

## Wirreanda Secondary School Bullying & Racism Policy

### Key Supporting Documents

[Behaviour support policy \(PDF 604 KB\)](#)

[Bullying prevention requirements](#)

[Responding to racism in schools](#)

### Our Values

We aim to establish a community in which everybody upholds our school values of respect, responsibility and resilience; and where individual differences are appreciated, understood and accepted. Everybody has a right to enjoy their time at school and to feel safe and a sense of belonging.

### Department for Education Vision

“Australian schools are learning communities that promote student wellbeing, safety and positive relationships so that students can reach their full potential.” (Australian Student Wellbeing Framework 2023).

All students have the right to feel safe, respected and included. Our learning communities are free from bullying, harassment, homophobia and racism.

Our school climate fosters healthy and respectful relationships. We will create this with our students, families and the broader community.

We will model behaviours that:

- Demonstrate respect
- Value diversity
- Promote belonging and wellbeing

### WSS Approach to Bullying Prevention & Anti-Racism Strategies

At Wirreanda Secondary School, we will plan, implement and review our bullying prevention strategies and anti-racism strategies regularly. We will do this with our Governing Council, staff, students, families and local community.

#### Promote

We will model and promote positive behaviour.

Our actions:

- Create a welcoming and inclusive school
- Ensure staff understand their role to create a safe school

- Establish school values and behaviour expectations. Ensure these reflect inclusion, respect, safety and diversity
- Share the school values and behaviour expectations. Lead by example
- Use consistent language among staff, students, parent/guardians that encourages positive behaviours and social interactions
- Establish a physical school environment that encourages positive social interactions
- Establish and display behavioural expectations in all classrooms. Develop these with students. Review regularly. Lead by example
- Ensure students feel safe to raise concerns and report bullying and racism
- Use the Suspension, Exclusion and Expulsion (SEE) procedures in response to not meeting behaviour expectations

### Teach

We will explicitly teach respectful behaviours and expectations about bullying and racism in the classroom.

Our actions:

- Build staff skills to respond well to bullying and racism
- Teach about bullying and racism in all year levels, including how to prevent, identify, respond to and report bullying, cyberbullying and racism
- Explicitly teach positive behaviour and social and emotional skills. Guide students to have healthy relationships, both in person and online. Do this across all subject areas
- Use teachable moments when an issue happens. Teach about respectful and appropriate behaviours

### Intervene

We will intervene in specific incidents of bullying or observed bullying behaviour and racism behaviours.

Our actions:

- Take bullying and racism seriously. Respond promptly and consistently to reports of bullying or observed bullying behaviours and racism
- Use fair and consistent responses to bullying or suspected bullying and racism or suspected racism
- Document all bullying/racism incidents through student behaviour record on Daymap or student concern record. Follow up with students while bullying/racism incidents are being resolved
- Make sure leadership can manage complex bullying/racism incidents. This includes where bullying/racism is ongoing. This includes upskilling leaders to do this and providing support when managing incidents

### Working Together

We will work with families, service providers and the community to address bullying and racism.

Our actions:

- Work with the Governing Council, site leadership, department staff and the local community to design local strategies to prevent and reduce bullying and racism within our school community
- Actively promote and facilitate parent/guardians to take part in activities that promote safety and wellbeing. Parents/guardians are encouraged to attend parent forums about these issues when available
- Involve parents, guardians and students in planning bullying/racism prevention and intervention responses
- Share information with parents/guardians about bullying/racism. Include how to recognise it and what to do when their child is involved in bullying/racism
- Work with community organisations to promote safe and inclusive messages
- Communicate regularly with affected families when a bullying/racist incident happens
- Work with other services to support students who have been involved in bullying/racist incidents

### Respond

We will provide visible and consistent responses to bullying and racism that foster trust and confidence in the school community.

Our actions:

- Share information on how to prevent and respond to bullying/cyberbullying and racism
- Review our strategies and actions to prevent and respond to bullying and racism. We will make sure that student needs are being met
- Ensure safe ways for students to report bullying and racism and let students know how to do this through student issue report or through a conversation with a staff member
- Make information about the complaints resolution process available for all staff, students and parents
- Ensure staff, parents, guardians and students feel confident to respond to bullying and racism.
- Set aside staff time and funds to plan, implement and assess our strategies to prevent and respond to bullying and racism

### Repair and Restore Relationships

We will repair and restore relationships that have been harmed by bullying and racism.

Our actions:

- Develop solutions to bullying and racism incidents with students, staff, parents/guardians
- Support students who have engaged in bullying and racist behaviours. Help them to think about the result of the behaviour. Help them to learn positive behaviours. This may be through responses such as community service, formal warning, internal placement, suspension or learning task depending on the severity of the behaviour
- Support all students who experience bullying, engage in bullying behaviour, or witness bullying and racism

### Create Safety and Wellbeing

We will establish safety and wellbeing.

