

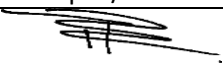


Broadford Secondary College

# Bullying Prevention Policy

Policy and Procedure

*Broadford Secondary College actively promotes the safety and wellbeing of all students. All staff are committed to protecting students from abuse or harm in the school environment in accordance with their legal obligations including Child Safe Standards.*

Date Implemented	July 2023
Author	Matthew Willison
Approved By	Principal / School Council
Approval Authority (signature & date)	
School Council Consultation	
Date Reviewed	March 2025
Responsible for Review	College Council / Principal Class Officers
Review Date	March 2027
References	DET



## Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy, please contact the college on 57841200

## BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY

### Purpose

Broadford Secondary College is committed to providing a safe and respectful learning environment where bullying is not tolerated.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Promote a culture where students feel safe, supported, and respected.
- Clearly define bullying and explain the school's processes for prevention and response.
- Support the rights of all students to access their education free from bullying, violence, harassment or discrimination.
- Outline the school's commitment to Child Safe Standard 11 by ensuring all students feel empowered to speak up and seek help.

This policy applies to all school activities, including those occurring during school hours, while travelling to and from school, and during online interactions.

## Scope

This policy addresses how Broadford Secondary College aims to prevent, address and respond to student bullying behaviour. Broadford Secondary College recognises that there are many other types of inappropriate student behaviours that do not meet the definition of bullying which are also unacceptable at our school. These other inappropriate behaviours will be managed in accordance with our *Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy and Inclusion and Diversity policy*.

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions. It also applies to bullying behaviour between students that occurs outside of school hours, where the behaviour impacts on student wellbeing and safety at school.

## Policy

### Definitions

#### **Bullying**

In 2018 the Education Council of the Council of Australian Governments endorsed the following definition of bullying for use by all Australian schools:

*Bullying is an 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.*

Bullying is repeated, deliberate behaviour intended to cause physical, social, emotional, or psychological harm. It involves a misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more people.

- It involves a misuse of power in a relationship
- It is ongoing and repeated, and
- It involves behaviours that can cause harm.

Bullying can be:

- Physical – hitting, pushing, damaging belongings
- Verbal – name-calling, insults, teasing, threats
- Social – excluding, spreading rumours, damaging reputations
- Cyberbullying – using digital technologies to harass, threaten, or embarrass

Bullying can be a form of racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia or other type of social prejudice when the behaviour is targeted at an individual or group because of a personal characteristic, such as race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability.

For further information about bullying, refer to: [Bully Stoppers \(education.vic.gov.au\)](http://education.vic.gov.au) and the Department's [Bullying Prevention and Response](#) policy on the Policy and Advisory Library.

### Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying is bullying that takes place through technology (such as phones, social media, or messaging apps). It includes hurtful texts, sharing embarrassing images, or online exclusion.

### What bullying is not

Not all conflict or rude behaviour is bullying. While still unacceptable, these behaviours are not classified as bullying:

- Mutual arguments or disagreements
- Single incidents of social rejection or dislike
- Random acts of aggression, intimidation, or meanness

All of these behaviours may still require intervention and support from school staff.

### Other distressing and inappropriate behaviours

Broadford Secondary College recognises that not all upsetting behaviour is bullying. Behaviour that is inappropriate or harmful but does not meet the definition of bullying will still be taken seriously and addressed under our Student Engagement Policy.

These behaviours include:

- Harassment – behaviour that targets an individual based on their identity (e.g. gender, race, disability)
- Discrimination – unfair treatment due to personal characteristics or background
- Violence – acts or threats that cause physical harm or fear
- Aggressive or intimidating behaviour – including verbal abuse, threats, or pushing
- Rude or unkind conduct – even if it occurs only once

All forms of inappropriate behaviour, whether from students or adults, are unacceptable and will be managed through appropriate school processes. Staff will assess the situation and respond according to its impact, not just intent.

## Bullying Prevention

Broadford Secondary College is committed to preventing bullying through a whole-school approach that promotes inclusion, respect, and positive relationships. Prevention efforts are embedded in our daily practices, curriculum, and culture.

