

Bullying and Harassment

Wellbeing and Engagement 1.2

School Values

At Berri Regional Secondary College (BRSC) we value:

- Determination
- Safety
- Respect
- Learning

Overview

At BRSC all members of the school community have a right to learn and work in a safe and supportive school environment. We all have the right to be treated with fairness, dignity and respect. Everyone has a responsibility to keep others safe and to treat each other as equals regardless of individual differences. Harassment & bullying undermines the development of positive relationships. Bullying can have long-term effects on the health, wellbeing and education of young people. It can damage the atmosphere of a class and the climate of a school.

Scope

The aim of this policy is to ensure that BRSC is a safe environment, free from harassment & bullying, for all members of the school community. Our objectives are to; reduce the incidence of harassment or bullying; counter the view that harassment or bullying is an unavoidable part of school life; create a supportive climate and provide staff, students and parents with options to respond to harassment or bullying. To reduce the amount of bullying incidents it is essential that BRSC students' are familiar of the process of how to recognise and report bullying/harassment.

Definition

The following definitions of terms were agreed by the Safe and Supportive Schools Communities Management Group, which is a national committee, supported by the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs (MCEEDYA) with representatives from all Australian education jurisdictions.

Bullying is repeated verbal, physical or social 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 communication technologies. Conflict or fights between equals and single incidents are not regarded as bullying. Bullying in any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders.

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; and/or ability or disability. Discrimination is often ongoing and commonly involves exclusion or rejection.

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; and/or 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.

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.

Sexual harassment is unwelcome sexual conduct, which makes a person (of the same or opposite gender, same-sex attracted, bisexual or transgender) feel offended, humiliated and/or intimidated, where that reaction to the conduct is reasonable in the circumstances.

Sexual harassment can be a single incident, repeated or continuous, direct or indirect, and take various forms. Sexual harassment is a legally recognised form of sex discrimination. Behaviour of a sexual nature based on mutual attraction, friendship and respect, which is welcome or invited, consensual and reciprocal, does not constitute sexual harassment.

Examples of Bullying:

- **Physical:** hitting, pushing, touching, grabbing, looks, stares, aggressive body language, facial expressions, gestures, spitting, taking or damaging property
- **Verbal or written:** spoken or written insults, threats, suggestive comments, name-calling, unfair criticism, spreading rumours
- **Cyber:** using e-mail, voice and text messaging, social networking sites, photographic and video images
- **Graffiti:** using pictures, tags or words
- **Social:** forming groups to leave out, ignore and disrespect; influencing, encouraging or organising someone else to be involved in any type of bullying or harassment.

Example of Sexual Harassment:

- Unwelcome touching, hugging, kissing, brushing up against a person, staring or leering
- Suggestive comments or jokes; sexually explicit pictures, screen savers, posters, graffiti, letters, messages, magazines or any other visual or written medium
- Unwelcome invitations to go out on dates
- Requests for sex
- Inappropriate and intrusive personal questions about a person's private life or his/her body
- Insults, taunts, teasing or name calling of a sexual nature; or sexually explicit conversation
- Accessing sexually explicit internet sites
- Offensive telephone calls, letters, e-mails or mobile phone text messages
- Posting filmed or photographed images or comments on social networking sites
- Behaviour that may constitute a criminal offence under criminal law and reportable to the police, such as physical or indecent assault, stalking, obscene communications, and sexual assault.

Reporting

How is Bullying Reported? If you are bullied or you know someone who is being bullied, please report it. Early detection gives the school the best opportunity to follow up the incident and intervene. When bullying is ignored it may get worse.

If you are bullied:

1. Tell the person who is bullying to stop. State clearly that the behaviour is unwelcome and hurtful.
2. Seek help. Talk about it with someone you trust. This may include carers, friend or a member of the school community.
3. Report it to a trusted adult (Home Group Teacher, Subject teacher, Youth Worker, Year level leaders, Deputy Principals, Principal)
4. If bullying continues after you have reported it to a staff member please fill out a Harassment Form. These forms are available via Daymap.

If you see someone is being bullied: A bystander who observes or hears a bullying incident is considered part of the problem if they do not act or care enough to do something about it whether or not it affects you personally.

