



Education &
Communities

Anti-bullying Plan

Helensburgh Public School





Bullying:

Preventing and Responding to Student Bullying in Schools Policy (2011)

The NSW Department of Education and Communities rejects all forms of bullying. No student, employee, parent, caregiver or community member should experience bullying within the learning or working environments of the Department.

Bullying

Bullying is repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons. Cyber bullying refers to bullying through information and communication technologies.

Bullying can involve humiliation, domination, intimidation, victimisation and all forms of harassment including that based on sex, race, disability, homosexuality or transgender. Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long term effects on those involved including bystanders.

Conflict 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 inappropriate gestures
- **psychological** eg spreading rumours, dirty looks, hiding or damaging possessions, malicious SMS and email messages, inappropriate use of camera phones.

The term “bullying” has a specific meaning. The school’s Anti-bullying Plan sets out **the processes for preventing and responding to student bullying**. The school has a range of policies and practices, including welfare and discipline policies that apply to student behaviour generally.

Schools exist in a society where incidents of bullying behaviour may occur. Preventing and responding to bullying behaviour in learning and working environments is a shared responsibility of all departmental staff, students, parents, caregivers and members of the wider school community.

School staff have a responsibility to:

- respect and support students
- model and promote appropriate behaviour
- have knowledge of school and departmental policies relating to bullying behaviour
- respond in a timely manner to incidents of bullying according to the school’s Anti-bullying Plan.

In addition, teachers have a responsibility to:

- provide curriculum and pedagogy that supports students to develop an understanding of bullying and its impact on individuals and the broader community.

Students have a responsibility to:

- behave appropriately, respecting individual differences and diversity
- behave as responsible digital citizens
- follow the school Anti-bullying Plan
- behave as responsible bystanders
- report incidents of bullying according to their school Anti-bullying Plan.

Parents and caregivers have a responsibility to:

- support their children to become responsible citizens and to develop responsible online behaviour
- be aware of the school Anti-bullying Plan and assist their children in understanding bullying behaviour
- support their children in developing positive responses to incidents of bullying consistent with the school Anti-bullying Plan
- report incidents of school related bullying behaviour to the school
- work collaboratively with the school to resolve incidents of bullying when they occur.

All members of the school community have a responsibility to:

- model and promote positive relationships that respect and accept individual differences and diversity within the school community
- support the school’s Anti-bullying Plan through words and actions
- work collaboratively with the school to resolve incidents of bullying when they occur.

Our School Anti-Bullying Plan

This plan outlines the processes for preventing and responding to student bullying in our school and reflects the *Bullying: Preventing and Responding to Student Bullying in Schools Policy* of the New South Wales

This policy has been constructed by a group of Executive Staff at Helensburgh Public School in consultation with members of the teaching staff and P&C. Aspects of the policy have been discussed with senior members of the School's Student Representative Council.

Statement of purpose

Helensburgh Public School is an inclusive environment, where diversity is affirmed and individual differences are respected. Respect for others is a key value, which underpins the school's rules and expectations.

The school community does not tolerate bullying in any form. Students and staff have the right to expect that they will spend the school day free from the fear of bullying, harassment and/or intimidation.

All members of the school community have a responsibility to work together to address bullying.

Protection

Bullying is defined as repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power, by an individual or group towards one or more persons. Cyber bullying refers to bullying through information and communication technologies.

Bullying can involve humiliation, domination, intimidation, victimisation, and all forms of harassment including that based on sex, race, disability, homosexuality, or transgender. Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on both victims and bullies.

Single incidents of disagreement, conflict or fights are not defined as bullying.

(As per DEC Guidelines)

Examples of bullying include (but are not limited to):

- Teasing/name calling
- Repetitively commenting negatively or sarcastically about another person, or their belongings.
- Excluding others from groups or games
- Derisive looks aimed to make someone feel uncomfortable
- Threats
- Touching, taking or damaging others' property
- Physical harm – hitting, tripping, pushing

Examples of cyber bullying include (but are not limited to):

- Negative comments or photos on social media sites – Facebook, Twitter, Kick, Instagram etc.
- Spreading rumours via social media sites
- Texting or emailing negative comments, teasing or name calling on electronic media

Strategies to Maintain a Positive Climate of Respectful Relationships

Prevention

- Conduct a bullying audit of students and staff to determine levels of bullying occurring across the school as well as students who may be identified as bullies or at risk of being bullied
- Maintain and promote inclusive extracurricular activities such as Band, Choir, Sport, Environmental team, Dance groups, Debating, Public Speaking, Art programs that provide a group for children to belong to.
- Provide opportunities for positive leadership through SRC, House Captains, Buddy Classes, Peer Support Program
- Encourage adherence to our three school rules; Be Safe, Be Respectful, Be a Learner.
- Use of the school reward system to encourage and promote positive behaviour.
- Staff to maintain a vigilant attitude towards recognising and recording minor behaviour incidents in order to identify patterns of behaviour being exhibited by potential bullies.
- Staff consistently follow procedures set out in the School Welfare and Discipline Policy
- Regular discussion amongst staff of children at risk of being bullied or of being a bully, based on patterns of behaviour recorded in playground monitoring books.
- Consistent reminders of the acronym/ principles learnt at anti-bullying sessions and through visiting performers eg STAMP – prominently displayed around the school

- Raise community awareness of the definition of bullying through regular annual parent information meetings

Early Intervention

Early intervention for students with social difficulties and/or resilience issues, will enable monitoring or close supervision of these students to ensure their needs are being met and their well-being at school is supported.