Our school uses the following strategies to prevent bullying:

- We implement a School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) framework that teaches and reinforces respectful behaviour across the school.
- Respectful Relationships program is delivered in all year levels and promotes equality, emotional literacy, conflict resolution, and respectful conduct.
- Our sub-school model ensures students have a consistent advocate and are known and supported.
- Tier 2 and 3 students are supported through check-ins, Individual Education Plans, and counselling.
- Peer Mentors, House Leaders, and Student Voice teams promote a culture of respect and support.

- Staff participate in ongoing professional learning about bullying prevention, trauma-informed practice, and restorative approaches.
- We identify and implement evidence-based programs and initiatives from the [Schools Mental Health Menu](#) that are relevant to preventing and addressing bullying and help us to build a positive and inclusive school climate.
- We participate in the Safe Schools program to help us foster a safe environment that is supportive and inclusive of LGBTIQ+ students.
- Teachers are encouraged to incorporate classroom management strategies that discourage bullying and promote positive behaviour.
- A range of year-level incursions and programs are planned for each year to raise awareness about bullying and its impacts.
- In the classroom, our social and emotional learning curriculum teaches students what constitutes bullying and how to respond to bullying behaviour assertively. This promotes resilience, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem-solving.

For further information about our engagement and wellbeing initiatives, please see our Student Wellbeing and Engagement policy.

## Incident Response

### Reporting concerns to Broadford Secondary College

Broadford Secondary College encourages all students, parents, carers, and staff to report any incidents of bullying. Reports can be made to a trusted teacher, Year Level Coordinator, or through the Wellbeing Team.

All reports are taken seriously, recorded, and followed up according to this policy. Wherever possible, students will be involved in discussions about what actions will be taken to keep them safe and supported.

We understand that reporting bullying can be difficult. Students and families are encouraged to come forward early so we can take appropriate steps to help. Anonymous concerns may be raised, though direct follow-up may be limited if information is incomplete.

### Investigations

All bullying reports are followed up in a timely and respectful manner. The process may include:

- Speaking with all parties involved, including bystanders
- Gathering relevant information and reviewing previous incidents
- Offering immediate support where needed to any student impacted
- Informing families of the investigation and outcome
- Recording findings and actions taken in Compass

Investigations are led by the Year Level Coordinator or Sub-School Leader. If needed, the Assistant Principal will oversee the process.

Outcomes are based on the nature and severity of the behaviour. Consequences may include warnings, restorative meetings, suspension, or other supports as outlined in the Incident Response section.

Serious bullying, including serious cyberbullying, is a criminal offence and may be referred to Victoria Police. For more information, see: [Brodie's Law](#).

## Responses to bullying behaviours

When the Year Level Coordinator or Sub-School Manager has sufficient information to understand the circumstances of the alleged bullying and the students involved, a number of strategies may be implemented to address the behaviour and support affected students in consultation with the Student Wellbeing Team, teachers, SSS, Assistant Principal, Principal or Department of Education and Training specialist staff.

There are a number of factors that will be considered when determining the most appropriate response to the behaviour. When making a decision about how to respond to bullying behaviour, Broadford Secondary College will consider:

- the age, maturity and individual circumstances of the students involved
- the severity and frequency of the bullying, and the impact it has had on the target student
- whether the student/s engaging in bullying behaviour have displayed similar behaviour before
- whether the bullying took place in a group or one-to-one context
- whether the students engaging in bullying behaviour demonstrate insight or remorse for their behaviour
- the alleged motive of the behaviour.

The Year Level Coordinator or Sub-School Manager may implement all, or some of the following responses to bullying behaviours:

<b>Step 1:</b>	
Behaviour identified and confirmed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Behaviour Identified: discussion with student(s).</li> <li>• After School Reflection.</li> <li>• Student(s) to read <i>Bullying Prevention Policy</i>, sign and commit to not re-offending.</li> <li>• Possible restorative meeting between parties.</li> <li>• Contact parents/carers to inform them.</li> <li>• Document on COMPASS under Major Behaviour (Harassment/Bullying).</li> </ul>
<b>Step 2:</b>	
Behaviour continues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent contact; Letter sent home to outline process.</li> <li>• Student(s) may be suspended in consultation with the principal.</li> <li>• Wellbeing Support offered to student(s).</li> <li>• Document on COMPASS under Major Behaviour (Harassment/Bullying).</li> <li>• During any suspension, the student must complete an anti-bullying worksheet to hand to the Year Level Coordinator.</li> </ul>
<b>Step 3:</b>	
Behaviour continues again	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent contact; Remind of the process outlined in the letter.</li> <li>• Student(s) may be suspended further in consultation with the principal.</li> <li>• Formal Wellbeing Referral and/or Restorative meeting.</li> <li>• Contact VicPol - Youth Liaison Officer.</li> <li>• Document on COMPASS under Major Behaviour (Harassment/Bullying).</li> <li>• During any suspension, the student must complete a bullying research project to hand to the Sub-School leader.</li> </ul>

