



Ramco Primary School

Anti-Bullying Policy



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This Policy has been developed in light of the Cossey Report recommendations, the National Safe Schools Framework and input from all stakeholders.

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STATEMENT:

Our core values of Respect, Responsibility, Resilience and Honesty help us build a school community free from bullying, harassment, discrimination and violence.

OUR SCHOOL DOES NOT TOLERATE BULLYING

Ramco Primary School will provide a safe, inclusive, supportive and ordered learning environment free from bullying, harassment and violence. Bullying, including cyber bullying, harassment and violence, is not acceptable in this school and will be dealt with seriously and expediently.

The school will work with the school community and other services and agencies to support its' students in being responsible and productive members of this community.

DEFINITIONS:

Bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons. Cyber Bullying refers to bullying through information and communications technologies such as the Internet and mobile phones. Conflicts or fights between equals and single incidents are not defined as bullying. Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long standing effects on those involved, including bystanders.

Examples include: **Direct Bullying** – such as physical or verbal abuse and **Indirect Bullying** – such as deliberate, ongoing, disrespectful behaviour towards others

Harassment is behaviour that targets an individual or group due to their identity, race, culture or ethnic origin; religion; physical characteristics; gender; sexual orientation; marital, parenting or economic status; age; ability or disability and that offends, humiliates, intimidates or creates a hostile environment.

Harassment may be an ongoing pattern of behaviour, or it may be a single act. It may be directed randomly or towards the same person(s). It may be intentional or unintentional, i.e. words or actions that offend and distress one person may be genuinely regarded by the person doing them as minor or harmless.

Harassment is unacceptable and needs to be addressed as part of creating a safe school. It would not be considered bullying if any one or more of the following three features were present:

- it occurred only once and was not part of a repeated pattern
- it (genuinely) was not intended to offend, demean, annoy, alarm or abuse
- it was not directed towards the same person(s) each time.

Violence is the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against another person(s) that results in psychological harm, injury or in some cases death. Violence may involve provoked or unprovoked acts and can be a single incident, a random act or can occur over time.

Should physical assault occur, the '*DECD Assault Site Responsibilities Procedure*' is to be followed.

Discrimination occurs when people are treated less favourably than others because of their race, culture or ethnic origin; religion; physical characteristics; gender; sexual orientation; marital, parenting or economic status; age; ability or disability. Discrimination is often ongoing and commonly involves exclusion or rejection.

Cyberbullying is a term used to describe bullying that is carried out through internet or mobile phone technologies.

Examples include:

- pranking - repeated hang ups, anonymous, mocking or threatening phone calls.
- image sharing - forwarding or sharing unflattering or private images without permission.
- sexually explicit images - people of any age, who forward or share images of a sexual nature of a person under 18 needs to be aware that this is a criminal offence (child pornography) that may result in prosecution.
- text and email - sending insulting or threatening text messages or emails.
- personal online information - publishing online someone's private, personal or embarrassing information without permission, or spreading rumours online.
- identity theft - assuming someone's identity online and negatively representing them in a way that damages their reputation or relationships.
- hate sites - creating hate sites or implementing social exclusion campaigns on social networking sites.

Sexual harassment is any unwanted, unwelcome or uninvited behaviour of a sexual nature that makes a person feel humiliated, intimidated or offended. Sexual harassment can take many different forms and may include physical contact, verbal comments, jokes, propositions, the display of offensive material or other behaviour that creates a hostile environment. (Australian Human Rights Commission, 2010)

REPORTING:

Who to report to:

Parents and students can report incidents of bullying, including cyber bullying, to their class teacher in the first instance and, if the incident is serious or unresolved, to the principal, or to someone on the school's staff they have confidence in.

It is difficult for the school to follow up on an incident if it is unaware of it and, therefore, we encourage all incidents to be reported.

How to report:

Parents and students may find it helpful to write down the details of the incident as a first step. A face-to-face discussion is usually the best way of reporting an incident and, if dissatisfied with the outcome, follow up with a written statement with the request for a further meeting.

If seriously concerned about the manner in which the school is dealing with an incident, a parent can follow the Ramco Primary School Complaint Policy and Procedure.

When to report:

Reporting of an incident should occur as soon after the incident as possible. This gives the school the best opportunity to follow up the incident and intervene.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES – What can students do about Bullying?

