

Rowville Primary School Prevent Bullying Policy

DEFINITIONS

The definition of bullying below comes from the Safe Schools Hub and is the agreed term used at Rowville Primary School:

Bullying is an ongoing misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that causes physical and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power over one or more persons. Bullying can happen in person or online, and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders. Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying. However, these conflicts still need to be addressed and resolved. (<http://safeschoolshub.edu.au/resources-andhelp/Glossary>)

Bullying can take many forms, including:

- Verbal (name calling, put downs, threats)
- Physical (hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting)
- Social (ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating)
- Psychological (spreading rumours, stalking, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions or acts that instill a sense of fear or anxiety)
- Cyberbullying, where the above behaviours are enacted in an online forum.

Cyberbullying

Many students being bullied also experience some form of cyberbullying. Cyberbullying is defined as bullying that takes place using electronic technology. Electronic technology includes devices and equipment such as mobile phones, computers and tablets, as well as communication tools including social media sites, text messages, chat, and websites.

Examples of cyberbullying include mean text messages or emails, rumours sent by email or posted on social networking sites, and embarrassing pictures, videos, websites, or fake profiles. (Stopbullying.gov.au, 2016)

Cyberbullying is often subtle and occurs outside the school environment. At Rowville Primary School, instances of cyberbullying are seen as just as severe as any other form of bullying and, as such, will be dealt with in the same way.

PURPOSE

The Preventing Bullying Policy clearly defines preventative and intervention strategies to ensure Rowville Primary School is a safe and caring environment.

Teachers actively promote the positive resolution of conflicts and appropriate responses to bullying behaviour through the provision of classroom programs, such as restorative conversations and circle time, which lead to the development of:

- positive relationships
- social skills
- communication and problem-solving skills
- conflict resolution skills and processes
- education regarding appropriate behaviours when using online forums and social media
- accepting and celebrating individual differences.

GUIDELINES

- All students are acknowledged and valued as individuals regardless of gender, racial, cultural, religious, physical or intellectual differences.
- All students are informed that if they are bullied, teachers are available to support them and prevent it from happening. Students will be encouraged to report incidents to a teacher, be it the class teacher or yard duty teacher or another teacher within the school.
- The Principal and staff have a responsibility to fairly, reasonably and consistently implement the Student, Safety Engagement and Wellbeing Policy.
- All parents are informed that if they believe that their child is being bullied, they should contact the school. This could include a teacher, the Principal or Assistant Principal.
- All members of staff are informed that if they feel bullied by any member of the school community they are to report this to the Principal.
- All teachers are informed of the procedures that are to be followed if an incident of bullying is reported to them.
- All teachers have a responsibility to respond to, investigate, follow up and monitor incidents of bullying.
- All forms of bullying, whether it be physical, verbal or cyber are not tolerated at any level.
- All students will sign a Digital Technologies Agreement and students in Years 5 & 6 will sign a One-to-One digital Device Agreement as a way of promoting safe use of technology.

IMPLEMENTATION

- As a school we will develop a values driven culture as per the values in our Student Engagement and Well-Being Policy. This will be supported by Classroom Circle Activities.
- The staff member investigating a bullying incident will use a restorative conference to establish the facts; discuss the impact of the incident; and develop a solution. A period of monitoring will be part of the solution. A record will be kept of the conference.
- In a case where it is confirmed that the incident is bullying, the school will provide support and opportunity for counselling for the recipient and the student who bullied.
- If the bullying persists the school will undertake action as per the Student, Safety Engagement and Wellbeing Policy.

Responding to Bullying Incidents

The school has clear guidelines to responding to bullying incidents. Should repeated incidences (bullying or cyberbullying) occur, the following actions will be taken:

- the Principal and Assistant Principal will be informed
- incident to be logged using the school tracking processing and recognising the privacy of all parties
- parents of all students involved will be notified
- restorative practise carried out with victims and students carrying out the bullying
- a consequence will be given in accordance with the whole school behaviour management plan (e.g. suspended, student time out)
- in repetitive instances, an Individual Behaviour Management Plan will be created and further action, e.g. suspension, may be enacted. The intervention of School Support Services will be used as necessary.

Individual Behaviour Management Plan

An Individual Behaviour Management Plan will be drawn up by the Assistant Principal, class teacher, the student and parents. The Plan will be simple, measurable, reliable and set within a time frame and will state:

- The behaviour goal for that student
- How to achieve the plan
- When to start the plan

- When the plan will be reviewed.

A further meeting will be held at the end of the period to review progress.

The intervention of School Support Services will be used as necessary.

EVALUATION

The policy will be evaluated annually. The review process will include ongoing collection of data about bullying through the Parent Opinion Survey, Student Attitudes to School Survey and playground incident data records.

The school has a proactive approach to anti-bullying and data will be analysed to inform the future directions of programs at the school.

References

Rowville Primary School Student Safety, Engagement and Well-Being Policy

Rowville Primary School Anti-Bullying and eSmart Policy & Agreement

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

<http://safeschoolshub.edu.au/resources-andhelp/Glossary>

This policy was ratified on 6 th September 2017 and is due to be reviewed in September 2018.
