselves and their situation. They often look upon themselves as failures, stupid, ashamed or unattractive.

Factors which may indicate bullying could include

- reluctance to attend work at the College
- poor work performance
- performance results which do not reflect ability or effort
- absenteeism due to stress or unexplained illness
- loss of self confidence or self-esteem
- a unexplained change in behaviour patterns

What Can You Do If You Are Being Bullied?

If you believe that you are being bullied, you can:

- tell the person who is bullying you that you don't like it and that you want it to stop.
- speak with your friends or your parents.
- talk it over with a person with whom you feel comfortable, or one of delegated staff members at the College

Any staff member of the College, teaching or non-teaching who believes that they are bullied should make it known that the behaviour is unwelcome and offensive. If the bullying continues, the individual should be encouraged to approach a person with whom they feel comfortable or speak with one of the staff who is designated as a staff member to specifically deal with these issues.

Remember, everyone has the right to be treated as a worthwhile individual; everyone has the right to workplace environment free from bullying

Dealing with incidents of student bullying:

1. As concerned staff we will listen to what they have to tell us. We will write down what the complaint is and ask questions about the behaviour about which there is a complaint. We will also ask questions about behaviour which may have occurred before this incident so as to get some background information.
2. Staff will interview the perpetrator of the bullying by themselves, and talk about what effect their behaviour is having on the victim. They will try and find out if there is a reason why this behaviour is taking place.

3. Staff may then wish to talk to both the perpetrator and the victim together so that each of them can express their feelings and reasons.
4. Staff will then try to have both students propose solutions to the problem, so that all concerned feel as if the bullying will cease.
5. Staff then will contact parents of students concerned to establish ongoing lines of communication.
6. Staff will then make an appointment to speak with the students again approximately one week later to assess the situation. Staff will then talk with all people concerned about the current situation.

If, after initially having the problem dealt with by a teacher, the bullying continues either in the same form or a different form, it is essential that students tell you of this. If this is the case do not wait for one week before examining the problem again.

Victimisation

At Rivermount College it will not be tolerated if victimisation occurs to a person who:

- has made a complaint
- intends to make a complaint
- acts as a witness in any complaint
- intends to act as a witness in any complaint
- supports a victim in any complaint
- intends to support a victim in any complaint about bullying which is brought to the attention of the staff.

Students and staff should feel confident that no victimisation such as threats, harassment or harm of any type will occur if a case of bullying is reported.

SECTION 6 CURRICULUM POLICY STATEMENTS

As teachers at both Rivermount College and Radiant Life College develop curriculum documents in various subject areas, the need for a clearly defined policy statement becomes essential.

Given Rivermount College's strong commitment to Creation and the Environment and the importance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander History and Culture, a number of important curriculum policy papers have been developed already.

These include:

- 1. Environmental Education Policy*
- 2. Australian Studies Program - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander History and Culture*

1. ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION POLICY

To assist the development of Environmental Education as an integral part of the total curriculum, Rivermount College has adopted the following policy statements and practical guidelines as a basis for discussion and implementation.

Basic Premises

1. Human Welfare and survival depends on a quality environment with adequate supplies of fresh air, water and food and minimal levels of toxins and radiation. All members of the human family have an equal right to such a quality environment.
2. All human activity affects the environment by the input and output of materials and the use of energy.
3. Many resources are finite. Even renewable resources will remain available as long as consumption does not exceed renewal.
4. People in technologically advanced societies use a far greater share of global resources than those in less technologically advanced societies.
5. All organisms depend on and interact with one another and their non-living surroundings.
6. Man-made materials and waste products are often hostile to the environment and must be disposed of in such a way that they do not endanger plant, animal or plant life.

7. Every species of plant and animal has intrinsic value and we must curb those human activities which threaten species with extinction.
8. Adequate samples of natural communities and ecosystems must be preserved for the benefit and enjoyment of future generations.
9. The degradation of the environment has accelerated through the exponential growth of the human population and the increased affluence of people in technologically advanced societies.
10. Agricultural, industrial and commercial development must be sustainable over the long term without degrading the environment.
11. Sound environmental actions and lifestyles can result only from an informed and educated public.
12. Although the environmental effects of one person's lifestyle is small the collective actions of many individuals can make a significant impact for environmental good or ill.

POLICY STATEMENTS

In its design and operation, both Rivermount College and Radiant Life College will practice sound environmental principles by:

1. Building and Grounds

- (a) designing buildings with a view to maximise passive solar heating and cooling, thus reducing the need for heaters and air conditioners.
- (b) planting vegetation native to the area, wherever possible and practical, with a view to -
 - (i) increasing public knowledge about native habitats
 - (ii) encouraging the presence of native birds and other wildlife in the grounds
 - (iii) minimising the need for artificial watering and fertilising
- (c) consulting and cooperating with owners and occupants of adjoining properties in environmental projects of a wider nature
- (d) protecting the quality of the Albert River and its foreshores by -
 - (i) control of erosion of the banks
 - (ii) minimising the entry of wastes and soil into the river through run-off water
- (e) minimising the use of insecticides and artificial fertilisers

2. School Operations

- (a) encouraging the use of public transport, car pools, bicycles and foot transport when travelling to and from school and other college activities
- (b) minimising waste of paper, water, electricity and other resources
- (c) recycling waste products wherever possible and practical

