BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY

This policy is to advise and guide the Principal whose responsibility it is to implement policy with appropriate procedures – See Bullying Prevention Procedures

Rossbourne School takes a zero-tolerance approach to child abuse and is fully committed to ensuring that its strategies, policies, procedures and practices meet all Child Safety Standards as specified in Ministerial Order No. 870 (2015)

PURPOSE

Rossbourne 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 a shared understanding amongst all members of the School community
- make clear that no form of bullying at the School will be tolerated
- outline the strategies and programs in place at the 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 accept responsibility to report 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 and students engaging in bullying behaviour)
- seek parental and peer group support in addressing and preventing bullying behaviour at the School.

When responding to bullying behaviour, Rossbourne 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

The 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 Rossbourne School aims to prevent, address and respond to student bullying behaviour. The 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 relevant School policies and procedures.

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions.

POLICY

Definition of 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.

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 behaviours using digital technology. For example, via a mobile device, computers, chat rooms, email, social media, etc. It can be verbal, written and include images, video and/or audio.

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 be managed in accordance with relevant School policies and procedures.

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. Rossbourne School will use other relevant policies and procedures 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. Harassment of any kind will not be tolerated at the School and may have serious consequences for students engaging in this behaviour. The School will use other relevant policies and procedures to guide a response to students demonstrating harassing behaviour, unless the behaviour also constitutes bullying in which case the behaviour will be managed in accordance with the Bullying Prevention Policy.

See also Rossbourne School policies and procedures including:

- **Bullying Prevention Procedures**
- **Care, Safety and Welfare of Students (Restrictive Interventions)**
- **Student Behaviour Management – Discipline**
- **Student Wellbeing and Engagement**

POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed on a two-year basis, 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.

Ratified by Rossbourne School Council: 12 August 2020

Review date: August 2022