Strategies which may assist children include:

- Peer Support Program
- Encouraging and supporting students to try new games with a variety of others
- Carefully chosen “buddies”
- Classroom focus on social skills
- Access to the school counsellor via referral to the Learning Support Team
- Parents are encouraged to contact the school if they become aware of a problem
- A zero tolerance to bullying behaviour adopted and promoted by staff.

Response

- Stage-based anti-bullying lessons in every classroom as part of the PE/PD Health Curriculum
- Visiting Performers, people with expertise to workshop with students

- Promotion of the STAMP acronym across the school via posters reminding students of meaning with regular discussion in classrooms
- Role play by senior students in buddy classes/ assembly and discussion of role play with junior classes
- Promote and describe the roles of bystanders and upstanders across the school
- Regular discussion of Student Welfare issues in staff and stage meetings
- Recording of minor playground incidents in the playground books in order to determine patterns of behaviour.
- Teachers will regularly remind students to report incidents. Discuss with classes the difference between dobbing and responsible reporting.

Reporting

Incidents of bullying may be reported directly to a teacher by the student involved, or they may become apparent following the daily checking system in place for the playground behaviour books. Minor playground incidents are recorded in order to identify patterns of unacceptable behaviour demonstrated by students over a period of time.

Minor incidents are tallied and entered into the school Welfare System through “Sentral”. Once two or more similar incidents are attributed to a particular student, procedures outlined in the HPS Student Welfare Policy are implemented

According to the HPS Student Welfare Policy, incidents of bullying require the identified bully to attend timeout at lunchtime where they discuss behaviours and school rules. They also complete a bullying booklet. These students are then placed on a behaviour contract in the classroom and/or playground for a period of two

weeks. Their behaviour during this time is closely monitored by all staff in classrooms, library, RFF, and on the playground.

Parents receive a letter stating the behaviours their child has been exhibiting and consequences applied according to the discipline policy.

If behaviours do not improve, parents are invited to the school for an interview with the Stage Supervisor and/or Principal.

Both bullies and victims of bullying will be offered access to the school counsellor at regular timetabled sessions in order to develop or improve socialisation and or resilience strategies as required by the student involved.

Continued involvement in bullying will lead to Caution to Suspend, Suspension or Expulsion as per the NSW DEC guidelines.

Procedures for Reporting Bullying Incidents to the Police

Where bullying incidents involve severe or repeated physical violence, and the student is of a culpable age, these incidents shall be reported to the police via the School Safety and Security Unit, as soon as they become evident on 1300 880 021

Procedures regarding contacting Child Well Being Unit or Department of Community Services

Where concern for the welfare of a child or young person becomes evident, the Principal shall:

- use the Mandatory Reporter Guide available at www.keepthemsafe.nsw.gov.au
- if there is a risk of significant harm, call the Child Protection Helpline on 133 627
- contact the Child Wellbeing Unit on 02 9269 9400

Publication of Anti-Bullying Policy

The Anti-Bullying Policy will be publicised in the following ways.

The policy will be made available on the school website <http://www.helensburg-p.schools.nsw.edu.au/>, promoted in the school newsletter and available as a hard copy from the school office.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Processes used to monitor and evaluate this policy shall include, but not be limited to:

- Utilisation of evidence retrieved from SENTRAL welfare. Calculation of reduction of incidents being reported by students each term.
- Whole school and community consultation after a given time period (6-12 months depending upon incidents reducing or not reducing).

Reporting to the Community

Helensburgh Public School Welfare Community will report annually to the school community on the effectiveness of the Anti-Bullying Plan, This will occur through the Annual School Report each year.

Review of Policy

This policy shall be reviewed in consultation with the community every three years as per DEC guidelines

Additional Information

Police Youth Liaison Officer (YLO) 42267791

The Anti-Bullying Plan – NSW Department of Education and Communities

School Liaison Police Officer (SLP) 42267721

Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800

Reach Out Australia www.au.reachout.com/bullying

Principal's comment

At Helensburgh Public School we are committed to ensuring all students have a safe and happy educational experience. We take seriously our involvement with parents in the production of this policy. We will work with all stakeholders using the latest research to address the problem of bullying and make our school a place that reflects the agreed values of RESPECT, SAFETY and LEARNING.

Development Team

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