



Heathfield High School

HEATHFIELD HIGH SCHOOL

ANTI-BULLYING & HARRASSMENT POLICY

STATEMENT OF INTENT

At Heathfield High School we recognise that bullying exists in the closed world of adolescents and therefore all schools need to create an atmosphere of openness and reporting. We also recognise the role of parents and the community in influencing how we deal with bullying in the community.

The stress for targets of bullying can have far reaching effects on their personal and social development as well as a considerable impact on their educational achievements and the educational achievements of their peers.

Total elimination of bullying will be a difficult, if not impossible, task. It is, however, the duty of all staff, students and parents to pursue this ideal with determination and vigour. Students and staff are entitled to enjoy their educational experience without fear of harassment from any sector of the school community.

The aim of our policy is to empower the whole school community to recognise and respond appropriately to bullying and harassment and to contribute to the general health and well-being of all students.

ANTI BULLYING CODE

Bullying interferes with learning and will not be tolerated at Heathfield High School. It is not an acceptable part of growing up.

The Department for Education and Child Development (DECD) recognises bullying as an inappropriate behaviour, which can be dealt with according to the school's discipline policy and suspension code.

Every student has the right to enjoy learning and leisure free from intimidation. Students should support each other by reporting all instances of bullying. Bullying is too important not to report. Reports of bullying will be taken seriously and appropriate action will be taken.

Each member of the Heathfield High School community shares the collective responsibility to ensure every member feels safe, supported and valued at all times.

AIMS OF POLICY

The aims of this policy are -

- To provide a safe, secure learning environment for all.
- To create a supportive environment and break the code of secrecy.
- To raise awareness of the issues involved with bullying and provide information to students, staff and parents.
- To ensure that the needs of both targets and bullies are addressed.
- To implement procedures to address bullying behaviour and so develop in those involved, respect for others.
- To impart information, skills and strategies to students, staff and parents.

HOW DO STUDENTS KNOW ABOUT THE SCHOOL'S BULLYING POLICY?

ACE group sessions, Brainstorm Productions workshops, diary (explained in detail during ACE in week 1 term 1), regularly revisited in Middle and Senior years curriculum, pamphlets/posters around school, school website, SAPOL visits (e.g. Cybersafety sessions).



Heathfield High School

DEFINITION OF BULLYING AND HARASSMENT

Bullying is not the same thing as a disagreement between two people.

Bullying is the misuse of power, position or privilege by an individual or group towards one or more persons. It is done to intimidate, coerce, create fear, control, embarrass, exclude, or cause pain or discomfort.

Bullying is -

- Deliberate and ongoing rather than one off.
- Any form of behaviour that is not welcome and not asked for.
- Distressing and hurtful to the target.
- Always one way rather than an exchange.

Bullying can be recognisable or hidden. Bullying is about power. A person or a group engages in bullying behaviours towards another person to establish or maintain a position of power over them.

Harassment is behaviour that targets an individual or group due to identity, race, culture or ethnic origin; religion; physical characteristics; gender; sexual orientation; marital, parenting or economic status; age; and/or ability or disability, and that offends, humiliates or creates a hostile environment. Harassment may be an ongoing pattern of behaviour, or it may be a single act between two people or groups.

Bullying and harassment may be:

- **Verbal** - name calling, personal comments, racial abuse, gossip, saying unwelcome comments, e.g. put-downs, threats, teasing, spreading rumours.
- **Social** - not being spoken to or being deliberately/maliciously left out of activities by an individual or group.
- **Property** - when possessions are stolen or damaged or extortion takes place e.g. hiding, throwing, stealing, dumping or intentionally damaging someone's property; forcing others to do things, such as hand over lunches, money.
- **Mental** - when pressure to conform is applied, intimidation (verbal e.g. threats) or nonverbal (e.g. glaring or laughing at others).
- **Physical** - physical assault. Throwing objects at others, pushing, shoving, fighting, pinching or any other unwelcome physical contact used intentionally to intimidate or hurt someone.
- **Written** – graffiti (pictures, tags or words), text messages, web sites, or other misuses of technology, writing comments or notes intended to embarrass or upset someone.
- **Sexual** – unwelcome sexual conduct which makes a person feel offended, humiliated and/or intimidated e.g. inappropriate touching or brushing up against someone; verbal or written sexual remarks; commenting on someone's body in a sexual way; pestering someone to go out with them or asking someone for sex when the person has said no; showing or sending pictures or texts/emails of a sexual nature, inappropriate comments about or questioning of someone's sexual identity/preferences.
- **Racist** - any of the above types of bullying directed towards people on the basis of their racial/cultural group.
- **Cyber** - using e-technology as a means of victimising others; using an internet service or mobile technologies - such as social networking sites (e.g. Facebook), email, chat room discussion groups, instant messaging, webpage, photographic and video images; inboxing, clicking 'Like' button to someone's comments or SMS (text messaging) with the intention of harming another person.
- **Indirect** – influencing, encouraging or organising someone else to be involved in any type of bullying or harassment.
- **Discrete** – when there are no witnesses or in ways which are not noticed by others.

