



ANTI-BULLYING POLICY

1. Rationale

This plan outlines the processes for managing and responding to student conflict in our school and reflects the *Bullying: Preventing and Responding to Student Bullying in Schools Policy* of the New South Wales Department of Education and Communities.

The Henry Kendall High School community takes the issue of bullying seriously and works proactively to address instances across the school context.

2. Purpose

Students attend school to participate in quality education that will help them to become self directed, lifelong learners who can create a positive future for themselves and the wider community. Our school does not condone inappropriate behaviour that negatively impacts teaching and learning and the wellbeing of students. Students, teachers, parents, caregivers and members of the wider school community have a shared responsibility and role to create a safe and happy environment; and to manage, within reason, incidents of bullying.

3. Context

Our school community acknowledges that schools exist in a society where conflict, intimidation, harassment and victimisation occur. Most importantly, parents maintain the primary responsibility within the community for managing matters of bullying. Such management is outside of the school context utilising, where appropriate, community agencies including police.

As a school, bullying is taken seriously, and strategies may be implemented within reason to manage conflicts and support individuals.

Bullying is a serious form of peer conflict. We have identified Bullying as a social problem that could: devalue, isolate and frighten, affects an individual's ability to achieve, has long-term effects on those engaging in all types of bullying behaviour, including cyberbullying. We also acknowledge that those who are the subjects of bullying behaviour and the onlookers or bystanders are equally affected. Teachers, students, parents, caregivers and members of the wider community have a responsibility to work together to address, and within reason, manage bullying.

As a school community we identified bullying can be defined as intentional, repeated behaviour by an individual or group of individuals that causes distress, hurt or undue pressure.

Bullying involves the abuse of power in relationships. Bullying can involve all forms of harassment (including gender, race, disability, sexuality), humiliation, domination, intimidation and victimisation of others. Bullying may also include harassment based on medical conditions such as diabetes, anaphylaxis and epilepsy.

Conflicts or fights between equals or single incidents are not defined as bullying.

Bullying behaviour can be:

- **verbal** eg name calling, teasing, abuse, putdowns, sarcasm, insults threats
- **physical** eg hitting, punching, kicking, scratching, tripping, spitting
- **social** eg ignoring, excluding, ostracising, alienating, making intentional inappropriate gestures
- **psychological** eg spreading rumours, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions, malicious text and email messages, inappropriate use of smart phones and social media platforms.

Students, teachers, parents, carers, and members of the wider school community have a shared responsibility and role to create a safe and happy environment. However, it is acknowledged that many instances of bullying are not known or reported to school personnel.

4. Strategies to Manage and Report Bullying including Bullying

Incidents of bullying may have reasonable steps taken to manage and resolve the conflict. Each instance will be looked at within context, and a range of factors considered in determining a management approach.

Where an incident of bullying is made aware to a teacher, it is addressed by the teacher and a resolution is sought.

Where a perpetrator exists in the conflict, this may include a verbal caution and counselling, detention, time out, communication with parents, referral to Head Teacher, ARCO or Head Teacher Student Services. Instances of bullying should be entered into the schools Sentral data base, including details of students involved and management strategies implemented.

However, if the conflict is more serious in nature it may be necessary to refer the matter to the Deputy Principal as per the school's *Discipline and Learning Policy*.

In instances where a victim is identified, a management strategy may include verbal feedback in which the student is assured:

- that the matter is being treated seriously,
- that action is being taken, and
- that any further instances also need to be reported to the teacher, Year Adviser or the Head Teacher Student Services or School Counsellor.

Repeated instances of conflict between peers may require further management strategies to be implemented (if the conflict is known to the school). These will need to consider a range of relevant and contextual information, and be implemented within the guidelines of the school's *Discipline and Learning Policy*. Possible Actions include: mediation, parental contact, School Counsellor/ARCO referral, withdrawal from playground/class, referral to external/DoE support agencies, formal caution, suspension from school, advising parents to report the matter to police, or involving the Police School Liaison Officer.

