FOOD, a warm bed and freedom — Parade College students gave them all up to spend 24 hours in the shoes of an asylum seeker.

Twenty students in year 9 to 12 recently volunteered to lock themselves inside a large makeshift cage, with some boys even choosing to fast the entire 24 hours.

Bread, soup, barley sugar and water was provided for the other students and supervising teachers.

They slept outdoors, in temperatures as low as, 8°C and had nothing but conversation, books and board games to keep them entertained.

Year 10 student Lucas said he aimed to raise awareness among his peers about social injustice and poverty.

"I think a lot of people my age are oblivious to this issue," he said.

"There are a lot of myths about asylum seekers. I think the media has made a big issue about them coming by boat, but most of them come in by air.

"The boats just make them look bad.

"Life isn’t only in colour, there’s black and white and grey patches.”

About an hour into the initiative, Lucas suggested the cold would be the biggest hurdle for the students.

"It’s going to be cold but that’s OK, it’s a good lesson to learn,” he said.

"Most people take their central heating system for granted and just think ‘I’ll turn it up a notch or grab a blanket.’"

Bundoora Parade College students locked themselves in cages to raise awareness of asylum seekers.

Year 11 student Will, who tutored Sudanese children last year, said going without food for 24 hours was “no big deal”.

"It’s only a day, and it’s raising awareness of how it is to be an asylum seeker,” he said.

"The violence and conditions that they have to put up with is alarming.”

Students had access to bathroom facilities and slept under a veranda. Parade students also raised money for various charities during their Live Below the Line campaign, which asks people to go for a week or a day on just $2 a day.

This small amount represents what people in extreme poverty in Australia may live on.