Peer pressure plays a pivotal role in bullying and this may occur when a young person is perceived to be weak or different. Bullies don't want to be disliked and may exhibit bullying behaviour out of their own sense of self loathing. The bully usually picks an easy target and someone that other people are unlikely to defend. The peer pressure to be liked



Heathfield High School

combined with the peer pressure to reject the person who appears different leads to bullies picking on kids who may already be struggling with their own social issues.

Some people find it difficult to distinguish bullying from teasing or joking. Often, a bully can dish out criticism and personal attacks, but can't take it. Teasing and joking occurs among equals and is equally given and accepted; a bully, since he or she is trying to exert control, will usually not be able to take the same level of treatment in return.

STRATEGIES FOR DEALING WITH BULLYING

In order to stop bullying, a victim must first make his feelings known. For many, children and adult, this is a difficult task. Telling a bully that his or her actions are hurtful and not fun may be difficult, but it is a good way to determine a real bully from a joker who takes things too far. Someone who is not a bully will likely sincerely apologize and stop his or her behavior when confronted with an honest, straight-forward complaint. If, on the other hand, a person responds to the complaint with jeers, insults, or increased bullying, a victim can now rest assured that he is dealing with a real bully and should feel more comfortable seeking help to stop bullying behavior.

WHAT CAN I DO IF BULLYING IS OCCURRING?

Ignore it, walk away; Deflect with humour; Show it doesn't upset you. Stay close to friends – avoid being isolated; Tell the bully to stop; Tell yourself you are not to blame, you don't deserve to be bullied.

For all of the above, stand up for yourself and act confidently, hold your head up, look the other person in the eye, stand straight with shoulders back, stand your ground when you are talking and react calmly, not aggressively.

If you witness or know/hear of someone being bullied, support them. Bullies feed off the power they have over a target. By not intervening when you witness bullying or harassment, you are supporting the behaviour, giving the bully an even stronger sense of power, which may lead to an increase in bullying.

You can stop bullies in their tracks by -

- Refusing to participate, even passively, in bullying behaviour
- Not laughing or accepting comments that make fun of or hurt others
- Telling the bully on the spot that the behaviour is wrong.
- Standing up for the person being targeted

If the bullying continues -

- Seek help from someone you trust (parents/caregivers/teacher/counsellor/sports coach/student leader)
- DO NOT put up with behaviour which makes you feel embarrassed, uncomfortable, afraid or upset.

SILENCE AND SECRECY NURTURE BULLYING

Reporting or Dobbing? Reporting bullying is about acting responsibly by trying to prevent further harm. Dobbing is deliberately trying to set someone up, to get them into trouble.

Dobbing –	Reporting -
No one is being hurt	You or someone else is being hurt by the bully's behaviour
No one is afraid	You or someone else is afraid
Gets someone into trouble	Gets someone out of trouble



Heathfield High School

STUDENT REPORTING OF BULLYING

Students can report bullying to any member of staff or to a student leader (who will then refer the matter to a teacher or counsellor). Students seeing others being bullied are encouraged to report it. Reports can be made anonymously.

It is important to give as much information as possible:

- Who did the bullying?
- What happened?
- When did the bullying start and how long has it been happening?
- Where did it take place?
- Were there any witnesses?

When bullying is reported, the teacher will deal with it immediately. Further appropriate action and follow up will then take place as soon as practicable. (see role of staff)

- A discussion will be arranged and later the situation will be reviewed.
- Further occurrences of bullying are likely to result in more serious consequences, e.g. suspension/possible exclusion.
- A report to the police will be made in the case of suspected criminal behaviour. (e.g. verbal/physical/sexual assault, serious property damage, sexting, theft)
- More severe bullying behaviours (e.g. fights) will result in suspension and/or possible exclusion.

All reports of bullying are acted upon; however the consequences for students who bully may not be disclosed or observable to others.

ROLE OF STAFF

Everyone in the school should be aware of the indications of potential bullying and should act in response. All staff must ensure that harassment, bullying or threatening behaviour is not tolerated in school.