If you are being bullied, there are several things you can do;

- Tell them to stop, clearly state that the behaviour is unwelcome and offensive
- Talk it over with your teacher, parent / caregiver; they can help you make a decision about what to do
- **Report it.** Don't ignore it. When bullying is ignored, it often gets worse
- Disempower those engaging in bullying by speaking up and don't be part of the audience, as the bystander
- Show persistence in addressing problems that do not just go away. Keep trying to solve them
- Report any incidents of bullying on a 'Student Concern Report' if your attempts to solve the problem have not worked
- Do **NOT** retaliate with verbal abuse, physical violence or cyber bullying
- If seriously endangered in the community after hours, *have an adult help* to ring the Waikerie Police:

8541 2888

If you see bullying happening to another student:

- Tell the person to stop bullying
- Be a friend to the person affected
- Encourage the person affected by the behaviour to report the incident to a classroom / yard duty teacher
- Encourage the person affected to talk it over with their parent / caregiver
- Record the incident on a 'Student Concern Report' and give to your classroom teacher
- Talk it over with your parent / caregiver; they can help you make a decision about what to do

PARENT RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Encourage children to talk things through with you so that you can ascertain the facts.
- Try to keep an open mind, remembering that there are other points of view.
- Talk to children about what **they** can do to make themselves safe.
- Communicate with school staff so we can work **together** to restore safety and equity.
- Raise any concerns with staff so they can find out the facts.
- Do not approach other parents or their children.

The Principal will:

- Develop, implement and review regularly the school's anti-bullying policy (involving staff, parents and students)
- Survey regularly all or a random selection of students, parents and teachers
- Provide to the Governing Council updates in relation to school bullying data and trends and any anti-bullying programs/initiatives in place or being considered
- Make this report available to the general school community via the newsletter and place on the school's website for easy access by parents
- Include the topic of bullying behaviour as a Governing Council meeting agenda item at least twice a year
- Ensure that new staff and new students and their families are aware of the school community's negotiated anti-bullying policy and the decision-making procedures open to them if they wish to influence school practice
- Ensure the inclusion of the school's Student Code of Behaviour as part of the school's enrolment process
- Manage the incidents of bullying in a way that is consistent with the DECD School Discipline Policy and Ramco Primary School Code of Behaviour
- When necessary, implement sanctions in line with policy – and which may include take home, suspension or exclusion if the Principal deems it necessary to ensure the safety and wellbeing of the school community.
- Ensure ongoing training and development of teachers, induction of students and the provision of information to parents
- Manage a whole school approach to ensure the '*Keeping Safe Child Protection Curriculum*' is implemented in all year levels
- Ensure that all parents have access to:
 - The school's anti-bullying policy,
 - The DECD Bullying and harassment at school: Advice for parents and caregivers leaflet
 - Information about the '*Keeping Safe Child Protection Curriculum*' and related documents
 - To reports presented to Governing Council
- Ensure that all parents are aware of their rights to advocacy and of avenues open to them in establishing an anti-bullying policy

School staff members will:

- Develop and foster positive relationships with students and families
- Communicate and interact effectively with students and engage in cooperative problem solving relationships to address issues of bullying
- Participate in developing, implementing and reviewing the school's anti-bullying policy, curriculum and in-service offerings, and the procedures for managing incidents of bullying
- Critically reflect on practices and develop the knowledge and skills needed to manage incidents of bullying successfully
- Establish, maintain, make explicit and model the school's expectations relating to bullying

- Participate in training and development related to decreasing bullying in schools
- Support students to be effective bystanders
- Ensure the concept of bullying is defined clearly and sensibly
- Collect relevant data using surveys and questionnaires
- Provide regular lessons in the classroom. How to prevent bullying should be a significant part of the students' social education curriculum
- Follow up any grievances using the Ramco Primary School Complaint Policy and Procedure

RECOGNISING BULLYING:

Some signs that a student is being bullied **may** be;

- Unexplained cuts, bruises or scratches
- Damaged clothing or property
- A pattern of vague headaches or stomach aches
- Unwillingness to go to school
- Asking for extra pocket money or food
- Personal items or equipment have gone missing
- Regular tearfulness, anxiety or difficulty sleeping
- Expresses threats to hurt self or others
- Change in normal behaviour
- 'Hiding' information on mobile phones, emails or in comments on their social networking pages

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

Consideration will be given to students with a disability, gifted students, Special School students, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, students in care (guardianship), and students who are same sex attracted, in managing incidents of bullying.

