

Students at Yarra Valley Grammar suspended over offensive ranking of female students

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A Melbourne school principal is "shocked and outraged" by a misogynistic list ranking female students.

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- In short:** Three male students at Yarra Valley Grammar have been suspended over a spreadsheet rating the attractiveness of female students.
- The spreadsheet used offensive terms and referenced sexual violence.
- What's next?** The school is holding meetings with students and parents and says it has contacted police.

Victorian Premier Jacinta Allan has said she is "devastated" by the behaviour of boys at a Melbourne school who compiled an offensive dossier on female students.

Three male students at Yarra Valley Grammar in Ringwood in Melbourne's east have been suspended after compiling the highly offensive spreadsheet rating the attractiveness of their female peers.

Warning: This story contains offensive language and references to sexual violence.

The students were reprimanded after staff discovered a screenshot of the document.

The school's principal, Mark Merry, said the spreadsheet used offensive terms and referenced sexual violence.



Yarra Valley Grammar has suspended three students over the offensive document. (ABC News: Danielle Bonica)

The spreadsheet used terms such as "wifeys" and "cuties" to describe female students and also used the term "unrapeable", he said.

"I'm shocked and outraged really," Dr Merry told ABC News Breakfast.

"We're attempting to pick up the pieces now. What has been said can't be unsaid and now we're facing the consequences of it here at the school."

Dr Merry said the use of the term "unrapeable" in the spreadsheet was particularly shocking and prompted the school to contact police.

He said police had not yet determined whether they would pursue the matter. The ABC has contacted Victoria Police.

"We see this as a very serious matter. It's completely counter to everything that we hold dear here at the school," he said.

"We have lots of students in that year level who are outraged, who feel sad, who feel angry and they're rallying around to support these young women."

Family and domestic violence support services:

- The Survivor Hub**
- Full Stop Australia:** 1800 385 578
- 1800 Respect National Helpline:** 1800 737 732
- DV Connect Women's Line:** 1800 811 811
- 13 YARN** 13 92 76
- Kids Helpline:** 1800 55 1800
- Headspace:** 1800 650 890
- Lifeline** (24-hour Crisis Line): 13 11 14



Yarra Valley Grammar principal Mark Merry said the school had spoken to the parents of students involved in the incident. (ABC News: Nico White)

The school met with students on Monday and also with the parents of the female pupils referenced in the document.

Dr Merry would not rule out expelling students over the incident. He said the Yarra Valley Grammar School ran courses on gender boundaries and how to behave in respectful relationships.

A father leaving the school on Monday said he had every confidence the administration was handling it appropriately.

"I just feel for all the children, boys and girls," he said.

"Whether you're there on this list, not on this list, it affects all girls, even affects some of the boys as well."

He said he wanted the boys to be expelled but would accept whatever consequences the school imposed.

One mother said the situation made her feel very sad but she did not think the boys should be expelled

"The school is taking responsibility, we are happy about (that)."

Premier brands schoolboys' actions 'disgraceful'



Jacinta Allan says behaviour of boys at Melbourne school 'utterly unacceptable'

Ms Allan said she was shocked when she learned what had happened at the school.

"The behaviour that's been reported today at the school in Ringwood is misogynist, it's disgraceful, it's disgusting and it's utterly unacceptable," she said.

"This pattern of violence against women, not only does the act of violence have to stop but [also] these displays of disrespecting women. It's just disgraceful."

Ms Allan said it was up to the school to decide whether further action would be taken against the students involved.

"My thoughts today are with the young women and the young men who they go to school with who are absolutely devastated by this news," she said.

Federal Education Minister Jason Clare said the school was handling the incident appropriately.

"It is disgusting and appalling. I'm glad the students have been suspended," he told Channel Nine.

"I also understand the female students are receiving counselling from the school. That's what I would expect the school to do."

What is the government's gendered violence plan?



A series of gendered violence deaths has brought a moment of fresh national reckoning. With it has come renewed scrutiny on the actions of governments. What is their plan?

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Consent activist urges community to take such acts seriously

Sexual consent activist Chanel Contos said such behaviour was commonplace in schools.

"If this is shocking news to anyone ... they're not paying attention," she said.

"This notion of ranking women and objectifying girls is new to absolutely no-one."

Ms Contos said such behaviour contributed to a culture where women were positioned as subordinate and objectified by male peers.

"We really need to take these acts seriously. Because these small acts relate directly to the rallies and protests that we had in Australia last week," she said.

"We really need to look at what sort of messages young men are receiving from various sources that makes them think that that is an okay way to act."

Rise in misogyny linked to popularity of social media figures, expert says

Stephanie Wescott, a feminist researcher and lecturer at Monash University's School of Education, Culture and Society, said she had observed a rise in sexism in Australian schools in recent years.

She said her team recently spoke to 30 female teachers who reported a level of sexism, misogyny and sexual harassment in they had never seen before.



Dr Stephanie Wescott says teachers are reporting levels of misogyny among teenage boys that they've never seen before. (ABC News: Billy Dropper)

Dr Wescott said that since COVID lockdowns there had been a rise in popularity of social media figures such as Andrew Tate.

"There just seems to be a more brazen and entitled way that boys are expressing these attitudes and behaviours in recent times," she said.

"There was a very specific shift in the behaviour and attitudes towards women and girls, and that shift was noticeably linked to particular content the boys were viewing online."

Dr Wescott said she supported the use of the Federal Government's funding to fight gender-based violence for counter-influence programs, and called on schools to run respectful relationships programs as a whole-of-school intervention.

"We need a zero-tolerance approach to violence against women and girls in schools and we really need the government to come out very strongly otherwise these kinds of behaviours, they're just not going away because our response isn't strong enough," she said.

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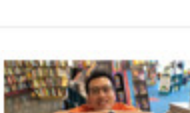
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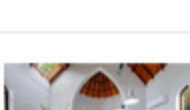
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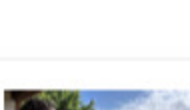
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