



# BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY

This policy has been developed by members of School Council.

<b>Date written:</b>	Sept 2015	<b>Date reviewed:</b>	June 2020
<b>School Council Ratified:</b>	2018	<b>Next review:</b>	2021/2022

**Reviewed in line with DET template**

## **PURPOSE**

Rosanna Primary is committed to providing a safe and respectful teaching and learning environment where bullying and harassment is not tolerated. Rosanna Primary believes that all students have the right to learn in a school environment in which they feel safe and secure.

This Bullying Prevention Policy should be read in conjunction with the Rosanna Primary Student Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy.

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

This policy is designed to:

- Explain what bullying and harassment are, and the fact that they are unacceptable and will not be tolerated.
- Expect that everyone in the school community be alert to signs and evidence of bullying and have a responsibility to report it to staff whether as observer or victim.
- Ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are investigated thoroughly and followed up appropriately.
- Ensure that support is given to both victims, perpetrators and bystanders.
- Seek parental and peer-group support and co-operation at all times.

When responding to bullying behavior Rosanna Primary School aims to:

- be proportionate, consistent and responsive
- find a constructive and positive solution for everyone
- stop the bullying from happening again
- restore the relationships between all involved.

Rosanna Primary School acknowledges that school staff owe a duty of care to students to take reasonable steps to reduce the risk of reasonably foreseeable harm, which can include harm that may be caused by bullying behaviour.

## DEFINITIONS

'**Bullying** is when an individual or group uses real or perceived power to repeatedly cause physical or psychological harm to another person.' (RPS Staff 2014) It may be direct physical, direct verbal, indirect or cyberbullying. Bullying is not a one-off disagreement between two or more people or a situation of mutual dislike. Bullying can be:

1. **Direct physical bullying** – eg. hitting, tripping, and pushing or damaging property.
2. **Direct verbal bullying** – eg. name calling, insults, homophobic or racist remarks, verbal abuse.
3. **Indirect bullying** – eg. spreading rumours, playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate, mimicking, encouraging others to socially exclude a person, damaging a person's social reputation or social acceptance, or cyberbullying.

**Cyber-bullying** is direct or indirect bullying behaviours using digital technology. For example via a mobile phone, chat rooms, social media, or MUD (multiuser domains where individuals take on different characters) rooms. It could involve setting up a defamatory personal website or deliberately excluding someone from social networking spaces. It can be verbal, written and include images, video and/or audio.

**Harassment** is any verbal, physical or sexual conduct (including gestures) which is uninvited, unwelcome or offensive to a person which could reasonably be expected to cause offence, humiliation or intimidation to a person.

### **Other distressing behaviours**

Many distressing behaviours may not constitute bullying even though they are unpleasant. Students who are involved in or who witness any distressing behaviours should report their concerns to school staff and our school will follow the Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy.

**Mutual conflict** involves an argument or disagreement between people with no imbalance of power. In incidents of mutual conflict, generally, both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution to the issue. Unresolved mutual conflict can develop into bullying if one of the parties targets the other repeatedly in retaliation.

**Social rejection or dislike** is not bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.

**Single-episode** acts of harassment, nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. If someone is verbally abused or pushed on one occasion, they are not being bullied. Harassment, nastiness or physical aggression that is directed towards many different people is not the same as bullying. However, single episodes of harassment, nastiness or physical aggression are not acceptable behaviours at our school.

## IMPLEMENTATION

Our school will not tolerate bullying (including cyberbullying) or harassment.

- A school-wide approach will be taken to deal with bullying and harassment in a consistent and systematic way, with a focus on student safety and wellbeing.
- All new students and staff will be informed of the Bullying Prevention policy and practices at the commencement of their time at the school.
- All complaints of bullying or harassment will be taken seriously and treated sensitively and confidentially. This policy will be clearly communicated to students, parents and staff on the school's website and through newsletters from time to time.

## **SPECIFIC PROGRAMS**

- Our school will organise preventative curriculum programs such as the Respectful Relationship Program, that promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, tolerance, conflict resolution and problem solving. The curriculum will include anti-bullying messages and strategies in line with DET materials e.g. Bully Stoppers: Make a Stand, National Day of Action Against Bullying and Violence, Lend a Hand and 'No Blame Approach to Bullying'.
- The school Leadership Team and teachers will work together to ensure the safety of all school members in situations of bullying (including cyberbullying) and harassment, by thoroughly investigating complaints while respecting the need for confidentiality, notifying parents/carers and planning interventions.
- If students believe they are being bullied they should contact their classroom teacher in the first instance, or a staff member that they would prefer to discuss the matter with.
- If a teacher feels a student is at serious and imminent risk from bullying (including cyber bullying) and harassment then it is their professional duty to pass on the information to an appropriate person in order to ensure appropriate support for the student. It is important for teachers to document fully their interaction with the student and any interventions taken.
- Student programs will be organised to raise student awareness about bullying and harassment, to provide a forum for discussion and to aid development of attitudes. Some matters will be dealt with formally in the curriculum and in peer support programs, leadership programs, extra-curricular programs, classroom discussions and occasional activities run by outside experts.
- Staff professional development programs will occur periodically to keep staff informed of current issues/strategies for dealing with bullying and/or harassment issues.
- Disciplinary consequences for bullying (including cyberbullying) and harassment will comply with the school's Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy. The Principal or their nominee will provide disciplinary consequences including suspension in accordance with the DET Guidelines.
- Parents or carers who may develop concerns that their child is involved in, or has witnessed bullying behaviour at Rosanna Primary School should contact the Student Wellbeing Coordinator.
- Serious bullying, including serious cyberbullying, is a criminal offence and will be referred to Victoria Police.

