

# School sorry for Hitler dress-up

**EVAN ZLATKIS**

AN incident at an Alice Springs school last week in which a student dressed up as Adolf Hitler in front of a group of Jewish students has been described as an “innocent mistake”, and a “very distressing lesson for all concerned”.

After checking with a teacher, the St Philip’s College student wore a costume impersonating the Nazi leader at a Book Week assembly where he was named one of the “best dressed”.

It happened in front of a group of middle school students from Melbourne’s Bialik College, who were on exchange at the time.

A spokesperson at St Philip’s said the student involved “has an interest in history and politics”, and “did the right thing” by getting permission for his costume.

“This was an innocent mistake by a teacher who is a respected, honourable and lovely person who got it wrong on the day,” the spokesperson said.

“The school apologises unreservedly for any offence that has been caused.”

The spokesperson said the school has been in touch with the principal of the visiting students who were present on the day and “they have accepted our apology”.

“We are reviewing our policies on these kind of events to ensure that nothing like this can happen again.

“The school is providing support and assistance to the teacher, the student, and their family. It has been a very distressing lesson for all concerned.”

Bialik principal Jeremy Stowe-Lindner told *The AJN* it was an “unfortunate incident”, and that the teacher and student involved made a “very poor judgement call”.

“Having said that, their response to the incident, their proactivity with liaising with us and their communication with me as principal, demonstrating a determination to reflect on both the situation and educational provision in the school, is heartening,” Stowe-Lindner said.

“Schools are learning institutions and we all make mistakes, and the important thing now is how that is reflected upon and learnt from.”

The principal of St Philip’s, Roger Herbert, is visiting Bialik this week to offer a personal apology to the students and their families.

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**Spokesperson**  
St Philip’s College

Stowe-Lindner said apart from this incident, the students had a “very positive experience” on exchange.

B’nai B’rith Anti-Defamation Commission chair Dvir Abramovich said this is a timely wake-up call that we all have “much work to do in ensuring that all students understand the evils of the Holocaust, and what Hitler represents”.

“As there are fewer survivors to bear witness to Nazi atrocities, we call on the Australian government to introduce mandatory Holocaust education at all schools so students learn the universal lessons of the Holocaust, become ambassadors for our country’s fundamental values and combat all forms of intolerance and racism.”