5. Communication with Parents and Caregivers

Parents and caregivers need to be informed of ongoing or serious instances of bullying. Other information that needs to be conveyed include: the steps the school is undertaking to manage the issue (within the scope of DoE and HKHS Policies and Procedures) and support agencies that can assist, including Police.

6. Strategies for Monitoring and Evaluating the Effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Policy

1. Professional Learning: regular professional learning and updates are conducted through staff meetings, Professional Learning Plans and welfare folders in each faculty
 - Head Teacher Student Services: conduct a briefing session to staff each year on the school Anti Bullying Policy.
 - Deputy Principals: Communicate the school Anti-Bullying Policy to parents each year through the school newsletter. Ensure details are communicated to new and casual staff, and as part of the Induction Program
 - Student Services transition team and Year Adviser: identify 'at risk' students from Partner Primary Schools and transition planning for vulnerable students to be put in place through the STAR program. A particular focus on transition points and new enrolment to prevent additional harm by putting in programs of support.
2. Education
 - Deputy Principals/Year Advisers: raise awareness of aspects of the Anti-Bullying Policy each term at school assemblies
 - Stage 4 wellbeing curriculum addresses specific aspects of bullying and it's impact.

8. Early Intervention in Bullying

Early intervention strategies and programs at Henry Kendall High School help to identify students at being at risk of developing long-term difficulties with social relationships and those students who are identified at or after enrolment as having previously experienced bullying. Targeted Early Intervention Strategies may include:

- Observe students inside and outside the classroom to identify early signs of relationship issues within each year group and across the school
- Proactively teach positive social behaviour to identified students

- Year Advisors use assembly and roll call as an opportunity to identify any issues within year groups and promote positive relationships between students

Identified students may be referred through the Learning Support Team to external agencies such as RYSS, HeadSpace, or CAMHS. The Learning Support Team may also set up buddy systems and used targeted programs such as Shine, Positive Peer Relationships, Top Blokes program, Peer Support through the SSO and welfare team to support and educate students. Additional strategies may include distributing and case managing through Learning Support and Welfare teams and report weekly to staff and executive through Welfare reports.

The school will endeavour to identify a history of bullying issues, where deemed appropriate, for students enrolling into the school. Such identification is reliant upon either parents or the previous school disclosing past incidents or bullying. In such cases the enrolling Deputy Principal will consider available information and may seek further details from the previous school. Where a bullying history for the enrolling student is established the Deputy Principal may pass this information to the Learning Support Team and Year Adviser for planned interventions as appropriate.

Additional strategies across the curriculum may include;

- Professional Learning activities for staff on strategies for dealing with bullying and the management of student behaviour.
- Encourage positive bystander behaviour through the curriculum.
- Provide positive activities and safe places for students during breaks.
- Identify relevant websites and advertise through our school website.
- Use our school newsletter to provide information to parents.
- Ensure values education is included in every curriculum.
- Promote the value of respect across the whole school through staff professional learning and explicit teaching in classes.
- Use student and staff mentors to support students who are affected by bullying activities.
- Encourage positive and co-operative behaviour through school reports and our reward systems.
- Remind staff of Duty of Care obligations, including on playground supervision.
- Encourage referrals to the counsellor or welfare team.
- Refer issues to the ARCO.
- Discuss and explain this policy with students, parents and staff through professional learning activities, year and whole school assemblies, information bulletins and the school community newsletter.
- Cyber safety programs explicit in stage 4 and 5 and whole school welfare programs annually. This is complemented with Police Liaison Officer lectures to all year groups about various aspects of law and social justice issues that are relevant to each cohort and identified through the Senior Executive and Welfare team.

10. Principal's Comment

Our school culture promoted values essential for living in a caring, civil and just society; values such as cooperation, integrity, responsibility and respect for others. We foster in our students a capacity for independent, lifelong learning and provide opportunities and guidance for students to develop into good citizens and capable leaders. An understanding of tolerance, respect and a supportive environment is integral to the values of our school. This plan establishes a framework for these understandings and places responsibility to avoid, respond to, address and resolve bullying at all levels and with members of our Learning Community.

Evaluation

This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's two year review cycle.

This policy was last updated

April 2023