



Rosewood Downs Primary School

Bullying Prevention Policy



HELP FOR NON-ENGLISH SPEAKERS

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact Rosewood Downs Primary School on 03 9795 3744 or rosewood.downs.ps@education.vic.gov.au.

PURPOSE

Rosewood Downs Primary School 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 Rosewood Downs Primary School community
- make clear that no form of bullying at Rosewood Downs Primary School will be tolerated
- outline the strategies and programs in place at Rosewood Downs Primary School to build a positive school culture and prevent bullying behaviour
- ask that everyone in our school community be alert to signs and evidence of bullying behaviour, and understands the importance of reporting bullying behaviour to school staff
- ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are appropriately investigated and addressed
- ensure that support is provided to students who may be affected by bullying behaviour (including targets, bystanders, witnesses and students engaging in bullying behaviour)
- seek parental and peer group support in addressing and preventing bullying behaviour at Rosewood Downs Primary School.

When responding to bullying behaviour, Rosewood Downs Primary School aims to:

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

Rosewood Downs Primary School 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 Rosewood Downs Primary School aims to prevent, address and respond to student bullying behaviour. Rosewood Downs Primary School 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 Child Safety and Wellbeing, and Student Wellbeing and Engagement policies.

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.

DEFINITIONS

1. Bullying

In 2018 the Education Council of the Council of Australian Governments endorsed the following definition of bullying for use by all Australian schools:

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.

Bullying has three main features:

- It involves a misuse of power in a relationship
- It is ongoing and repeated, and
- It involves behaviours that can cause harm.

There are four main types of bullying behaviour:

- Physical – examples include hitting, pushing, shoving or intimidating or otherwise physically hurting another person, damaging or stealing their belongings. It includes threats of violence.
- Verbal/written – examples include name-calling or insulting someone about an attribute, quality or personal characteristic.
- Social (sometimes called relational or emotional bullying) – examples include 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.
- Cyberbullying – 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.

Bullying can be a form of racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia or other type of social prejudice when the behaviour is targeted at an individual or group because of a personal characteristic, such as race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability.

For further information about bullying, refer to: [Bully Stoppers](#) and the Department's [Bullying Prevention and Response](#) policy on the Policy and Advisory Library.

2. Other distressing and inappropriate behaviours

Many distressing and inappropriate behaviours may not constitute bullying even though they are unpleasant. Students who are involved in or who witness any distressing and inappropriate behaviours should report their

concerns to school staff and our school will follow the Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy and/or this 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 of nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. However, single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression are not acceptable behaviours at our school and may have serious consequences for students engaging in this behaviour. Rosewood Downs Primary School will use its Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy to guide a response to single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression.

Harassment is language or actions that are demeaning, offensive or intimidating to a person. It can take many forms, including sexual harassment and disability harassment.

Discrimination is behaviour that treats someone unfavourably because of a personal characteristic (for example, race, religious belief or activity, disability, sex or intersex status, gender identity or sexual orientation).

Discrimination, harassment, and any other inappropriate behaviour is not tolerated at our school and there may be serious consequences for students engaging in this behaviour. This includes any form of racism, religious or disability discrimination, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, or any other behaviour that targets an individual or group.

POLICY

Rosewood Downs Primary School has a number of programs and strategies in place to build a positive and inclusive school culture and relationships to promote wellbeing. We strive to foster a school culture that prevents bullying behaviour by modelling, encouraging and teaching behaviour that demonstrates acceptance, kindness and respect.

Bullying prevention at Rosewood Downs Primary School is proactive and is supported by research that indicates that a whole school, multifaceted approach is the most effect way to prevent and address bullying. At our school:

Whole-school culture and inclusion

- The School-wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) framework is embedded to create safe, positive and inclusive learning environments that explicitly teach and reinforce expected behaviours and discourage inappropriate behaviours, including those related to bullying.
- The school celebrates and values the diverse backgrounds of members of the school community through multicultural education and the teaching of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and cultures to promote mutual respect and social cohesion.
- The school participates in initiatives such as Harmony Day to promote inclusivity, respect and cultural diversity.

Explicit teaching of respectful relationships

- The URStrong Friendology and Respectful Relationships scope and sequence is implemented across the school to teach friendship skills, empathy, emotional regulation and conflict resolution. Students are

explicitly taught the difference between conflict, mean behaviour and bullying and are encouraged to demonstrate upstander behaviour.

- Families are supported with guidance and information about positive friendships, respectful behaviour and online safety.

Student belonging and engagement

- Students are supported to develop a strong sense of belonging and positive peer relationships through initiatives such as the Year 6 and Prep buddy program, student leadership opportunities, and structured lunchtime clubs and activities.
- The school provides structured and inclusive play opportunities, including lunchtime clubs, sports equipment borrowing and scheduled access to playground resources, to promote positive peer interactions and reduce playground conflict.

Wellbeing support, supervision and early intervention

- The school employs a Mental Health and Wellbeing Leader (MHWL) through the Mental Health in Primary Schools (MHIPS) initiative to support a whole-school approach to mental health and wellbeing.
- Targeted proactive supports, including social skills groups and wellbeing interventions, are provided for students who require additional support with friendships or social interactions.
- Staff maintain active supervision of classrooms and playground spaces to support early identification of concerning behaviour and provide positive guidance.
- Staff monitor student wellbeing and record early signs of behaviour that could escalate into bullying so patterns can be identified and addressed proactively.
- The school provides multiple pathways for students to seek help or report concerns, including trusted teachers, wellbeing staff and school leadership.
- School leadership regularly reviews supervision practices, wellbeing programs and teaching approaches to respond to emerging trends and strengthen preventative strategies.