Our actions:

- Take action against discrimination, harassment, racism and violence. Report criminal actions to South Australia Police
- Provide targeted social and emotional support for students who need more help after bullying/racist incidents
- Establish inclusive practices so students who might feel excluded are safe and supported
- Develop a support plan for students impacted by bullying or racism
- Provide targeted skill building and capability building for staff to restore safety and wellbeing after critical incidents

### How Bullying/Racism is Reported & Resolved

We will work with students, parents/guardians to resolve bullying/racism issues. If needed, we will get advice, counselling and support from internal and external services.

All reports of bullying and racism will be taken seriously. Responses will be planned and quick. The principal or leadership team will immediately respond to life threatening, significant harm or criminal behaviour issues. We will refer criminal actions to South Australia Police.

Our responses will restore the safe and positive learning environment.

### Reporting Bullying

Students can report bullying/racism to:

- Home Group Teacher/House Leader/Member of leadership/Wellbeing team
- Completing a Student Issue Report via the FROG Student Portal
- Speaking directly with a trusted member of staff

Parents/guardians can report bullying/racism to:

- Home Group Teacher/ House Leader/Member of leadership/Wellbeing team

Give us as much information as possible. This might include:

- Who was involved, including who engaged in the bullying/racist behaviour and who the behaviour was directed at and witnesses
- When the incident happened
- Where the incident took place, for example social media
- If anyone stopped or tried to stop the behaviour
- What led up to the incident
- What happened after the incident.

### Gathering & Documenting Information

Staff might speak about the incident with:

- Students
- Parent/guardians
- Other staff members
- Any other witness or person involved

### Intervention & Support

Staff will determine if the incident:

- Meets the definition of bullying or racism
- Poses an immediate risk to student or staff safety

If there is no immediate risk, staff might use the following strategies with students directly involved:

- Restorative practices, including an apology
- Method of Shared Concern or Support Group Method of intervention
- Parent/guardian meeting
- School-based responses in line with the school behaviour policy

For example:

- Loss of privileges
- Given a learning task
- Use of reflection space or class
- Limited areas for play or activities or extra yard supervision
- Suspension and exclusion in line with SEE Procedures

### Refer to Services

Refer students to specialist support, if needed. This might be from the Department for Education or external services. Options will be discussed with students and their families.

### Document & Record

All incidents of bullying/racism and responses will be documented and stored in line with Department for Education records management procedures. A record of an incident might go in a student's file. Incidents will also be recorded in Daymap and may be recorded in the Department for Education's incident management system.

### Monitor and Follow Up

Staff will check on all students involved in a bullying/racist incident. They will ensure all students are safe and relationships are repaired. They will talk with students and families about the actions taken where possible. If a student and their family are not happy with the steps taken by the school, they can call the department's complaints management line on 1800 677 435.

## Bullying & Harassment

### Bullying

A national definition of bullying has been endorsed by the Education Council. 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.

#### *Three Main Features of Bullying:*

1. It involves a misuse of power in a relationship:

Conflict or fights between equals are not defined as bullying. Bullying occurs where there is a power imbalance. This might come from:

- The context. For example a number of children acting against one child
- Personal characteristics. For example different physical, emotional or social development

2. It is ongoing and repeated:

One incident of misbehavior is generally not defined as bullying. Schools will still respond to all incidents of misbehavior. One act by one person might be bullying if:

- The behaviour adds to a series of other people's behaviours that misuse power and result in harm
- It can be shared online or with technology to a wide audience, or repeated with multiple views

3. It involves behaviours that can cause harm:

Bullying can cause physical and psychological harm. Physical harm can include injury. It can also include theft or damage to belongings. Psychological harm can include:

- Anxiety
- Not wanting to go to school
- Lack of interest in school
- Isolation and depression

Psychological harm can last some time. It will depend on a student's situation and the support available to them. Support might come from family, school and friends. A fear of being bullied can create psychological harm.

#### *Types of Bullying*

Physical: hitting, kicking, tripping, pinching, pushing or damaging or stealing belongings or causing these things to happen.

Verbal: verbal abuse, name calling, insults, taunting, intimidation, threats.

Social: social exclusion, lying, spreading rumours, unkind facial expressions or body language, mean and condescending looks, playing jokes to embarrass and humiliate, mimicking and damaging someone's reputation or social relationships.

Cyber: Cyberbullying is online bullying. It uses technology, including social media platforms. Verbal and social bullying can be cyberbullying when they occur online. Cyberbullying includes:

- Abusive texts and emails
- Hurtful messages, videos and images, including images that have been changed
- Sharing personal images and videos without consent
- Pretending to be someone else online to be hurtful

### Harassment, Discrimination and Violence

Bullying, harassment, discrimination and violence all create or add to a negative environment. This can make students feel unsafe and unable to reach their full potential.

#### *Harassment*

Harassment is a behaviour that targets an individual or group. This can be due to their: identity, race, culture or ethnic origin; religion; physical characteristics; gender; sexual orientation; age; or ability. It offends, humiliates, intimidates or creates an unsafe environment. It might be a pattern of behaviour or a single act. It might be directed randomly or at the same person. It might be on purpose or unintended.

