



# **ROWVILLE SECONDARY COLLEGE**

## **Bullying and Harassment Policy and Procedures (VRQA 10)**

**2014**

**To be read in conjunction with  
Behaviour Management Policy and Procedures  
(VRQA 28)  
&  
Internet Policy and Procedures (VRQA 23)**

**Principal:**

**School Council President:**

## **ROWVILLE SECONDARY COLLEGE BULLYING and HARASSMENT POLICY and PROCEDURES**

### **Rationale:**

Rowville Secondary College is committed to providing a community where everyone has the right to feel safe. The College community is committed to creating a caring environment which promotes learning, personal growth and positive self esteem. The College is dedicated to providing such an environment and each student, parent and teacher has the responsibility of ensuring that it is maintained.

The College aims to create and maintain a culture of positive student, parent and teacher relationships and refuses to accept bullying as part of school life. These are important to the success of this policy and the creation of a positive culture and sense of community.

### **Guiding principles**

Bullying is a deliberate act intended to hurt or embarrass another person by words or actions. It can be done by one person or by a group, and it is usually repeated. It can happen at school or out of school. Onlookers and supporters of bullies are bullies too. This definition is the guiding principle of this policy. All members of the College community have the right to conduct their business free from harassment and bullying and anything less than this will not be tolerated. (See appendix 1 for definitions and examples of bullying and harassment)

### **Rights and Responsibilities:**

All college members have the right to a safe, friendly environment which respects the rights of everyone and where no-one will be bullied or harassed.

All college members have a responsibility to treat others with fairness, kindness and respect. They also have the responsibility to support anyone they see being bullied and to report the incident to somebody who can help.

### **Implementation:**

A College wide approach is taken to deal with all forms of bullying and harassment.

- Information on the College's policy is published in the College student diary and on the College website.
- All complaints are investigated and taken seriously.
- There will be disciplinary consequences, covering a range of strategies for those in breach of the policy. These will be in line with the College Student Engagement policy and student Code of conduct.
- There will be supports and assistance given to those who have been harassed or bullied.
- Constructive and proactive strategies are used to deal with the education of members of the College community. These include: curriculum programs in the pastoral care

program, peer support programs and participation in forums and online programs, student leadership program etc.

- College staff will be provided with resources including professional development to assist in addressing issues in the classroom and school yard.
- Maintaining a strong commitment to the provision of counselling services for individuals or groups of students.
- Convening a Wellbeing executive and Committee to discuss and initiate wellbeing-based programs.
- The College Wellbeing Executive and the Student Management Executive will work collaboratively to review and implement student wellbeing and management strategies and policies.

## **Responsibilities**

### **Steps to be taken if bullying or harassment occurs:**

#### **The student:**

- Tell the person who is bullying you that you don't like it and want them to stop and leave you alone. (This is a difficult thing to say, but you should try if you can)
- Talk about the bullying with someone you can trust such as a friend, parent, older student or teacher.
- If you need further help, report the bullying to someone at the College who will listen and can help e.g. Class teacher, Student Wellbeing Coordinator, Team Leader, Head of School, Assistant Principal or any other teacher with whom you feel comfortable. (NB: this is NOT dobbing! It is not dobbing when you take action to protect your rights and welfare, or the rights and welfare of someone else)

Information on instances of suspected or low level bullying should be reported to the Team Leader.

#### **The College:**

##### **Further action may include:-**

- individual or group counselling, using a "No Blame" (Restorative Practice) approach
- peer mediation
- assertiveness training
- apologies to those who have been bullied
- contacting parents
- a positive written plan or contract to end the bullying behaviour
- implementation of procedures in the Student Code of Conduct if required

## **Process for Further Intervention**

### **• The Bully**

Some instances of bullying may be more serious or accumulate to the extent that firmer action is required. Such instances may be responded to in the following sequence (depending on the severity):

- Where an incident of bullying is experienced or observed, it shall be reported to the Team Leader. If on interviewing the student/s the Team Leader is satisfied that bullying has taken place parents will be contacted, the incident and resolution will be recorded. Suspension may occur in the first instance if violence is involved.
- Students who are reported for a second time for bullying behaviour will be interviewed by the Head of School and Team Leader and a conference with parents will be arranged. Further consequences will be determined at the time of the conference by the Head of School. This may include Restorative Justice Practice, behaviour contracts, yard sanctions, further discussion with the Head of School or suspension.
- Further bullying incidents will result in the student being withdrawn from classes immediately and parents being contacted to arrange for their child to be collected from the school. Suspension will be applied from this point and a further parent interview will be required.
- Where appropriate Restorative Practice will be suggested as a means of preventing further incidents of bullying.
- At any stage a student may be referred for counselling and an appropriate educational program may be devised to suit the individual or group.

### **The Target**

Students who have been identified as targets will be supported, advised and where necessary, offered counselling. Parents will be consulted. Action may take a number of forms.

- Informal chats with a teacher with whom the student feels most comfortable.
- Implementation of a buddy system to build a support network amongst peers.
- Regular meetings with Wellbeing Leader, a Teacher, Team Leader or Head of School to enable advice to be given and progress checked.
- Regular parental contact.
- Professional Counselling.
- Activities that equip students with appropriate skills and strategies to deal with bullies.