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

3. Incident Response

Reporting concerns to Rosewood Downs Primary School

Bullying is not tolerated at our school. We ensure bullying behaviour is identified and addressed with appropriate and proportionate consequences. All bullying complaints will be taken seriously and responded to sensitively.

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

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 Rosewood Downs Primary School are timely and appropriate in the circumstances.

We encourage students to speak to your classroom teacher as a first point of contact. However, students are welcome to discuss their concerns with any trusted member of staff.

Parents or carers who develop concerns that their child is involved in, or has witnessed bullying behaviour at Rosewood Downs Primary School should contact their child's classroom teacher, or the Principal either in person, by phone (03) 9795 3744 or by email rosewood.downs.ps@education.vic.gov.au.

Investigations

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

1. record the details of the allegations on Compass Education as a chronicle entry and include relevant staff in the notification chain

2. inform relevant staff such as classroom teachers of all students involved and leadership staff (Principal, Assistant Principal, and/or Leading Teacher)

Leadership staff (Principal, Assistant Principal, and/or Leading Teacher) are responsible for investigating allegations of bullying in a timely and sensitive manner. To appropriately investigate an allegation of bullying, leadership staff may:

- speak to the those involved in the allegations, including the target/s, the students allegedly engaging in bullying behaviour/s and any witnesses to the incidents
- speak to the parents/carer(s) of the students involved
- speak to the teachers of the students involved
- take detailed notes of all discussions for future reference
- obtain written statements from all or any of the above.

All communications with the relevant classroom teachers/education support staff, and leadership staff during 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 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](#).

4. Responses to bullying behaviours

When relevant classroom teachers/education support staff and/or leadership staff have 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 leadership staff (Principal, Assistant Principal, and/or Leading Teacher), SSS, the Department of Education.

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, Rosewood Downs Primary School will consider:

- the age and maturity and individual circumstances of the students involved
- the severity and frequency of the bullying, and the impact it has had on the target student
- whether the perpetrator student/s engaging in bullying behaviour have displayed similar behaviour before
- whether the bullying took place in a group or one-to-one context
- whether the students engaging in bullying behaviour demonstrates insight or remorse for their behaviour
- the alleged motive of the behaviour.

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

Rosewood Downs Primary School responds to reports of bullying using a range of proportionate, supportive and restorative strategies. Responses are guided by the Rosewood Downs Primary School Conflict Severity Matrix, which outlines increasing levels of behaviour severity based on factors such as misuse of power, repetition of behaviour, intent and harm caused. The matrix supports consistent responses ranging from teacher intervention

through to more serious consequences where required. Depending on the circumstances, the school may implement one or more of the following responses.

Wellbeing support and student safety

- Providing wellbeing support for the target student(s), students engaging in the bullying behaviour and other affected students, which may include break passes to access the STEM Lab, participation in social skills programs or additional wellbeing support.
- Developing Safety Plans, Individual Management Plans or attendance plans where bullying has contributed to safety concerns or school refusal.
- Adjusting supervision or environments where necessary to support student safety.

Restorative and problem-solving approaches

- Facilitating restorative practice conversations or meetings to repair relationships and support students to take responsibility for their behaviour.
- Facilitating mediation between students where appropriate and where students participate voluntarily.

Targeted support, monitoring and family communication

- Providing mentoring or coaching to support the development of students' social and emotional skills.
- Developing a Student Support Group (SSG) and/or Behaviour Support Plan where ongoing support is required.
- Monitoring the behaviour of students involved and implementing follow-up actions where necessary.
- Informing families when bullying concerns arise and maintaining open communication while the matter is addressed.

Disciplinary responses

- Applying proportionate disciplinary consequences where appropriate, which may include removal from class or the yard, withdrawal of privileges, internal suspension, external suspension or expulsion, consistent with the school's Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy, the Ministerial Order on Suspensions and Expulsions and relevant Department policies.

Rosewood Downs Primary School 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.

The leadership staff (Principal, Assistant Principal and Leading Teacher) are responsible for maintaining up to date records of the investigation of and responses to bullying behaviour.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in our staff handbook/manual
- Discussed at staff briefings/meetings as required
- Discussed at parent information nights/sessions
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Included as annual reference in school newsletter
- Discussed at student forums/through communication tools
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

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

Our school also follows Department of Education policy relating to bullying including:

- [Bullying Prevention and Response](#)
- [Cybersafety and Responsible Use of Digital Technologies](#)
- [Equal Opportunity and Human Rights – Students](#)
- [LGBTIQA+ Student Support 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](#)
- [Report racism or religious discrimination in schools](#)
- [Kids Helpline](#)
- [ReachOut Australia](#)
- [Lifeline](#)
- [Bullying. No way!](#)
- [Student Wellbeing Hub](#)
- [eSafety Commissioner](#)
- [Australian Student Wellbeing Framework](#)

EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years, or earlier as required following an incident or analysis of new research or school data relating to bullying, to ensure that the policy remains up to date, practical and effective.

Data to inform this evaluation will be collected through:

- discussion and consultation with school staff, students and parent/carers
- assessment of other school-based data, including the number of reported incidents of bullying in each year group and the effectiveness of the responses implemented
- Attitudes to School Survey
- Parent Opinion Survey

Proposed amendments to this policy will be discussed with school council.

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	March 2026
Consultation	Consulted 21 April 2026 with School Council
Approved by	Principal
Next scheduled review date	Before March 2028 [month, year – noting 2-year review cycle]