#### *Discrimination*

Discrimination happens when people are treated differently to others. This can be because of their: identity, race, culture or ethnic origin; religion; physical characteristics; gender; sexual orientation; age; or ability. Discrimination interferes with people's right to fair treatment and equal opportunities.

#### *Violence*

Violence is the intentional use of physical force or power. It can be threatened or actual, against another person. It might result in psychological harm, injury or in some cases death. It might involve provoked or unprovoked acts. It can be one incident, a random act or can happen over time.

Bullying, harassment, discrimination and violence may be based on gender, race, sexuality, culture, religion, disability and care status. Bullying, harassment, discrimination and violence for any reason is not acceptable in South Australian public schools. It will be responded to. Responses will depend on the behaviours, the needs of the students and the rights of all students to be safely included in learning.

### **Racism**

Racism involves prejudice, discrimination, or unfair treatment towards individuals or groups based on race, ethnicity, or national origin. This can be at interpersonal, community, and system levels.

It can manifest in two key ways:

- Direct or overt racism: Clear and intentional actions or behaviours, such as verbal abuse, physical attacks, or explicit exclusion based solely on race
- Indirect or covert racism: Subtle, at times unintentional, behaviours or systems that disadvantage individuals, including omission, ignoring, or inequities embedded in organisational practices and policies that disproportionately affect certain racial groups

Both forms reinforce inequality, marginalisation, and structural disadvantage, shaping societal dynamics and access to resources and opportunities. Racial discrimination, vilification and harassment are unlawful under State and Commonwealth Acts and should be considered behaviours of concern in relation to the department's Behaviour Support Policy. Under Australian law, racial discrimination is defined as a distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin which has the purpose or effect of nullifying or impairing the recognition, enjoyment or exercise, on an equal footing, of any human right or fundamental freedom in the political, economic, social, cultural or any other field of public life. (*Racial Discrimination Act 1975*)

Racial Vilification refers to behaviour that incites hatred, serious contempt, or severe ridicule against a person or group based on their race, ethnicity, or national origin. It is unlawful and can involve verbal comments, gestures, or materials that promote hostility. Racial harassment includes unwelcome, hostile, or intimidating actions or speech targeting a person or group based on their race, ethnicity, or national origin, creating an offensive or unsafe environment.

### Roles & Responsibilities

We each have a role to play to:

- Prevent bullying, harassment and racism
- Respond when it happens
- Support those involved and affected by bullying and racism

The Australian Student Wellbeing Framework elements are leadership, inclusion, student voice, partnerships and support. They guide our practices and responses to prevent and reduce bullying in our school community.

### School Leaders & Staff

- Model and promote positive behaviour. Value diversity, demonstrate respect, and include all students and their families
- Provide and take part in professional development to build skills, knowledge and confidence about preventing bullying and racism. Including how to recognise, respond and manage it
- Assess bullying/racism data and trends to develop prevention strategies. Do this with the Governing Council and school community

- Collect data on bullying/racism regularly. Use the data to plan how you will prevent and respond to bullying/racism
- Explicitly teach students about respectful relationships, bullying, cyberbullying and racism. Teach them how to recognise bullying/racism, what to do and how to get help
- Work with students to come up with solutions to bullying and racism. Include them in decisions that affect their safety and wellbeing
- Support all students to be included, in particular students at higher risk of being bullied or the victim of racism
- Act promptly and thoroughly when bullying, cyberbullying and racism has been reported. This includes incidents that happen out of school hours or off school grounds when it relates to school relationships
- Report criminal matters to the South Australian Police
- Support parent/guardians to recognise bullying and racism. Include information about what to do when their child is engaging in or affected by bullying or racism
- Work with families, service providers and the community to support students affected by bullying or racism
- Support students to repair and restore relationships that have been harmed by bullying or racism
- Have planned responses to bullying and racism. Make them visible and consistent. Responses should foster trust and confidence
- Help students to be physically and psychologically safe from bullying and racism

#### Parent/Guardians and Families

- Model and promote safe, respectful and inclusive behaviours
- Help their children to be safe online at home. This includes checking their children's use of technology and social media
- Ensure their children know how to identify and report bullying/racism. Work with the school to help their children be safe from bullying/racism
- Discuss regularly about safety issues. This includes bullying, cyberbullying and racism. Help them understand what it is, why it is harmful and how to respond. Use the same messages the school uses
- Report concerns about bullying/racism to school staff
- If a bullying/racist incident happens, work with the school
- Support their children to go to school while a bullying/racist issue is being worked on.
- Get external professional support for their child, if needed

#### Students

- Model behaviours that are safe, respectful and inclusive, both face-to-face and online
- Build skills, knowledge and confidence to recognise, respond to and manage bullying and racism
- Be a part of decision making to improve student safety and wellbeing
- Take a stand when bullying or racism is observed. Step in, if it's safe. Seek help from adults
- Support friends and peers get help from trusted adults if they experience bullying or racism
- Support friends to behave in safe, respectful and inclusive ways if their friends engage in bullying or racism