

Bullying and Harassment Prevention Policy



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Related Department for Education policies, procedures, guidelines, standards, frameworks	Department for Education Bullying & Prevention strategy
Related Riverbanks College B-12 policies, procedures	Positive Behaviour policy
Responsibility	School Leadership and Governing Council

Rationale

Riverbanks College B-12 is a thriving and inclusive community that lives our values of kindness, belonging, collaboration and grit. We pride ourselves on positive relationships and we will educate our students to show kindness and care for all members of our community. We have a zero tolerance to any form of bullying, violence, or harassment. We believe that all students have the right to learn in an environment where they feel safe, included, connected, confident and supported.

Purpose

- To educate staff, parents, and students in our school community about what bullying and harassment is, and about the importance of maintaining a safe and positive learning environment.
- To encourage all members of our community to identify and communicate incidents of bullying appropriately.
- To respond to incidents of bullying that have been reported to the Riverbanks College quickly and effectively.
- To utilise appropriate actions and supports when investigating incidents.

Definitions

The agreed national definition for Australian schools describes bullying as 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. [National definition of bullying for Australian Schools – developed by the Safe and Supportive School Communities Working Group and endorsed by the Education Council \(2019\)](#)

Behaviours That Do Not Constitute Bullying Include

- Mutual arguments and disagreements (where there is no power imbalance)
- not liking someone or a single act of social rejection
- one-off acts of meanness or spite
- isolated incidents of aggression, intimidation, or violence.

However, these behaviours are still considered serious and not aligned with Riverbanks College's values of kindness, collaboration, grit and belonging. At Riverbanks College our staff will work to quickly respond to any matters raised of this nature in collaboration with students and parents. Students at Riverbanks College are encouraged to report all bullying and harassment incidents through our well-being platform, posimente.

Education

Professional development for staff relating to bullying, harassment, and proven counter measures to include restorative practices processes.

Community awareness and input relating to bullying, its characteristics and appropriate responses.

Delivery of Thrive program to promote resilience, life and social skills, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving. The Thrive program includes Child Protection Curriculum (CPC) and Leaders of Learning which encompasses student empowerment and agency. Students will be actively encouraged to have a voice in issues which impact them.

Recognition of positive behaviours including communication with caregivers.

A 3 Tier Approach to Bullying Prevention

Tier 1 – Universal Practice

This tier will focus on prevention and the modelling and encouraging of our inclusive and thriving culture. Majority of our students, approximately 80%, will respond to this first, initial tier of support and strategies. Tier 1 will include the explicit teaching of social skills and emotional awareness through our Thrive Time Well-being program, the consistent modelling of our values by all Riverbanks College staff and staff education in recognising and preventing the different forms of bullying. Tier 1 encompasses core instructions and basic interventions. It includes proactive classroom management strategies aimed at creating a safe and supportive school. Students who do not respond to these interventions may move into Tier 2.

Tier 2 – Targeted Small Group Intervention

This tier will focus on students, approximately 15%, who require some additional intervention to help resolve issues and develop their social skills to improve their connection to their peers and community. Some students need extra support in developing social and emotional goals, and it is in Tier 2 that these individuals receive this support. Often these interventions and supports are delivered in small group settings, such as friendship or social skills groups. This targeted support will also include counselling and consistent check ins with a member of our wellbeing team. Students who do not respond to these interventions may move into Tier 3.

Tier 3 – Individualised and Intensive Intervention

A small percentage of students find difficulty in responding to the interventions, supports and strategies utilised in Tier 1 and 2. Tier 3 provides individualised supports, including from outside agencies. Tier 3 may also require higher level positive behaviour support interventions.

Riverbanks College May Enact One or All of the Following Positive Behaviour Support Consequences

If bullying persists, parents will be contacted, and a meeting arranged. Consequences of actions and strategies to improve behaviour will be discussed in this meeting. The severity of consequences will be increased for repeat offenders.

Documented warning (written or verbal)
 Loss of privileges including exclusion from the yard or yard restrictions
 Informing and consulting caregivers
 Mediation and/or Restorative reconnection

Ongoing counselling for both victim and perpetrator
 Social skills training
 Internal or external suspension
 Reinforcement of positive and inclusive behaviours
 Police notification

Riverbanks College will utilise consequences in line with our Positive Behaviour Support policy.

Staff Responsibilities and Expectations

Teaching and regularly reminding students of our values and culture. Employing strategies set out in the Student Engagement Framework. Uphold high expectations of student behaviour and recording incidents of behaviour which are not aligned to the ethos of Riverbanks College.

Explicitly teach the mandated CPC which covers power in relationships and bullying. Consulting with relevant team members as appropriate depending on the nature, severity, and frequency of the incident to ensure communication and resolution of the incident as effectively as possible.

Modelling appropriate behaviours to students, caregivers, other staff, and the wider community always. Using restorative practices to support students in resolving issues. Building and developing positive, respectful, and supportive relationships.

Delivering and promoting the thrive program which promotes resilience, social skills, assertiveness, tolerance, conflict resolution, restorative practices and problem solving. Participation in year level and mentor group meetings.

Student Responsibilities and Expectations

Learning and modelling our school values of kindness, collaboration, grit and belonging.

Monitoring and being mindful of their own behaviours and ensuring that they are not engaging in bullying or harassment incidents, including 'bystander behaviour'.

Supporting and encouraging their peers to do the right thing.

Participating in activities that the school provides to develop their skills, strengths, and connectedness to all members of the school community.

Actively redirecting minor behaviours of bullying and reporting higher level behaviours of bullying and harassment immediately.

Parent/Caregiver Responsibilities

Communicate any concerns of bullying and harassment to Riverbanks College using the posimente platform.

Work with all members of the Riverbanks College community to model appropriate behaviours and actively promote a community which is kind, thriving and inclusive.

To not approach any group or individual who they believe are the cause of a concern but instead, communicate their concern to Riverbanks College staff.

