



Summary

Table 1 - Document details

Publication date	May 2022
Review date	May 2024
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 2022
Version	1.2

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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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.

Bullying can be:

1. *direct physical bullying* – e.g., hitting, tripping, and pushing or damaging property.
2. *direct verbal bullying* – e.g., name calling, insults, homophobic or racist remarks, verbal abuse.
3. *indirect bullying* – e.g., spreading rumours, playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate, mimicking, encouraging others to socially exclude a person and/or damaging a person's social reputation or social acceptance.

Cyberbullying is direct or indirect bullying behaviour using digital technology. For example via a mobile phone, tablets, computers, chat rooms, email, social media, etc. It can be verbal, written or include use of images, video and/or audio.

Other distressing 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

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

INCIDENT RESPONSE

Reporting concerns to Rowville Secondary College

Bullying complaints will be taken seriously and responded to sensitively at our school and without recrimination against the complainant or victim of the alleged bullying.

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.

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 Rowville Secondary College are timely and appropriate in the circumstances.

We encourage students to speak to the Learning Mentor. However, students are welcome to discuss their concerns with any trusted member of staff including teachers, Wellbeing staff and Social Workers.

Parents or carers who develop concerns that their child is involved in, or has witnessed bullying behaviour at Rowville Secondary College should contact Student Wellbeing co-ordinator on 9755 4555.

Investigations

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

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

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

- speak to the students involved in the allegations, I Td(7s)-1.3 (ib6-5.6 (e)(m)-6.6 (r)8 (ir c)2.2 (n5 ((

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- Provide discussion and/or mentoring for different social and emotional learning competencies of the students involved.
- 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.
- 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 Learning Mentor 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 with updates on the management of bullying incidents.

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

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

- Statement of Values
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Duty of Care Policy
- 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:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

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:

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