RASMUSSEN STATE SCHOOL DEFINITION OF BULLYING BEHAVIOURS

Bullying behaviours are about an imbalance or abuse of power where there is a deliberate intent to cause harm, to distress, to intimidate or to dominate; they can be isolated incidents but are more often frequent in nature however the target of the bullying may not always be the same. There are four different types of bullying: physical, verbal; social and psychological.

It is not considered bullying if people of equal power are involved in a conflict (e.g. difference of opinion) or a natural clash occurs (e.g. getting hit by a ball in a game). Bullying behaviours impact on the person being bullied (Victim); those doing the bullying (Bully) and those looking on (Witness).

1. Rasmussen State School strives to create positive, predictable environments for all students at all times of the day. The disciplined and teaching environment that we are creating is essential to:
   - achieving overall school improvement, including the effectiveness and efficiency of our student support procedures
   - raising achievement and attendance
   - promoting equality and diversity and
   - ensuring the safety and well-being of all members of the school community.

There is no place for bullying in Rasmussen State School. Research indicates that both those being bullied and those who bully are at risk for behavioural, emotional and academic problems. These outcomes are in direct contradiction to our school community's goals and efforts for supporting all students.

Bullying behaviours that will not be tolerated at Rasmussen State School include (but are not exclusive to) name-calling, taunting, mocking, making offensive comments, kicking, hitting, pushing, taking belongings, inappropriate text messaging, sending offensive or degrading images by phone or internet, producing offensive graffiti, gossiping, excluding people from groups, and spreading hurtful and untruthful rumours.

Bullying may be related to:
- race, religion or culture
- disability
- appearance or health conditions
- sexual orientation
- sexist or sexual language
- young carers or children in care.

At Rasmussen State School there is broad agreement among students, staff and parents that bullying is observable and measurable behaviour. When considering whether or not
bullying has occurred, we will therefore avoid speculation on the intent of the behaviour, the power of individuals involved, or the frequency of its occurrence. Whether bullying behaviour is observed between students of equal or unequal power, whether it occurs once or several times, and whether or not the persons involved cite intimidation, revenge, or self-defence as a motive, the behaviour will be responded to in similar fashion, that is, as categorically unacceptable in the school community.

Research indicates that many problem behaviours are peer-maintained. That is, peers react to bullying in ways that may increase the likelihood of it occurring again in the future. Reactions include joining in, laughing, or simply standing and watching, rather than intervening to help the person being bullied. Whilst our school would never encourage students to place themselves at risk, our anti-bullying procedures involve teaching the entire school a set of safe and effective response to all problem behaviour, including bullying, in such a way that those who bully are not socially reinforced for demonstrating it.

The anti-bullying procedures at Rasmussen State School are an addition to our already research-validated school wide positive behaviour support processes. This means that all students are being explicitly taught the expected school behaviours and receiving high levels of social acknowledgement for doing so. Adding lessons on bullying and how to prevent and respond to it is a subset of procedures that our students are already accustomed to.

Attempting to address specific problem behaviours will not be successful if the general level of disruptive behaviour in all areas of our school is not kept to a low level. Therefore, our school wide universal behaviour support practices will be maintained at all times. This will ensure that:

- Our universal behaviour support processes will always remain the primary strategy for preventing problem behaviour, including preventing the subset of bullying behaviour
- All students know the 3 school values and have been taught the expected behaviours attached to each rule in all areas of the school including our 3 unacceptable behaviours and 1 priority expectation:
  ① Inappropriate language
  ② Physical violence
  ③ Out of class without a pass
  ④ Listen to the teacher first time
- All students are receiving high levels of positive reinforcement for demonstrating expected behaviours, including those associated with following our routines, from all staff in the non-classroom areas of the school (ONYA’s)
- A high level of quality active supervision is a permanent staff routine in the non-classroom areas. This means that duty staff members are easily identifiable and
are constantly moving, scanning and positively interacting as they move through
the designated supervision sectors of the non-classroom areas

Research indicates that a common outcome of anti-bullying programming is an
improvement in understanding of bullying but little change in the frequency or
nature of actual bullying behaviour.

One of the reasons cited for this outcome is the lack of behavioural rehearsal in
the programming. The School Wide Positive Support Process at Rasmussen State
School takes care to combine knowledge with practice in a process of active
learning, so that students understand by ‘doing’ as much as by ‘knowing’.

Rasmussen State School uses behavioural data for decision-making. This data is entered
into our OneSchool database on a daily basis and can be recalled as summary reports at
any time. This facility allows the school to track the effectiveness of its anti-bullying
process, to make any necessary adjustments, and to identify specific bullying behaviours
that may need to be revisited or revised in the instructional process.

All students are taught on enrolment, regularly in class and on parade the approved
process.

All students have been or are being taught the specific routines in the non-classroom
areas, from exiting the classroom, conducting themselves in accordance with the school
expectations in the playground and other areas, to re-entering their classrooms.

At Rasmussen State School we acknowledge that there will be ‘Natural Clashes’ in sport
and when students are moving between classes and breaks. Natural clashes occur when
students come in contact with each other accidentally and with no intent to harm.

Conflict is a disagreement or argument between two or more individuals where one or
both sides may feel their needs are not being met. Conflict occurs in all human
relationships and in all school communities. Conflict must be expected and planned for.

Conflict can be devastating when it involves one party trying to gain control in a way that
abuses the rights of others. Power abuse can occur between individuals, between groups,
in organisations or between countries.

Conflict may be positive and constructive when both sides are concerned about each
other’s well-being and want a solution that suits both. When the opportunity for a fair
discussion and debate, conflict can result in a better outcomes and a win – win situation.

The positive use of conflict is different from bullying and harassment because it
respects the rights of both sides and builds the trust that allows healthy debate in a
civil society.