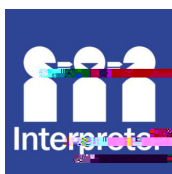


# Bullying Prevention Policy

## Summary

Table 1 - Document details

Publication date	May 2024
Review date	May 2026
Related legislation/applicable section of legislation	
Related policies, procedures, guidelines, standards, frameworks	RSC Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy RSC Digital Technologies Policy
Approval date	May 2024



### Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the school on 9755 4555.

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## 1. Purpose

Rowville Secondary College is committed to providing a safe and respectful learning environment where bullying will not be tolerated.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- x explain the definition of bullying
- x make clear that any form of bullying at Rowville Secondary College will not be tolerated
- x 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
- x outline the strategies and programs in place at Rowville Secondary College to build a positive school culture and prevent bullying behaviour
- x ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are appropriately investigated and addressed
- x ensure that support is provided to students who may be affected by bullying behaviour (including victims, bystanders, and perpetrators)
- x seek parental and peer group support in addressing and preventing bullying behaviour at Rowville Secondary College.

When responding to bullying behaviour, Rowville Secondary College aims to:

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

Rowville Secondary College 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.

## 2. Scope

This policy addresses how Rowville Secondary College aims to prevent and respond to student bullying behaviour. Rowville Secondary College 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 Wellbeing and Engagement Policy.

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions. It also applies to bullying behaviour between students that occurs outside of school hours, where the behaviour impacts on student wellbeing and safety at school.



### **Other distressing behaviour and inappropriate 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 and/or the Bullying Prevention Policy where the behaviour constitutes bullying.

**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**

- x We engage in school wide positive behaviour support strategies with our staff and students, which includes programs such as:
  - o Respectful Relationships
  - o Berry Street Education Model
  - o School Wide Positive Behaviour Support
- x In the classroom, our social and emotional learning curriculum teaches students what constitutes bullying and how to respond to bullying behaviour assertively. This promotes resilience, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving.
- x Teachers are encouraged to incorporate classroom management strategies that discourage bullying and promote positive behaviour.
- x A range of year level incursions and programs are planned for each year to raise awareness about bullying and its impacts.
- x We promote upstander behaviour as a way of empowering our students to take appropriate action positively and safely when they see or hear of a peer being bullied.
- x The Peer Support Program encourages positive relationships between students in different

1. record the details of the allegations in Compass and
2. inform the Learning Mentor and House Leader

The House Leader is responsible for investigating allegations of bullying in a timely and sensitive manner. To appropriately investigate an allegation of bullying, the House Leader may:

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

All communications with the House Leader in the course of investigating an allegation of bullying will be managed sensitively. 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 implement an appropriate response most effectively to that behaviour.

Serious bullying, including serious cyberbullying, is a criminal offence and may be referred to Victoria

- x 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.
- x 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.
- x 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.
- x Facilitate a process using the Support Group Method, involving the victim student(s), the perpetrator students and a group of students who are likely to be supportive of the victim(s).
- x Facilitate a Student Support Group meeting and/or Behaviour Support Plan for affected students.
- x Prepare a Safety Plan or Individual Management Plan restricting contact between victim and perpetrator students.
- x Provide discussion and/or mentoring for different social and emotional learning competencies of the students involved.
- x Monitor the behaviour of the students involved for an appropriate time and take follow up action if necessary.
- x Implement year group targeted strategies to reinforce positive behaviours.
- x Implement disciplinary consequences for the students engaging in bullying behaviour, 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.

The House Leader is responsible for maintaining up to date records of the investigation of and responses to bullying behaviour.

Rowville Secondary College 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



- x Complaints Policy
- x Duty of Care Policy
- x Inclusion and Diversity 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:

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

## 7. Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed every two years, or earlier as required, following analysis of school data on reported incidents of, and responses to, bullying to ensure that the policy remains up to date, practical and effective.

Data will be collected through:

- x discussion with students
- x regular student bullying surveys
- x regular staff surveys
- x assessment of school-based data, including the number of reported incidents of bullying in each year group and the effectiveness of the responses implemented.