



PEACEFUL SCHOOLS PROGRAM PILOT SCHOOL OVERVIEW

Berwick Boys Grammar

Berwick Boys Grammar School came to the CASSE Peaceful Schools Program (PSP) pilot as a relatively new school with their first cohort of year 6 boys in 2012.

Berwick Grammar already had a peaceful school and was keen to strengthen their positive culture to ensure an optimum educational experience for their culturally diverse cohort. They were interested in the psychoanalytic understanding of mentalisation and power dynamics that CASSE's PSP offered and how this could be applied to developing successful, well rounded, self and other aware young men.

They formed a group of altruistic year 6 boys under the supervision of a CASSE student team leader and he led the inquiry based community of students. The CASSE student team became known to the whole school through presentations and awards made at general assemblies that rewarded altruistic behaviour observed in fellow students.

The students identified a relationship between level of sportsmanship and power that ultimately manifested in exclusion to some degree of less skilful students from team selection and games as a problem. The students reported their strong sense of fairness and justice on an individual level had little or no impact on changing this power dynamic.

The CASSE PSP consultants facilitated mentalising about this issue and the students themselves found a solution. They branded some sporting equipment with the CASSE student team values. This promoted fairness when playing with this equipment and served as a reminder to be inclusive, regardless of skill level. In the context of growing concern in relation to obesity, this initiative was encouraging participation across the whole school population and addressing more than the issue it set about to correct.

A change of culture was underway and life was much improved for many the boy whose academic ability is not matched by his sporting prowess.

The Berwick Boys Grammar School students now use mentalisation and conflict resolution skills taught to them through the CASSE PSP pilot project in the resolution of any issues that arise, bringing the reality of their school day closer to their ideal.

This resource and further information about Creating A Safe Supportive Environment is available to download at www.casse.org.au.