### **Parents:**

- Parents can support this policy at home by encouraging their children to treat each other with respect and not to be bullies themselves.
- If parents notice that their child seems unhappy or reluctant to go to school, they should discuss the matter with their child in order to find out whether bullying has occurred.
- Parents who believe that their child may have been bullied should report their concerns to the Student Wellbeing leader, Team Leader, Head of School or Assistant Principal.
- All parents are encouraged to cooperate with the college in order to ensure that bullying does not occur throughout the school community and beyond.

### **Resources**

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/about/programs/bullystoppers/>

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/programs/bullystoppers/stepbystepconcernstudent.pdf>

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/programs/bullystoppers/stepbystepincontent.pdf>

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/Documents/about/programs/bullystoppers/stepbystepconcernstaff.pdf>

<http://www.amf.org.au/>

**Review:** this policy is reviewed annually in line with the AIP or more often if necessary due to changes in regulations or circumstances.

## **Appendix 1. Definitions of Bullying and Harassment.**

### **Verbal Harassment**

- name calling
- put downs
- knocking achievers
- spreading rumours
- threatening remarks
- telephone - victims home telephoned, with the intention to scare.

### **Physical Harassment**

- fighting, punching
- threats of violence
- using dangerous weapons or implements pushing, pulling, unwelcome physical contact throwing objects
- damaging or interfering with others or their property

### **Cyber Harassment**

- Cyber bullying is the deliberate and repeated use of the power of the telephone or internet for purposes such as posting personal information with the intention to harass, cause discomfort or spread rumours.

### **Social Ostracism**

- Deliberate exclusion, and/or encouraging others to exclude from friendship groups, class activities, games in the yard.

### **Extortion**

- Involves students bullying other students to give up possessions or do things that they don't want to:
  - buying food and drink
  - doing school work
  - committing minor offences

### **Sexual Harassment**

- touching or brushing against someone in a sexual manner
- making sexually orientated jokes, drawing or writing
- commenting on the size or shape of someone's body

- making unwanted sexual advances
- asking uninvited questions about someone else's private life
- suggesting that sexual favours will be rewarded, or conversely that consequent refusal will have unpleasant repercussions
- indecent sexual exposure
- assaulting someone sexually

#### **Racial Harassment**

- Racist comments, jokes
- physical abuse
- negative reference to a person's appearance, religion cultural values or beliefs

#### **What Bullying is NOT:**

Many distressing behaviours are not examples of bullying even though they are unpleasant and often require teacher intervention and management. There are three socially unpleasant situations that are often confused with bullying:

- **Mutual Conflict:** In mutual conflict situations, there is an argument or disagreement between students but not an imbalance of power. Both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution to the problem. However, unresolved mutual conflict sometimes develops into a bullying situation with one person becoming targeted repeatedly for 'retaliation' in a one-sided way.
- **Social Rejection or Dislike:** Unless the social rejection is directed towards someone specific and involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others, it is not bullying.
- **Single-episode acts of nastiness or meanness, or random acts of aggression or intimidation:** Single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. If a student is verbally abused or pushed on one occasion they are not being bullied.

Nastiness or physical aggression that is directed towards many different students is not the same as bullying.

## Appendix 2- Reporting Bullying Templates

### Reporting on Incident of Bullying / Harassment

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Staff member recording incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

Name of student(s) who appears to have instigated bullying

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Year/Class: \_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) of target(s)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name(s) of witnesses

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Did you observe the incident?

YES

No

If 'No' who reported the incident to you? \_\_\_\_\_

Brief description of incident (what was allegedly said or done to the student who appears to have been bullied?)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What form(s) of bullying took place?    Verbal     Physical     Indirect     Cyber   
Other     Please detail: \_\_\_\_\_

Was the incident of bullying:    Mild     Severe

Describe how you responded (Did you use a school anti-bullying practice?)

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Describe how student responded to your intervention

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**Where / when / time incident took place:**

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

When:    before school     recess     lunch     in class     after school

Time:    \_\_\_\_\_ : \_\_\_\_\_ am/pm

Date incident took place: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

**Additional comments:**

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**Referral of Student who has bullied / harassed other to Student Wellbeing leader or Team Leader**

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Staff member recording incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_                      Position: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of student being referred: \_\_\_\_\_

Year/Class: \_\_\_\_\_

History of incident(s) of bullying (dates, description)

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Have parents/guardian been notified?                      YES                       No

If 'No' why not? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Have they attended a conference?                      YES                       No

If 'No' why not? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Are they willing to participate?                      YES                       No

If 'No' why not? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What appears to be the reason for the student's bullying behaviour (family, peer, school, personal, other)?

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What practices have been tried?

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Impact

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What has been the student's attitude towards student(s) who have been targets? (e.g., any concern or remorse expressed)?

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A brief description of academic performance of student over past year or more.

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Distinguishing 'at risk' factors of student (e.g. limited English: economic disadvantage of family; ADHD)

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<b>Date Implemented</b>	<b>2014</b>
<b>Author:</b>	<b>CHO</b>
<b>Approved By</b>	<b>School Council</b>
<b>Approval Authority (Signature &amp; Date)</b>	
<b>Date Reviewed</b>	<b>2016 or prior if changes to DEECD policy or legal changes.</b>
<b>Responsible for Review</b>	<b>Student wellbeing executive.</b>
<b>Review Date</b>	
<b>References</b>	