## **Responses to bullying behaviours**

When a teacher has sufficient information to understand the circumstances of the alleged bullying and the students involved, a number of strategies may be implemented to address the behaviour and support affected students in consultation with the Student Wellbeing Team, teachers, School Support Services (SSS), Assistant Principal, Principal, Department of Education and Training specialist staff.

When making a decision about how to respond to bullying behaviour, Rosanna Primary School will consider:

- the age and maturity of the students involved

- the severity and frequency of the bullying, and the impact it has had on the victim student
- whether the perpetrator student or students have displayed similar behaviour before
- whether the bullying took place in a group or one-to-one context
- whether the perpetrator demonstrates insight or remorse for their behaviour
- the alleged motive of the behaviour, including any element of provocation.

Staff, in consultation with Leadership, may implement all, or some of the following responses to bullying behaviours:

- Offer counselling support to the victim student or students, including referral to the Student Wellbeing Team, School Support Services (SSS), or external provider.
- Offer counselling support to the perpetrator student or students, including referral to the Student Wellbeing Team, SSS, or external provider.
- Offer counselling support to affected students, including witnesses and/or friends of the victim student, including referral to the Student Wellbeing Team, SSS, or external provider.
- Facilitate a restorative practice meeting with all or some of the students involved. The objective of restorative practice is to repair relationships that have been damaged by bringing about a sense of remorse and restorative action on the part of the person who has bullied someone and forgiveness by the person who has been bullied.
- Facilitate a mediation between some or all of the students involved to help to encourage students to take responsibility for their behaviour and explore underlying reasons for conflict or grievance. Mediation is only suitable if all students are involved voluntarily and demonstrate a willingness to engage in the mediation process.
- Facilitate a restorative circle, involving the victim student(s), the perpetrator students and a group of students who are likely to be supportive of the victim(s).
- Implement disciplinary consequences for the perpetrator students, which may include removal of privileges, detention, suspension and/or expulsion consistent with our Student Wellbeing and Engagement policy, the Ministerial Order on Suspensions and Expulsions and any other relevant Department policy.
- Facilitate a Student Support Group meeting and/or Behaviour Support Plan for affected students.
- Prepare a Safety Plan or Individual Management Plan managing contact between victim and perpetrator students.
- Provide discussion and/or mentoring for different social and emotional learning competencies of the students involved.
- Monitor the behaviour of the students involved for an appropriate time and take follow up action if necessary.
- Implement year group targeted strategies to reinforce positive behaviours

All staff are responsible for maintaining up to date records of the investigation of and responses to bullying behaviour. Teachers will record the details of the incident as a Chronicle entry for the student/s on COMPASS. A notification of all incidents will be sent to the Principal and Student Wellbeing coordinator.

Rosanna Primary understands the importance of monitoring and following up on the progress of students who have been involved in or affected by bullying behaviour. Where appropriate, school staff will also endeavour to provide parents and carers with updates on the management of bullying incidents.

## **EVALUATION AND REVIEW**

The Rosanna Primary School Bullying Prevention Policy will be reviewed every one to two years, or more often if necessary due to changes in regulations or circumstances.

School Council will evaluate its relevance in line with DET guidelines and community expectations as represented by parent members on School Council.

Data will be collected through:

- Discussion with students
- Attitude To School Survey-school safety
- Incident Reports
- Assessment of school based data, including the number of reported incidents of bullying in each year group and the effectiveness of the responses implemented.

## **REFERENCES**

Links which are connected with this policy are:

- The school's Acceptable ICT Use Agreement (re: cyber-bullying)
- DET's [Bully Stoppers: Make a Stand, Lend a Hand](#)
- DET's [Vulnerable Students](#)

Supporting links:

- [Bully Free World: Special Needs Anti-bullying Toolkit](#)
- Australian Human Rights Commission - [Human rights in the school classroom](#)
- Safe Schools Coalition Victoria  
<https://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/Pages/safeschools.aspx?Redirect=2>
- [Racism. No way!](#) anti-racism education for Australian schools

## **RELATED DOCUMENTS**

### **Policy**

Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy

## **APPENDICES**

A: Bullying Prevention Procedures

## APPENDIX A

### Bullying Prevention Procedures

---

#### How will a student's bullying complaint be dealt with?

Bullying complaints will be taken seriously and treated sensitively. School procedures for responding to a student who bullies or harasses others are set out below.

**Note:** If at any time bullying or harassment persists or is sufficiently serious, the Principal may contact parents/carers and commence formal disciplinary action in accordance with the school's Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy/Student Code of Conduct and DET's Student Engagement and Inclusion Guidance.

#### Level 1

If the bullying or harassment incident is minor or a first time occurrence, teachers may elect to use one or more of the following:

- stopping the bullying/re-statement of rules and consequences/reminder of Bullying Prevention Policy
- restorative questioning
- time out and thinking space
- private conference

If the student does not take control over his/her behaviour, the Student Wellbeing Coordinator /Area Team Leader/Assistant Principal/Principal should be notified.

#### Level 2

If the bullying or harassment continues, or in instances of severe bullying or harassment, a referral should be made to the Assistant Principal/Principal who may:

- provide counselling support to the victim
- meet with the perpetrator to develop a Behaviour Support Plan and meet with parents of the student to discuss strategies
- provide discussion/mentoring of different social and emotional learning competencies including structured learning activities
- conduct a restorative conference separately with the perpetrator and "target"