Anti-bullying policy

Every person at Robert Townson High School has the right to be treated with respect in a safe learning environment. We recognize and celebrate diversity within the community and provide programs and support which acknowledge difference and promote harmony.

Bullying is not accepted at Robert Townson High School.
At Robert Townson High School we prevent bullying by:

Positive Behaviour In Schools (PBIS) is integral to our teaching and learning. Our school rules are:

- Be safe.
- Be respectful.
- Be a learner.

Staff encourage safe, respectful learners using rule reminders, positive reinforcement and fortnightly structured skills teaching.

Our well established Peer Support program involving Year 10 students (Peer Leaders) who mentor Year 7 students raises awareness of bullying behaviours and targets preventative strategies.

Every year the incoming Year 5 and 6 students participate in a transition to high school program which assists integration into high school life, identifies support personnel and strategies to cope in various situations.

Our Police Youth Liaison Officer conducts workshops for all years addressing various issues including bullying, racism, homophobia and bullying using social networking sites.

Promotion of mental health and wellbeing through whole school programs including Mindmatters and Staff Matters programs ensure social and emotional learning and mental health are a part of every classroom and every staffroom.

Peer Mediation is a conflict resolution strategy conducted by our Student Leaders at Robert Townson High School. Students are actively involved in resolving their own disputes under the guidance of our Student Leaders who are trained in a structured mediation process.

Restorative Justice is practiced at Robert Townson High School. Restorative Justice practices proactively build a positive school community and learning climate which improves school culture, classroom management and student discipline.

Appropriate respectful behaviours are taught and encouraged through various year developed programs including cyber use, sexual and physical health, legal awareness and anti-bullying seminars.

Our school’s Anti-racism Officer conducts mediation and education seminars when necessary.

What is bullying?

Bullying can be defined as intentional, repeated behaviour by a group or individual that causes distress and hurt which can be both physical and/or emotional.

Bullying involves the abuse of power in relationships. Bullying can involve all forms of harassment (including harassment on the basis of sex, race, disability or sexual preference—this is called HOMOPHOBIA), humiliation, domination and intimidation of others.

Bullying behaviour can be:

- **Verbal** eg. name calling, teasing, abuse, putdowns, sarcasm, insults, threats.
- **Cyber-bullying** ie. The use of electronic forms of contact, repeatedly and over time against another individual eg. text messages, e-mails, videos, photos or posting material on the internet or social networking sites.
- **Physical** eg. hitting, punching, kicking.
- **Social** eg. ignoring, excluding, ostracizing, alienating, making inappropriate gestures.
- **Psychological** eg. creating & spreading rumours, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions.
**Expectations of Staff**

Staff are expected to model appropriate behaviour, in accordance with the Department of Education & Communities Dignity and Respect charter—i.e. To treat each other with respect and promote a culture which tolerates differences.

It is expected that staff in classrooms will:

- Promote the school rules of “Be safe, be respectful, be a learner”
- Arrive punctually
- Provide a safe and supportive school environment that encourages positive relationships between students, their peers and teachers
- Interact positively with students reinforcing appropriate respectful behaviour verbally and using the PBIS Merit system
- Investigate any incidents of bullying reported to them in the classroom as per the Student Wellbeing and Anti-Bullying policies
- Record the incident on Sentral
- Check in with the students concerned to monitor their emotional wellbeing
- Report any reoccurrence of bullying in the classroom to the faculty Head Teacher

It is expected that staff on playground duty will:

- Arrive punctually
- Actively supervise, be vigilant, walk and talk to students, circulate regularly and change your route of circulation
- Remind students of the school rules verbally and by physically pointing to posters in the playground
- Watch out for isolated students who may be potential targets
- Interact positively with students reinforcing appropriate respectful behaviour verbally and using the PBIS Mini Merits
- Report incidents to the Head Teacher on duty.
- Record your knowledge of the incidents reported to you on Sentral

It is expected that Head Teachers of playground duty will:

- Investigate the reported incident of bullying, ask for written statements from those involved including witnesses
- Follow up with suitable consequences which include (but are not limited to) speaking with students concerned using the Pikas method of shared concern, detention, after school detention, phone call to parent, letter to parent, faculty monitoring cards, referral to Year Adviser, referral to Head Teacher Welfare, referral to School Counsellor
- Record the incident on Sentral

**Expectations of Students**

- Students will follow the school rules “Be safe, be respectful, be a learner”
- Students who experience bullying walk away, go to a safe place and report to a teacher and parent
- Students who see bullying speak up, walk away, tell a teacher, do not support the bully

**Expectations of Parents**

- Support their children in all aspects of their learning
- Support their children to follow the school rules “Be safe, be respectful, be a learner”
- Read the tips for parents
- Encourage your child to report bullying to their Year Adviser or Head Teacher Welfare
- Do not contact the bully or the family
A student is bullied and feels unsafe...