3. Curricular and Extra-Curricular Activities

- (a) preparing teaching units on environment topics appropriate to all year levels, incorporating the resources available in the College grounds and the wider community
- (b) integration of environmental concepts in the teaching of a variety of subject areas or by the use of a multi-disciplinary approach
- (c) introducing a program of incentives to recognise and reward students who show leadership and contribute significantly to environmental projects
- (d) encouraging individual, group and whole school environmental projects of a research and practical nature

4. Community Relations

- (a) making school facilities accessible to members of the larger community
- (b) actively supporting worthy environmental projects of the larger community
- (c) inviting to the College community representatives with environmental interests and expertise to observe, advise and serve as guest speakers
- (d) consulting with the owners and occupants of adjoining properties with a view to a joint approach to local environmental issues

2. AUSTRALIAN STUDIES PROGRAM

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander History and Culture

The Educational Philosophy and Mission Statement of Rivermount College and Radiant Life College includes a definite and strong commitment to the teaching of an Australian Studies program.

In particular, the College communities desire to develop positive and harmonious relationships with the original inhabitants of this country so that all students can benefit from and appreciate the richness and diversity of an Australian heritage.

This document outlines the aims and objectives adopted to teach Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander History and Culture and to work together with interested Indigenous communities in Queensland.

With the continued support and encouragement of The Hank Young Foundation, the establishment of Rivermount College and Radiant Life College will achieve the following objectives:

1. Developing and implementing the study of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and culture in the Colleges' curriculum by:

- (a) designing curriculum material that will assist to alleviate the ignorance of Australian society by teaching students the true history of Australia and Indigenous issues, to recognise and appreciate the diversity of the Australian people.
- (b) researching and teaching that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and applied anthropology is an integral part of Australian studies resulting in a balanced understanding of the current socio-political struggle by Australia's Indigenous people to obtain self determination and the realisation of equal rights
- (c) developing an awareness and appreciation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander achievements in the spheres of art, literature and dramatic performances
- (d) highlighting the influences deriving from the traditional past of Indigenous Australians, its continuing persistence and its significance for themselves and all citizens of Australia
- (e) establishing a nature trail with bush food and medicine plants which can be used in survival training as well as other skills to be taught by traditional Aboriginal artists and elders
- (f) developing an awareness amongst students that an understanding of traditional and contemporary Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture has much to contribute to present day Australian living as well as other world cultures, by learning from the Indigenous people how to survive against all odds and in difficult circumstances

- (g) inviting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander speakers to significant College events important school functions, as well as encouraging Indigenous Elders and cultural groups to visit the College on a regular basis

2. Developing a strong community awareness and appreciation of Indigenous issues by:

- (a) organising school and community excursions to remote Indigenous communities to create awareness of the benefits to be gained from Indigenous community life
- (b) reinforcing and preserving the cultural identity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and to foster a general community awareness and respect for all affinity with the natural environment as a fundamental element of the nation's heritage
- (c) promoting awareness among the Australian community about matters concerning Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in order to encourage:
 - the development of positive attitudes towards Indigenous Australians
 - to challenge societal and generational misconceptions and
 - to correct misinformation about Indigenous people which have a damaging effect on relationships within the general community
- (d) using Rivermount College and Radiant Life College as important educational and social institutions to break down negative attitudes in society and providing encouragement and practical support to Indigenous community groups.

3. Developing quality curriculum material on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies to be used by other schools in Australia by:

- (a) supporting and developing educational and cultural activities based on research and practice
- (b) development of classroom materials and teaching techniques to promote an appreciation and awareness of Indigenous Australian culture and language
- (c) disseminating curriculum material and ideas to other educational institutions in areas of Indigenous education and related activities

4. Providing educational opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students by:

- (a) providing scholarships to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to attend a quality private school, to enhance their employment prospects and improve their capacity to contribute to the Indigenous and general community well-being
- (b) improving the educational outcomes of these students by facilitating their access to an education which is in harmony with their cultural values and chosen lifestyles, which promotes pride in their identity and equips them with the opportunity to participate fully and equally in contemporary Australian society

- (c) promoting the social and physical well-being of Indigenous students and the development of a positive self-image through increased participation in sporting and recreational activities

5. Assisting Indigenous communities in the establishment of their own educational institutions by:

- (a) providing an opportunity for Indigenous teachers to gain experience in a private school environment
- (b) assisting administrative support services to Indigenous groups who want to set up their own Primary and Secondary community schools
- (c) employing professional and committed staff so that the College can be used as a “resource centre” to assist Indigenous community groups to develop and commence their own educational institutions

SECTION 7 CONCLUSION

In designing and implementing a Christian curriculum teachers of the Rivermount College and Radiant Life College must constantly assess the teaching content in every subject from a Biblical perspective - a process that will always be ongoing.

The continual search for truth and honesty will be made considerably easier if the motto of *Perseverance, Integrity & Excellence* is taken as a genuine guide for all our words and actions to *realise the potential within* all our students.

May we all experience *the strength through unity* that is ours as two distinct educational communities!

RIVERMOUNT COLLEGE
Yatala, Queensland



*Realising the
Potential Within*

RADIANT LIFE COLLEGE
Innisfail, Queensland



STRENGTH THROUGH UNITY