1. Support the person being bullied
2. Don't stand by and watch - get help from a teacher (home group teacher, subject teacher, yard duty teacher, youth worker, year level leader or principals).

Recognise Bullying:

1. Level 1: eg. A single incident. Both bully and victim are spoken to in an attempt to reach shared understanding and mutual concern for the situation. A Daymap record is created. Most issues can be resolved here.
2. Level 2: eg. Repeated incidents with same or different students/teachers. This is more serious. Parents/Carers will be contacted and a Daymap record is created.
3. Level 3: eg. Repeated incidents and/or an extremely serious incident. Repeat offenders will be suspended.
4. Involvement of police

Leadership Team Responsibilities:

- Develop, implement and review annually the school's anti bullying and harassment policy involving staff, parents and students
- Survey students, parents/carer and teachers, in line with the review schedule for the school's policy
- Provide updates to the Governing Council in relation to school bullying data and trends and any anti bullying programs/initiatives in place or being considered.
- Manage the incidents of bullying consistent with the DECD School Discipline Policy.
- Ensure ongoing professional development of teachers, induction of students and the provision of information to parents. This will be provided through the newsletter and school's website
- Ensure the Keeping Safe Child Protection Curriculum is implemented in all year levels.
- Ensure that all parents/carer have access to the school's Bullying and Harassment Policy including via the BRSC Website

Staff Responsibilities:

- Professional Development
- 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
- Teach programs which support an 'harassment and bully free' environment
- Encourage students to use steps to stop harassment and take action when a student presents an harassment form
- Establish, maintain, make explicit and model the school's expectations relating to bullying
- Respond to all incidents, documents details on school systems and communicate to all involved (students, parent/carers and staff)
- Implement restorative strategies to manage inappropriate behaviour and resolve conflict
- Inform parents/carers about serious incidents involving their young child
- Maintain confidentiality

Parents/carers Responsibilities:

- Keep the school informed of concerns about behaviour, their children's health issues or other matter of relevance
- Communicate in a respectful manner with the school staff about issues of concern soon after they arise
- Follow up on these concerns with relevant staff

Students Responsibilities:

- Are respectful towards other students, staff and members of the school community
- Participate in lessons about the school Bullying and Harassment policy and the Keeping Safe child protection curriculum
- Be an effective bystander (e.g. do not encourage the bully and seek help immediately)
- Communicate with an appropriate adult if bullied or harassed or if they are aware that someone else is being bullied.

Recognise Bullying

How to recognise a student's being bullied:

Students who are being bullied or harassed may not talk about it with their teachers, friends or leaders. They may be afraid that it will make things worse. This is why parents and teachers have an important part to play in helping the school and students deal with bullying. A change in behaviour in students may be a signal that they are being bullied or they have some other concern.

Signs: Some signs that a student is being bullied may be:

- Unexplained cuts, bruises or scratches
- Damaged or ripped clothing
- Vague headaches or stomach aches
- Refusal to go to school
- Asking for extra pocket money or food
- Tearfulness, anxiety or difficulty sleeping
- Hiding information on mobile phones, emails or comments on social networking
- Unexplained changes in friendship groups or not engaging with friends
- Loss of confidence and unhappiness

Training and Development

BRSC provides professional learning for teachers, as there is a distinct link between staff training and development and effective implementation of an anti-bullying policy. Teachers are regularly involved in professional development as it is significant in maintaining positive classroom practice and have lower incidents of bullying and harassment.

For further information regarding this policy contact any member of the leadership team at BRSC on (08) 8595 2677

Useful websites:

Resources are available to support understanding

These include:

- The Safe School's Framework: <https://www.education.gov.au/national-safe-schools-framework-0>
- Department for Education and Child Development: <https://www.decd.sa.gov.au/supporting-students/health-e-safety-and-wellbeing/cyber-safety-bullying-and-harassment>

(You may need to copy and paste the link in your browser)

Record history

Published: January 2021

Approvals

Status: Approved

Version: 1.0

Approved by: Governing Council

Approval date: January 2021

Review Date: December 2021

Status: Approved

Version: 1.1

Approved by: Governing Council

Approval date: December 2021 (minor amendments)

Review Date: December 2022