



## **BULLYING PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION**

Bullying is the repeated and intentional behaviour of causing fear, distress or harm towards another person that involves an imbalance of power. It can involve humiliation, domination, intimidation, victimisation and harassment. In any bullying incident there are likely to be three parties involved: the bully, the person being bullied, and bystanders.

Bullying can take many forms including:

- Physical bullying which involves physical actions such as hitting, pushing, obstructing or being used to hurt or intimidate someone. Damaging, stealing or hiding personal belongings is also a form of physical bullying.
- Psychological bullying which is when words or actions are used to cause psychological harm. Examples of psychological bullying include name-calling, teasing or making fun of someone because of their actions, appearance, physical characteristics or cultural background.
- Indirect bullying which is when deliberate acts of exclusion or spreading of untrue stories are used to hurt or intimidate someone.
- Cyber bullying which is the ongoing abuse of power to threaten or harm another person using technology. Cyber bullying can occur in chat rooms, on social networking sites, through emails or on mobile phones.

### **Rosebank's Policy**

All students, their families and employees at the College have the right to a learning and work environment free from intimidation, humiliation and hurt.

Bullying is not tolerated at Rosebank College.

This policy supports the College community to prevent, reduce and respond to bullying.

It is our policy that:

- bullying be managed through a 'whole-of-College community' approach involving students, staff and parents/guardians
- bullying prevention strategies are implemented within the College on a continuous basis with a focus on teaching age-appropriate skills and strategies to empower staff, students and parents/guardians to recognise bullying and respond appropriately
- bullying response strategies are tailored to the circumstances of each incident
- staff establish positive role models emphasising our no-bullying culture
- bullying prevention and intervention strategies are reviewed on an annual basis against best practice.

### **Policy Framework**

As a Catholic school and in the spirit of the St. Benedict and the Good Samaritan, we at Rosebank College seek to help young people learn the values of honesty, tolerance, understanding, self-discipline, co-operation and resourcefulness.

We want a safe, secure and welcoming school where everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

This means no-one should be hurt, feel threatened, frightened or harassed either physically or verbally. We need to realise the importance of reporting such instances so that anyone can find support from all sections of our school.

We want everyone – students, teachers and parents – to deal with bullying by taking a stand against it, whether they are the targets or witnesses. Teachers, students and parents have a responsibility to take a stand against behaviour which jeopardises positive relationships.

Students are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the **College Student Welfare Charter**, printed in the Student Diary, which supports this Policy.

## **Bullying Prevention Strategies**

Rosebank College recognises that the implementation of whole-College prevention strategies is the most effective way of eliminating, or at least minimising incidents of bullying within our community. The following initiatives form part of our overall bullying prevention strategy and our strategy to create a 'no-bullying' culture within the College:

- a structured curriculum and peer group support system, that provides age-appropriate information and skills relating to bullying (including cyber bullying) and bullying prevention, to students over the course of the academic year
- education, training and professional development of staff in bullying prevention and response strategies
- regular provision of information to parents/guardians, to raise awareness of bullying as a College community issue to equip them to recognise signs of bullying, as well as to provide them with clear paths for raising any concerns they may have relating to bullying directly with the College
- promotion of a supportive environment that encourages the development of positive relationships and communication between staff, students and parents/guardians
- promotion of responsible bystander behaviour amongst students, staff and parents/guardians
- reporting of incidents of alleged bullying by students, bystanders, parents/guardians and staff are encouraged, and made easy through the establishment of multiple reporting channels (as specified below)
- regular risk assessments of bullying within the College are undertaken by surveying students to identify bullying issues that may ordinarily go unnoticed by staff
- records of reported bullying incidents are maintained and analysed, in order to identify persistent bullies and/or victims and to implement targeted prevention strategies where appropriate
- statements supporting bullying prevention are included in students' College diaries
- education of staff, students and parents/guardians on health conditions to promote understanding and to reduce stigma and fear
- anti-bullying posters are displayed strategically within the College
- promotion of student awareness and a 'no-bullying' environment by participating in events such as the National Day of Action Against Bullying and Violence.

## **Reporting Bullying**

Students and their parents/guardians are sometimes reluctant to pursue bullying incidents, for fear that it will only make matters worse. A key part of the College's bullying prevention and intervention strategy is to encourage reporting of bullying incidents as well as providing assurance to students who experience bullying (and parents/guardians) that:

- bullying is not tolerated within the College
- their concerns will be taken seriously
- the College has a clear strategy for dealing with bullying issues.

Bullying incidents can be advised to the College verbally (or in writing) through any of the following avenues:

- informing a trusted teacher
- informing the College Counsellor
- informing a student's House Coordinator
- informing the Assistant Principal or the Principal.

Parents/guardians are encouraged to learn to recognise signs of bullying and notify the College through the House Coordinator, if they suspect their child is a victim of bullying.

## **Responding to Bullying**

Bullying behaviours vary enormously in their extent and intent and, as a consequence, each incident needs to be dealt with on its facts. In all circumstances the College:

- takes bullying incidents seriously
- provides assurance to the victim that they are not at fault and their confidentiality will be respected
- takes time to properly investigate the facts including discussing the incident with the victim, the bully and any bystanders
- takes time to understand any concerns of individuals involved
- maintains records of reported bullying incidents
- will escalate its response when dealing with persistent bullies and/or severe incidents.

Actions that may be taken when responding to bullying include:

- The "Method of Shared Concern" Approach (Pikas);
- The "No Blame" Approach (Maines & Robinson);

These approaches may be used to intervene in group or relational bullying situations. They are only appropriate during the initial stages. They are not appropriate for persistent or severe bullying incidents.

- notification of/consultation with parents/guardians
- offering counselling to persistent bullies/victims
- implementing effective follow up strategies
- disciplinary action, at the Principal's discretion, including suspension and expulsion of persistent bullies, or in cases of severe incidents.

## **External Support Services**

The following external support services are available to students and staff:

### **Youth Liaison Officers**

Youth Liaison Officers are NSW Police Force members who are responsible for administering the Young Offenders Act 1997 (NSW). They are responsible for delivering cautions, referring children to youth justice conferences, and implementing strategies to reduce crime by juveniles in the community.

The Youth Liaison Officer allocated to Rosebank College is from Burwood Police. The Youth Liaison Officer can be contacted on (02) 9745 8499.

### **School Liaison Police**

School Liaison Police are NSW Police officers who work with schools to reduce crime, violence and anti-social behaviour. School Liaison Police are a point of contact for the College community and the NSW Police Force. Our students are encouraged to contact the School Liaison police if they have any concerns.

Our School Liaison Police Officer is located at Burwood Police. The School Liaison Police Officer can be contacted on (02) 9745 8499.

## **Staff Responsibilities**

All staff are responsible to:

- model appropriate, respectful and supportive behaviour at all times
- deal with all reported and observed incidents of bullying in accordance with this policy
- ensure that any incident of bullying that they observe or is reported to them, is recorded appropriately
- be vigilant in monitoring students that have been identified as either persistent bullies or victims
- acknowledge the right of parents/carers to speak with the College if they believe their child is being bullied.

## **Signage**

Anti-bullying posters may be posted in strategic locations in the College to promote appropriate behaviour and encourage students to respect individual differences and diversity.

## **Implementation**

This policy is implemented through a combination of:

- staff training
- student and parent/guardian education and information
- effective incident reporting procedures
- effective management of bullying incidents when reported
- the creation of a 'no-bullying' culture within the College community
- effective record keeping procedures
- initiation of corrective actions where necessary.