



## Bullying Prevention Policy

### Rationale

Rosanna Golf Links Primary School will actively promote a safe, respectful and positive environment for all members of the school community. Bullying and harassment in any of its forms will not be tolerated.

### Purpose

Rosanna Golf Links is committed to providing a safe and respectful learning environment where bullying will not be tolerated.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- explain the definition of bullying so that there is shared understanding amongst all members of the Rosanna Golf Links Primary School community
- make clear that no form of bullying at Rosanna Golf Links will be tolerated
- ask that everyone in our school community be alert to signs and evidence of bullying behaviour, and accept responsibility to report bullying behaviour to school staff
- ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are appropriately investigated and addressed
- ensure that support is provided to students, staff and parents who may be affected by bullying behaviour (including targets, bystanders and students engaging in bullying behaviour)
- seek parental and peer group support in addressing and preventing bullying behaviour at Rosanna Golf Links.

When responding to bullying behaviour, Rosanna Golf Links 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 the students involved.

Rosanna Golf Links 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.

### Scope

This policy addresses how Rosanna Golf Links aims to prevent and respond to student bullying behaviour. Rosanna Golf Links recognises that there are many other types of inappropriate student behaviours that do not meet the definition of bullying which are also unacceptable at our school. These other inappropriate behaviours will be managed in accordance with our Student Engagement and Wellbeing and our Behaviour policy.

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps, excursions and online schooling.

### Policy

#### Definitions

Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm. It

can involve an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening.

Bullying can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time (for example, through sharing of digital records).

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have immediate, medium and 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.

### **Covert bullying**

Covert bullying can be very difficult for someone outside of the interaction to identify. It can include hand gestures and threatening looks, whispering, excluding or turning your back on a person, restricting where a person can sit and who they can talk with. Social bullying (spreading rumours, manipulation of relationships, excluding, isolating) is often covert bullying.

### **Cyberbullying**

Cyber bullying includes any form of bullying behaviour that occurs online or via a mobile device. It can be verbal or written, and can include threats of violence as well as images, videos and/or audio.

### **Physical bullying**

Physical bullying includes hitting, pushing, shoving or intimidating or otherwise physically hurting another person, damaging or stealing their belongings. It includes threats of violence.

### **Social bullying**

This is sometimes called relational or emotional bullying, and includes deliberately excluding someone, spreading rumours, sharing information that will have a harmful effect on the other person and/or damaging a person's social reputation or social acceptance.

### **Verbal and written bullying**

Verbal and written bullying includes name-calling or insulting someone about an attribute, quality or personal characteristic.

## **Bullying Prevention**

Rosanna Golf Links has a number of programs and strategies in place to build a positive and inclusive school culture. We strive to foster a school culture that prevents bullying behaviour by modelling and encouraging behaviour that demonstrates acceptance, kindness and respect.

Bullying prevention at Rosanna Golf Links is proactive and is supported by research that indicates that a whole school, multifaceted approach is the most effective way to prevent and address bullying. At our school:

- We have a positive school environment that provides safety, security and support for students and promotes positive relationships and wellbeing.
- We strive to build strong partnerships between the school, families and the broader community that means all members work together to ensure the safety of students.
- Teachers incorporate classroom management strategies that discourage bullying and promote positive behaviour.
- We communicate our policies and procedures on Bullying Prevention through the school website and within our Student Enrolment Package.
- Time is allocated at the beginning of the year to undertake the Start Up Program, ensuring that our school values of Responsibility, Kindness and Persistence are embedded into the classroom culture.
- In the classroom, our social and emotional learning curriculum and the teaching of Respectful Relationships, which teaches students what constitutes bullying and how to respond to bullying behaviour assertively. This promotes resilience, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving.

- The Peer Mediation program encourage positive relationships between students in different year levels. We seek to empower students to be confident communicators and to resolve conflict in a non-aggressive and constructive way.
- Students are encouraged to look out for each other and to talk to teachers and older peers about any bullying they have experienced or witnessed.
- We participate in the National Day of Action Against Bullying and Violence.