<b>Step 4:</b>	
Behaviour continues yet again	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent contact; Remind of the process outlined in the letter and previous incidents.</li> <li>• Student(s) may be suspended further in consultation with the principal, with a mandatory RTSM.</li> <li>• Region involvement from SSSO and involvement with external staff</li> <li>• Document on COMPASS under Major Behaviour (Harassment/Bullying)</li> </ul>

Additional methods of following up bullying behaviour may include:

- Facilitate a mediation between some or all of the students involved to help to encourage students to take responsibility for their behaviour and explore underlying reasons for conflict or grievance. Mediation is only suitable if all students are involved voluntarily and demonstrate a willingness to engage in the mediation process.
- Facilitate a process using the Support Group Method, involving the target student(s), the students engaging in bullying behaviour and a group of students who are likely to be supportive of the target(s).
- Implement a Method of Shared Concern process with all students involved in the bullying.
- Facilitate a Student Support Group meeting and/or Behaviour Support Plan for affected students.
- Prepare a Safety Plan restricting contact between target and students engaging in bullying behaviour.
- Provide discussion and/or mentoring for the students' different social and emotional learning competencies, including connecting affected students with an older Student Mentor or participation in resilience programs.
- Monitor the behaviour of the students involved for an appropriate time and take follow-up action if necessary.
- Implement cohort, year group, or whole school targeted strategies to reinforce positive behaviours via SWPBS.
- Implement proportionate disciplinary consequences for the students engaging in bullying behaviour, which may include removal of privileges, detention, suspension and/or expulsion consistent with our Student Wellbeing and Engagement policy, the Ministerial Order on Suspensions and Expulsions and any other relevant Department policy.

Broadford Secondary College understands the importance of monitoring and following up on the progress of students who have been involved in or affected by bullying behaviour. Where appropriate, school staff will also endeavour to provide parents and carers with updates on the management of bullying incidents.

The Year Level Coordinator or Sub-School Manager are responsible for maintaining up to date records of the investigation of and responses to bullying behaviour.

## COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in staff induction processes and available on of staff Google drive
- Discussed at staff briefings/meetings as required
- Included as annual reference in school newsletter
- Discussed at student forums/through communication tools
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request

## Further information and resources

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Statement of Values and School Philosophy
- Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy
- Parent Complaints policy
- Child Safe Standards
- Inclusion and Diversity Policy

Our school also follows Department of Education and Training policy relating to bullying including:

- [Bullying Prevention and Response](#)
- [Cybersafety and Responsible Use of Digital Technologies](#)
- [Equal Opportunity and Human Rights - Students](#)
- [LGBTIQ Student Support Policy](#)

The following websites and resources provide useful information on prevention and responding to bullying, as well as supporting students who have been the target of bullying behaviours:

- [Bully Stoppers](#)
- [Report racism or religious discrimination in schools](#)
- [Kids Helpline](#)
- [ReachOut Australia](#)
- [Lifeline](#)
- [Bullying. No way!](#)
- [Student Wellbeing Hub](#)
- [eSafety Commissioner](#)
- [Australian Student Wellbeing Framework](#)

## Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years, or earlier as required following an incident or analysis of new research or school data relating to bullying, to ensure that the policy remains up to date, practical and effective.

Data to inform this review will be collected through:

- discussion and consultation with students and parent/carers
- regular student bullying surveys
- regular staff surveys
- assessment of other school-based data, including the number of reported incidents of bullying in each year group and the effectiveness of the responses implemented

- Attitudes to School Survey
- Parent Opinion Survey

Proposed amendments to this policy will be discussed with student representative groups, staff and school council.