

	Policy Name:	Anti-Bullying and Harassment Policy	Date of approval:	28/5/2018
	Responsible:	Leadership	Review date:	05/2022



ANTI-BULLYING/HARASSMENT POLICY

Rationale

Rosebud Primary seeks to create a school where all members of the school community are safe, included and equal. Bullying/Harassment can be violent, exclusive and discriminatory, and as such, bullying/harassment is a threat to all of these outcomes.

Rosebud Primary School does not tolerate any form of bullying/harassment, and views all forms of bullying and harassment are unacceptable.

Aims:

- To create a culture of inclusion
- To reinforce within the school community what bullying and harassment are, and the fact that it is unacceptable
- To articulate the signs and evidence of bullying/harassment and to ensure bullying and harassment are reported whether a person is an observer or a victim
- To ensure that all reported incidents of bullying and harassment are responded to consistently and effectively
- To seek parental and peer-group support and co-operation at all times.

Definition:

Bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological aggressive behaviour by a person or group directed towards a less powerful person or group that is intended to cause harm, distress or fear. Types of bullying behaviour. There are some specific types of bullying behaviour:

- verbal or written abuse - such as targeted name-calling or jokes, or displaying offensive posters
- violence - including threats of violence
- Spreading rumours and keeping secrets, and repeated deliberate exclusion of people from activities.
- sexual harassment - unwelcome or unreciprocated conduct of a sexual nature, which could reasonably be expected to cause offence, humiliation or intimidation
- homophobia and other hostile behaviour towards students relating to gender and sexuality
- discrimination including racial discrimination - treating people differently because of their identity

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- cyberbullying - either online or via mobile phone.

Harassment is the continued unwanted and annoying actions of one-party or a group, including threats and demands. The purposes may vary, including racial prejudice, personal malice or purposefully making someone fearful or anxious.

Sexual harassment will not be tolerated by the Department under any circumstances. Sexual harassment is unlawful under the Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth) and the Equal Opportunity Act 2010 (Vic).

It is against the law to harass you because of your:

- sex
- pregnancy
- race (including colour, nationality, descent, ethnic or ethno-religious background)
- age
- marital or domestic status
- homosexuality (actual or perceived)
- disability (actual or perceived, past, present or future)
- transgender status (actual or perceived)

Anti-discrimination law defines harassment as any form of behaviour that:

- you do not want
- offends, humiliates or intimidates you
- creates a hostile environment.

It's important to understand that if a person finds a particular behaviour offensive, humiliating or intimidating, and it relates to their sex, race, age etc as described above, then it is harassment. This is irrespective of how the harasser or anyone else perceives the behaviour. People may have different ideas about what is offensive, and within reason, it is up to them to define what they find unacceptable.

Anyone can be harassed, including women or men, and people of any age or race. Harassment may be an ongoing pattern of behaviour, or it may be just a single act. It may be perpetrated by a person in a position of power over the victim, for example their supervisor at work, or it may occur where there is no power relationship, for example among work colleagues.

Depending on the circumstances, any of the following could be harassment if it relates to a person's sex, race, age etc:

- material that is displayed in the workplace (for example on a noticeboard), circulated on paper, sent by fax or put in someone's workspace or belongings
- material put on a computer, sent by email, or put on a website, blog or social networking site
- verbal abuse or comments
- offensive jokes
- offensive gestures

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- ignoring, isolating or segregating a person or group - for example not inviting someone to a work event that everyone else is invited to
- initiation ceremonies that involve unwelcome behaviour.

What is not bullying and harassment?

There are also some behaviours, which, although they might be unpleasant or distressing, are not bullying:

- mutual conflict - which involves a disagreement, but not an imbalance of power. Unresolved mutual conflict can develop into bullying/harassment if one of the parties targets the other repeatedly in retaliation
- single-episode acts of nastiness or physical aggression, or aggression directed towards many different people, is not bullying/harassment
- social rejection or dislike is not bullying/harassment unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.

Bullying roles. People in a bullying/harassment scenario may take on one of the following roles:

- a person who engages in bullying/harassment behaviour
- a target who is subjected to the bullying/harassment behaviour
- an assistant who assists the bullying/harassment behaviour and actively joins in
- a supporter who encourages and gives silent approval to the bullying/harassment, by smiling, laughing or making comments
- a silent bystander who sees or knows about someone being bullied/harassed but is passive and does nothing, this may be an adult bystander
- a defender who supports the student who is being bullied/harassed by intervening, getting teacher support or comforting them.

Implementation

Creating a Safe, Inclusive and Equitable Environment Safety starts in the classroom. Students should also feel and be safe everywhere at school, in the classrooms, the library, the toilets and the playground.

To provide a safe, inclusive and equitable environment, the school:

- Teaches positive behaviours through the School-wide Positive Behaviour System
- Teaches the types of bullying/harassment and roles people can play in bullying and harassment
- Teaches the process for students and teachers to report all incidents of bullying/harassment, including the process when an individual is frightened of reporting the incident

There are additional supports available to students involved in bullying and harassment incidents, such as the Kid's Helpline phone counselling service - ph.1800 55 1800

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Response to incidents

Reporting It is the role of all students, parents and staff to report incidents of bullying and harassment. Whilst reporting can be difficult, particularly for students who fear reprisal, incidents must be reported to school staff. If parents become aware of a bullying or harassment incident, they must report it to their child's teacher and/or the principal. Teachers who become aware of bullying/harassment incidents will immediately contact the principal.

Planned Interventions - When a bullying or harassment incident is reported, it is vital there is a consistent response from the school.

- Once an incident of bullying/harassment has been reported, the matter will be investigated and addressed by the classroom teacher and principal. This will involve mediation and conferencing with both the student/staff member targeted and the student/staff member engaged in bullying/harassment behaviour
- There will be appropriate disciplinary action for the student/staff member engaging in bullying/harassment behaviour.
- If necessary, counselling will be provided for both the student/staff targeted by and the student/staff engaging in bullying/harassment behaviour
- The parents of all students involved will be contacted and updated throughout the response process.
- The privacy of all parties will be recognised within the bounds of privacy legislation
- Staff must also be aware of the Workplace Bullying Policy found on the Victorian State Government, Education and Training website; <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/safetyhw/Pages/workplacebullying.aspx> (Appendix 2)
 - As part of Respectful Workplace's program, staff are encouraged to access the e-Learning module 'addressing workplace bullying' located in Edupay. Follow the link to 'other resources' then 'further/additional information' <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/hrweb/safetyhw/Pages/workplacebullying.aspx>
- To report bullying in the workplace, or seek support, you can speak with a member of leadership or your OH&S rep.
- The employee contact branch can also provide advice 9637 2595 or employee.conduct@edumail.vic.gov.au

Critical incidents are determined at the principal's discretion and include but are not limited to physical assault, sexual assault, criminal activity involving theft or serious damage of property, serious threats or homophobic bullying. If parents are concerned or have complaints regarding the school's anti-bullying processes, they may contact the principal, then if required the Department of Education and Training: <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/parents/complaints/Pages/default.aspx>

This policy will be reviewed every 4 years.