For further information about our engagement and wellbeing initiatives, please see our *Student Wellbeing and Engagement* policy.

## Bullying Prevention

### Reporting concerns to Rosanna Golf Links Primary School

Bullying complaints will be taken seriously and responded to sensitively at our school.

Students who may be experiencing bullying behaviour, or students who have witnessed bullying behaviour, are encouraged to report their concerns to school staff as soon as possible.

In most circumstances, we encourage students to speak to their classroom teacher. However, students are welcome to discuss their concerns with any trusted member of staff including teachers, Education Support Staff, Assistant Principal or Principal.

Parents or carers who may develop concerns that their child is involved in, or has witnessed bullying behaviour at Rosanna Golf Links should contact the Assistant Principal or Principal.

Our ability to effectively reduce and eliminate bullying behaviour is greatly affected by students and/or parents and carers reporting concerning behaviour as soon as possible, so that the responses implemented by Rosanna Golf Links are timely and appropriate in the circumstances.

### Investigations

When notified of alleged bullying behaviour, school staff are required to:

1. record the details of the allegations on COMPASS chronicle, making sure that relevant staff are informed in the notification chain
2. inform the Assistant Principal or Principal.

The classroom teacher in consultation with the Assistant Principal or Principal, is responsible for investigating allegations of bullying in a timely and sensitive manner. To appropriately investigate an allegation of bullying, the classroom teacher may:

- check COMPASS for previously logged incidents
- speak to the students involved in the allegations, including the victim/s, the alleged perpetrator/s and any witnesses to the incidents
- speak to the parents of the students involved
- speak to the teachers of the students involved
- take detailed notes of all discussions for future reference
- where possible obtain written statements from all or any of the above.

All communications with the classroom teacher in the course of investigating an allegation of bullying will be managed sensitively and confidentially. Investigations will be completed as quickly as possible to allow for the behaviours to be addressed in a timely manner.

The objective of completing a thorough investigation into the circumstances of alleged bullying behaviour is to determine the nature of the conduct and the students involved. A thorough understanding of the alleged bullying will inform staff about how to most effectively implement an appropriate response to that behaviour.

Serious bullying, including serious cyberbullying, is a criminal offence and may be referred to Victoria Police. For more information, see: [Brodie's Law](#).

## Responses to bullying behaviours

When the person investigating 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 Assistant Principal and Principal.

There are a number of factors that will be considered when determining the most appropriate response to the behaviour. When making a decision about how to respond to bullying behaviour, Rosanna Golf Links 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.

They may implement all, or some of the following responses to bullying behaviours:

- Offer counselling support to the victim, perpetrator, affected students, parents or staff, including witnesses and/or friends of the victim, including possible referral to Student Wellbeing Team, DET Student Support Services (SSS), 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.
- 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] restricting contact between victim and perpetrator students.
- Provide discussion and/or mentoring for different social and emotional learning competencies of the students involved, for example, connecting affected students with an older student mentor, resilience programs, etc.
- 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.

The Assistant Principal or Principal is responsible for maintaining up to date records of the investigation of and responses to bullying behaviour.

Rosanna Golf Links 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.

## References

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies, which are available on Compass (under School Documentation) and on the RGLPS Website.

- Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Parent Complaints policy
- Duty of Care Policy

The following websites and resources provide useful information on prevention and responding to bullying, as well as supporting students who have been the target of bullying behaviours:

- [Bully Stoppers](#)
- [Kids Helpline](#)
- [Lifeline](#)
- [Bullying. No way!](#)

### Policy Review and Approval

This policy was endorsed by the RGLPS School Council and will be reviewed every 1-2 years as part of the RGLPS review cycle.

Policy last reviewed	11.8.2022
Approved by	Principal - Kirrily Lamers
Next scheduled review date	11.8.2024