RISSALAH COLLEGE

WH&S POLICY
2014
WORKPLACE BULLYING
(UPDATED 2014)
SCOPE

This Workplace Bullying Policy guides the prevention and management of workplace bullying at Rissalah College, collectively called this workplace.

Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is three-fold:
1. To define workplace bullying within the context of the Work Health and Safety Act 2011.
2. To acknowledge the risk bullying poses to the health, safety and wellbeing of those in this workplace.
3. To provide guidance in relation to the management of allegations of workplace bullying in this workplace.

This Policy forms a part of a wider commitment to ensuring a safe and productive work environment, a healthy workplace and an anti-bullying ethos in this workplace.

Definitions

According to the Law Society of NSW, bullying can be defined as “unreasonable and inappropriate workplace behaviour that may intimidate, offend, degrade, insult or humiliate an employee (or another person), possibly in front of others and which can include physical or psychological behaviours”.

Workplace bullying shares some of the features of harassment, but essentially, harassment usually centres on unwanted, offensive and intrusive behaviour with a sexual, racial, or physical component. Harassment is best addressed as a separate issue under legislation specific to the type of harassment.

Policy Framework

This workplace is committed to ensuring that everyone, irrespective of their status or position, is treated with dignity and respect by colleagues, superiors and others with whom they may come in contact as a result of their work.

This workplace is therefore committed to providing employees with a safe and healthy work environment free from workplace bullying.

Work Health and Safety Context

Workplace bullying creates an unsafe working environment and poses a risk to employees’ health.

Under the NSW Work Health and Safety Act 2011 and the NSW WHS Regulation 2011, employers must ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of all people legally in their workplace. Employers also have a duty of care under common law to ensure and maintain a safe place of work.
Additionally, employers are vicariously liable for the acts of the employees committed within the course of employment unless it can be shown that all reasonable steps were taken to prevent employees engaging in bullying behaviour.

Employees, similarly, have a responsibility under the legislation to ensure that they take reasonable care for their own safety and health at work and do not create or increase the risk to another person.

Employees who consider that they are victims of workplace bullying have a responsibility to bring this matter to the attention of the appropriate person and cooperate with the employer in adopting measures to address workplace bullying.

Workplace bullying, if allowed to continue, can have very negative effects on the health of the organisation.

**Policy Content**

Workplace bullying, as defined above, is based on the misuse of power and creates a risk to health and safety. It is often repetitive behaviour, or occurs as a behavioural pattern aimed to ‘torment, wear down, or frustrate a person’ (Einarsen 1999, p16). Although a single incident of workplace harassment is not considered to be bullying behaviour it can be distressing for the recipients and can still cause injury. Single incidents can also be a ‘warning sign’ and should be addressed promptly.

The legitimate exercise of rights and responsibility by an employer, in a professional and appropriate manner, does not constitute workplace bullying. All employers have a legal right to direct and control how work is done and managers have a responsibility to monitor workflow and to give feedback on performance.

Employees working at this workplace who experience or witness workplace bullying are encouraged to report such behaviour to the Principal, who is responsible for handling reports of bullying in this workplace. Reporting workplace bullying is a legitimate and positive contribution to the workplace wellbeing.

Bullying allegations raised by staff will be treated seriously, investigated promptly, confidentially and impartially. The reporting and investigation procedures for dealing with bullying can be located in the Procedures for the Management of Workplace Bullying, located ________________ ________________ (insert location of Procedures)
Procedures

All employees will:

► Be made aware of, and given information and skills to assist them to identify and address, workplace bullying

► Have an appropriate mechanism for prompt investigation and resolution of any alleged bullying made available to them

► Have allegations of bullying taken seriously, managed promptly and appropriately

► Have allegations of bullying responded to in a manner which respects and recognises the innate dignity of each person

► Be provided with appropriate, effective training programs relevant to their area of responsibility to assist them to develop a workplace culture that discourages workplace bullying.

► Be provided with written guidelines and appropriate training for the correct application of this Policy and its associated procedures for preventing and managing workplace bullying allegations and occurrences

Appropriate disciplinary action will be taken against a person who:

► Bullies or harasses a worker or another person, or

► Victimises someone who has made a compliant, or

► Makes malicious, frivolous or vexatious complaints.

This workplace will publish and promote the Workplace Bullying Policy to staff, parents and, when appropriate, the wider community

Expectations

At this workplace, it is expected that:

► All staff will respect the rights of others and refrain from any form of bullying of any other person

► All staff will actively promote a bullying-free environment, and conduct themselves in a manner that does not condone any form of bullying of or by any person

► All staff will respond appropriately to any report of workplace bullying, promptly bringing any such report to the attention of the Principal, nominated in this Policy as responsible for handling such reports.
Policy Administration

This Policy will be reviewed periodically, or in the event of any information or incident that indicates the need for a review, or following relevant legislative or organisational change.

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