DEVELOPING POSITIVE PEER RELATIONSHIPS

Anti Bullying Policy

Any form of bullying behaviour is unacceptable at Richmond High School. We have implemented a range of strategies to deal with these issues. At Richmond High School we will continue to work to minimise all anti social behaviour and promote a safe learning environment.

National surveys indicate that up to one in six students report being bullied on a weekly or even more regular basis. As in any large school, students at Richmond High experience parallel patterns of behaviour. The majority of bullying behaviour in schools involve name calling and verbal forms of abuse. There has been an increase in the use of electronic media, SMS, email harassment and social network communication in recent years and the school has a responsibility to act in any situation which is clearly linked to the school.

The strategies to deal with bullying at RHS are both preventative and reactive in nature, and aim to involve the whole school community.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying can be defined as intentional, repeated behaviour by an individual or groups of individuals that causes distress, hurt or undue pressure.

Bullying involves the abuse of power in relationships. Bullying can involve all forms of harassment (including sex, race, disability, homosexuality or transgender), humiliation, domination and intimidation of others.

Bullying behaviour can be:

- Verbal (e.g. name calling, teasing, abuse, putdowns, sarcasm, insults threats).
- Physical (e.g. hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting).
- Social (e.g. ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating, making inappropriate gestures).
- Psychological (e.g. spreading rumours, dirty jokes, hiding or damaging possessions, SMS and email messages, inappropriate use of camera phones).
- Any incident where there is an intention or threat to cause harm to another student.

PREVENTATIVE STRATEGIES

Preventative strategies are aimed at creating a culture in the early years of high school that discourage any form of bullying.

In Year 7 we have:

- Peer Support.
- Conflict Resolution Program.
- Anti-Bullying Program.
- Pastoral Care – Teachers, Student Advisers, Counsellor and outside agencies.
Across the whole school we have:

- A “Hands Off” behaviour policy.
- Bullying/Harassment notification and follow up.
- PDHPE - involves all junior years.
- Peer Mediation
- Responsible bystander behaviour program – nil tolerance of negative bystander behaviour
- Drama performances by Brainstorm Productions.

**REACTIVE STRATEGIES**

Reactive strategies are aimed at dealing with specific incidents of bullying when they occur.

**Physical**

- The “Hands Off” policy is aimed in ensuring a non violent response to any confrontation situation between students.

- All actions which breach the “Hands Off” policy or fall into the category of negative bystander behaviour will incur serious consequences. No warnings will be given. The consequences for bullying include:
  - formal caution.
  - detention.
  - suspension (short and long).

*All incidents that breach the “Hands Off” Policy are to be referred to the Deputy Principal*

**Non Physical**

Non physical contact include incidents such as:

- name calling or malicious gossip (including mobile phone and internet communication)
- threatening behaviour and physical intimidation.
- interfering with others belongings.
- written material.

These incidents will be dealt with at a variety of levels depending on severity. The classroom teacher should respond by intervening in the following manner:

- counselling.
- issuing a warning
- faculty detentions
- parent contact

The head teacher should respond by intervening in the following manner:

- counselling
- parent contact.
- school detention.
- faculty monitoring card.
The deputy principal should respond by:

- school detention.
- formal caution.
- parent contact.
- suspension.

**What should we do if we are being bullied or if we see others being bullied?**

All reports of bullying will be taken seriously and handled in a sensitive manner. If bullying occurs the actions outlined below should be taken:

**Students**

- Tell someone – the most appropriate person is the teacher responsible for you at the time of the incident eg. Classroom Teacher, Playground Teacher.
- Talk to your Student Adviser or the Counsellor
- Where the bullying involves a serious assault, you should immediately report the incident to either the Deputy Principal or Principal.

**Staff**

If a student reports bullying or you witness bullying incidents yourself, it is important that:

- You deal with the issue, listen to the student and acknowledge the seriousness of the incident. Offer the student the opportunity to fill in the anti-bullying form no matter how trivial the incident may at first appear. Take appropriate action.
- Inform the Student adviser or Head Teacher Welfare
- Where the bullying involves a serious assault, you should immediately report the incident to either the Deputy Principal or Principal.

**Parents/Caregivers**

- Encourage your child to discuss any bullying and offer them strategies to help them manage any further incident.
- Discuss this policy with students and encourage them to follow the correct procedures.
- Contact the school if your child’s efforts to deal with bullying do not appear to be working. The first contact should be with the Student Adviser
- When the school’s attempt to deal with reported bullying and victimisation do not appear to be working your assistance will be sought. In cases of serious physical bullying you will be automatically involved.

**CONCLUSION:** Ensuring positive peer relationships is a shared responsibility and preventing bullying behaviour is everyone’s responsibility too. Bullying is a serious problem throughout all communities and has far reaching effects on those bullied. We trust that the whole school community can share the responsibility for combating bullying whenever and wherever it occurs. Rapid changes in electronic communications necessitate ongoing revision of this policy.
BULLYING / HARASSMENT REPORT

STUDENT: ____________________ Year: _____ Date: _____ Period/Time: _____

Where were you? Circle one: Classroom Between Lessons Toilets Playground Bus

What happened? Tick relevant box/es:

☐ Verbal - threats/name calling/sniggering/spreading rumours/abuse/teasing
☐ Physical - hitting/punching/tripping/pushing/kicking
☐ Social - ignoring/isolating/excluding/rejecting
☐ Emotional - stalking/teasing/body gestures/cruel mimicry/threatening stares/damaged possessions
☐ Technological - unwanted emails/harassing SMS messages/harassing telephone calls

Who was involved in this incident? List names (where known) or describe students:

________________________________________________________________________

What did you do? Tick relevant box/es:

☐ Told them to stop
☐ Told a friend: Friend’s name ______________________________
☐ Told my teacher: Mr/Mrs/Ms ______________________________
☐ Hit them back
☐ Got upset
☐ Walked out/away
☐ Ignored it

List any teachers or friends at school that you consider to be your support network

________________________________________________________________________

Is there any other information you think your teacher should know?

________________________________________________________________________

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TEACHER: ____________________ TIME & DATE OF FOLLOW UP: ____________

Action Taken:

☐ Re-visited classroom rules
☐ Addressed use of inappropriate language
☐ Seating plan implemented (where appropriate)
☐ Negotiated a follow-up time and date
☐ Completed a non-compliance form
☐ Made contact with parent/guardian
☐ Requested Student Adviser assistance (where necessary)
☐ Requested Head Teacher assistance (where necessary)
☐ Requested Deputy Principal assistance (where necessary)
☐ Other (give details) __________________________________________

For each student involved, forward copies to:

☐ Relevant Year Adviser - for student files

If serious, additional copies to:

☐ Head Teacher Welfare
☐ Deputy Principal
☐ Counsellor

Teacher signature: ____________________