All staff must respond to bullying -

1. Listen.
2. Reassure.
3. Continue to offer help, advice and support to those involved.
4. Document the incident and give to Middle or Senior year Coordinator

**Please Note: Situations involving violence or sexual harassment/interference must be reported immediately (Contact Amanda Baldock ext 303)*

The Middle or Senior Year coordinator will decide whether the following should occur:

- Referral to counsellor
- Referral to Assistant Principal, Behaviour Management for recommendation of suspension for behaviour if necessary.

5. Parents are informed of actions taken in bullying incidents by the Assistant Principals (middle, senior years or behaviour management)

Duty of care

To respond to incidents of harassment, bullying or threatening behaviour, all staff must take action by -

- Take action as quickly as possible such as moving the bully or target, detentions, parent contact.
- Make it clear to the bully that such behaviour is not acceptable.



Heathfield High School

- Establish whether or not the incident is part of a pattern.
- Encourage the bully to see the target's point of view.
- Explain why a consequence is given.

Every incident of bullying is unique. Bullying varies in its severity and consequent impact on those involved. Staff should follow the existing school discipline procedures when dealing with bullying.

All incidents of bullying need to be documented and given to the relevant Senior Leader to ensure that:

- Within the school, it is made clear that bullying will not be tolerated.
- Sanctions used take into account the severity and frequency of the bullying.
- Bullying behaviour is confronted clearly and pursued beyond the mere application of sanctions.
- Students who persist in bullying, despite counselling and support, may be suspended and ultimately excluded from school.

ROLE OF PARENTS

If you believe your child is involved in bullying, either as a target or as an aggressor, it is appropriate to communicate this information to the school by contacting an *ACE group teacher* or *coordinator* as soon as possible.

Advice for parents:

- If you suspect that your child is involved in bullying at school, either as a target or as an aggressor, encourage them to talk to you about it.
- Never dismiss the matter by saying it is the child's responsibility to deal with it, either by standing up to the bully or ignoring it.
- Don't be too over-protective either. Encourage your child to come to school after the school is made aware of the situation.
- Listen carefully and sympathetically. Try to get the relevant facts without interrogation.
- Encourage your child to tell someone at school about it.
- Describe accurately what has been happening to your child to your contact at the school. (ACE teacher, middle or senior years coordinator, school counsellor)
- Be prepared to work with the school to resolve the issue/s.
- Understand that bullying that occurs out of school hours is often out of the school's jurisdiction.

SUPPORT THROUGH THE CURRICULUM

Heathfield High School works actively through subject-specific curriculum and the Wellbeing Program to raise awareness concerning the issues related to bullying, and to reduce the frequency and severity of bullying incidents within the school community.

Subject Specific Curriculum

Responsible Living Curriculum includes dealing with bullying and conflict resolution

Other Key Learning Areas Identify specific opportunities to reinforce conflict resolution and anti-bullying.

Wellbeing Program

As part of their scheduled ACE group activities, the students are led, in small groups, through a series of workshops that focus on what bullying is, the effects of bullying, the reasons people bully, the resources available in the school, and the responsibilities of all school community members. The students participate in groups structured specifically to build group awareness and associated skills.

Organised for implementation in Term 1 of Year 8 & 9 each year with a follow-up day during Term 3



Heathfield High School

A bullying survey will be used with each year level to record incidents of bullying and to monitor any such incidents. This will be used to record and monitor bullying behaviour.

Big Brother/Big Sister support

Year 11 and 12 student leaders undergo training before Term 1 commences for the incoming Year 8 students. The Year 8 students are encouraged, through group work and orientation activities, to develop close relationships with the Year 11/12 students. The aim is for Year 8s to use the older students as a support network and point of reference in the school for information and assistance.

EVALUATION

An anti-bullying policy alone will not stop bullying. Bullying is an aspect of life that can only be reduced through raising awareness and appropriately empowering all members of the school community.

This policy will be reviewed annually through the implementation of surveys, updating information and analysis. The review will be conducted by representatives from Heathfield High School's well-being team, in collaboration with the Students for Students (S4S), parents and the Governing Council.

EVERY PERSON AT HEATHFIELD HIGH SCHOOL HAS A RESPONSIBILITY TO:

- Choose behaviour that does not cause another person embarrassment, discomfort or distress.
- Choose behaviour that does not disrupt learning.
- Point out to bullies that their behaviour is not acceptable.
- Report incidents of bullying.

FURTHER INFORMATION

The following websites have useful information and tips

- National Centre Against Bullying <http://www.ncab.org.au>
- Bullying. No Way! <http://www.bullyingnoway.com.au>
- Cybersmart <http://www.cybersmart.gov.au>
- Beyondblue <http://www.beyondblue.org.au>
- Headspace <http://www.headspace.org.au>
- Kids Helpline <http://www.kidshelp.com.au>
- Reach out <http://au.reachout.com>