The student
- Tell the person to stop the bullying.
- Report to a teacher, Head Teacher or Year Adviser.
- Speak to your parent or carer.

An Observer
- Inform a teacher, Head Teacher or Year Adviser.
- It is important that you NOT join in with the bullies.
- Be an advocate and support the student being bullied.

Parent/Carers
- Read the tips for parents.
- Inform the Year Adviser or Head Teacher Welfare.
- Do not contact the bully or their family.

Incident occurred in the classroom
- Class teacher will investigate the report of bullying
- Class teacher will ensure student feels safe in their class
- Class teacher will monitor

Incident occurred in the playground
- Teacher on duty will ensure the student is safe
- Teacher will report to HT on playground duty who will investigate the incident

Incident occurred outside of school
- Student to speak with their parent/carer
- Parent to contact Facebook help, phone provider or Police as decided by parent/carer
- Parent to inform school if deemed necessary

Teacher or Head Teacher will speak with students concerned using the Pikas method of shared concern, Disciplinary action including—detention, after school detention, faculty monitoring cards may be appropriate. Phone call to parent, letter to parent, referral to LST, referral to Year Adviser, referral to Head Teacher Welfare, referral to School Counsellor may occur. Issue will be recorded on Sentral. DP will be notified.

Issue resolved, bullying stops

Bullying continues

Referral to the Deputy Principal for further action which may include withdrawal, parent interview, presuspension and suspension

Student feels safe.
FACTS ABOUT CYBERBULLYING

24/7 and the invasion of home/personal space—Cyberbullying can take place at any time and can intrude into spaces that have previously been regarded as safe or personal.

The audience can be very large & reached rapidly—The difficulty in controlling circulated messages means the scale & scope of cyberbullying can be greater than any other forms of bullying & forwarded content is hard to control.

People who cyberbully may attempt to remain anonymous—This can be extremely distressing for those being bullied.

The targets can be peers or across generations—Adults & teachers have been targets, age or size is not considered. Bystanders can be accessories to the bullying when passing on a humiliating image or message.

Some instances may be unintentional—Lack of awareness of the consequences of sending something.

WHAT STUDENTS SHOULD DO

- Do not respond to the message
- Immediately exit the site if you feel uncomfortable or unsafe
- Secure & preserve any evidence
- Inform your parents/carers
- Block the sender/contact service provider & report the issue/close down the site
- Consider deleting your current e-mail address & reactivate a new one
- Contact your local Police.

Cyberbullying is against the law.

INTERNET SAFETY TIPS FOR PARENTS
(from www.netalert.gov.au)

- Place PCs in a common area of the house, NOT the bedroom.
- Monitor your child’s activities on the PC, walk past, talk to them about what they are doing.
- Teach your child not to engage in negative behaviour.
- If harassment does occur, save it to keep a record in case of further investigation.
- If receiving harassing messages on a social network site such as MSN or Facebook, Contact the service provider to block the sender or close down the site (see Facebook help site).
- If you find inappropriate content about your child on a website inform the police immediately.
- Most children will not tell their parents if they are being harassed online because they fear they will lose internet access. Don’t threaten access encourage your child to tell you if they have a problem.
- Install filters & blocking software to minimize dangers.
- Learn the lingo.
- Monitor your child’s use of their phone to access social networking sites.
- Remind your child to set the social networking sites to PRIVATE,
- NEVER EXCHANGE PERSONAL INFORMATION ON PROFILES.

For further information …

www.bullyingnoway.org.au
www.det.nsw.edu.au/antibullying
www.wiredkids.com
www.cyberbullying.org
www.facebook.com/help/?page=1020
www.reachout.com.au
www.cybersmartkids.com.au

Updated September 2011