The school will include in education plans any issues related to bullying, harassment, violence, discrimination or child protection matters for students with a disability (Negotiated Education Plan), an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander student (Individual Learning Plan) and students under guardianship (Individual Education Plan).

As part of the enrolment process, the school will require parents and/or students to acknowledge/agree to the school's Code of Behaviour.

ACTIONS:

RESPONSES TO INCIDENTS, FOLLOW- UP AND REPORTING TO PARENTS

Some flexibility is needed in how incidents are tackled, depending on the nature, severity and extent of the bullying. Staff will seek to respond to school bullying in the most appropriate way. This may include the use of sanctions in extreme cases, but recognise that progress can often only be made using a problem-solving approach working with students.

In extreme cases, under the Regulations pursuant to the Education Act, a student can be suspended or excluded from attendance at school if they:

Act in a manner that threatens the safety or well-being of a student or member of staff of, or other person associated with the school (including by sexually harassing, racially vilifying, verbally abusing or bullying that person).

Principals can use these regulations for incidents that occur off-site and/or out of school hours if another student's safety or wellbeing has been threatened. Therefore, these regulations can be used for incidents of cyber bullying or violence.

The Principal (or delegate) will:

- Follow-up with students who are victims or perpetrators of bullying to ensure they feel safe at school and remain connected to the school following an incident
- Notify parents of the victim of violence at the earliest opportunity
- Undertake to collaborate with parents in addressing the problem of bullying, especially in the resolution of cases in which action is to be taken by both the school and parents

PREVENTION, INTERVENTION AND COPING STRATEGIES:

Protection and Prevention Strategies:

- Using the curriculum to teach students about respectful relationships, civics and citizenship
- School Values – Respect, Responsibility, Resilience and Honesty
- Developing policies which promote student safety
- Teaching for and about diversity
- Teaching students about violence prevention, conflict resolution, anger management and problem-solving strategies
- Keeping Safe Child Protection Curriculum
- Kids Matter and National Safe Schools Program
- Social and emotional skills programs, including 'Play is the Way'
- Developing programs to help students participate and have a say in their learning
- Student Representative Council (SRC)
- Class Meetings
- Whole school approach – professional development for staff and a consistent approach
- Inclusion and wellbeing practices
- Transition and induction programs
- Friday Fun – promoting positive behaviour program
- Bully audit twice a year
- School Counsellor
- Student Opinion Surveys/ parents / staff through Kids Matter Program
- Students of Concern agenda item at weekly staff meetings

Intervention Strategies:

- Counselling students who have engaged / been affected by bullying using Restorative Justice techniques
- Talking with parents/caregivers about the situation
- Putting consequences in place for those who engage in bullying behaviour
- Teaching students not to be a bystander
- Ensuring all staff address bullying effectively and respectfully
- Following the RPS Code of Behaviour process

Post-Intervention Strategies:

- Monitoring any bullying situations to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all involved is maintained
- Talking with parents/caregivers about prevention strategies
- Reviewing and evaluating behaviour codes and practices
- Reporting bullying data to Governing Council (individual names are not disclosed)

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT:

- All staff undertake mandatory in-service training in Responding to abuse and neglect: Education and care (RAN-EC) training
- Annual review of training needs to be undertaken by Principal
- Staff identify training needs
- Teaching students about violence prevention, conflict resolution, anger management and problem-solving strategies
- Keeping Safe Child Protection Curriculum
- Staff participate in developing, implementing and reviewing the school's anti-bullying policy, curriculum and in-service offerings, and the procedures for managing incidents of bullying

DISTRIBUTION LIST:

- The Principal will make this report available to the general school community via the newsletter and place on the school's website for easy access by parents by ICT officer
- A hard copy of this policy can be located in the RPS Policy Folder and an electronic copy available on Admin drive

FURTHER RESOURCES

DECD Discipline Policy

Cossey Review 2011

Ramco Primary School Code of Behaviour Flow Chart

National Safe Schools Framework

Ramco Primary School Code of Behaviour

'Keeping Safe Child Protection Curriculum'

FURTHER INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

www.bullyingnoway.com.au

DATE REVIEWED:

Reviewed in consultation and with input from;

Governing Council

School Staff

Student Representative Council Members