



Education &
Communities

Anti-bullying Plan

8219 Hunter River High 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 Department of Education.

This plan has been written in consultation with all stakeholders within the extended community of Hunter River High School (HRHS) - staff, students, parents and community agencies. This plan is implemented through everyday interactions between students, staff and community.

Additionally, HRHS constantly reinforces the importance of, and implementation strategies for, this policy through regular staff meetings, year meetings with students, weekly student reviews by the school Learning Support Team and parent evenings and communication through the school's newsletter, webpage and Facebook page. The beliefs of this plan are continually reinforced through the school's values of harmony and respect, through PBL processes and teacher interaction with students.

Statement of purpose

Every individual, both staff and students, at Hunter River High School has a right to feel safe psychologically and physically. Any person who bullies another is denying them this right. In our school, we support the notion that individuals being bullied do not own the problem alone. Bullying damages everyone in our school community in one way or another.

Hunter River High School welfare policies and strategies focus on zero tolerance for harassment, discrimination or vilification. Our school does not tolerate bullying in any form, verbal or non-verbal. All members of the school community are committed to ensuring a safe and caring environment which promotes personal growth, achievement and positive relationships for everyone. We accept the

collective ownership of the problem of bullying, and will act together to provide educational strategies and skills, and sanctions to respond positively to incidents of bullying behaviour.

The development of positive student/teacher relationships is paramount. The school is also concerned about the need for students to gain knowledge and understanding of the depth of digital footprints on their lives and their future.

Hunter River High School values education, friendship and community. Our school is an inclusive environment, where diversity is affirmed and individual differences are accepted. We respect the rights of all to be safe at all times within this environment. We believe that everyone has the capacity to grow and learn, individually and collectively, from one another.

In particular, at Hunter River High School, our plans are built around:

- 1. Department of Education (DoE) policies;**
- 2. The DoE Core Rules and Values;**
- 3. Our core values of:**
 - Harmony,
 - Respect,
 - Honesty, and
 - Success; and
- 4. The Method of Shared Concern, by Frank Pikas.**

This plan is based on the DoE 'Preventing and Responding to Student Bullying in Schools Policy' (9/8/2011) that provides more information for interested school community members. All requirements of the DoE policy are mandatory for all staff. This plan should be read in conjunction with the Hunter River High School Student Welfare and Discipline Policy and the Staff Policies and Procedures.

Protection

The school understands bullying behaviour to be:

- 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;
- personal or negative comments directed at an individual through information and communication technologies which are repeated or incite others to join in – cyberbullying; and
- humiliation, domination, intimidation, victimisation and all forms of harassment including that based on sex, race, disability, homosexuality or transgender.

At Hunter River High School bullying and harassment are not tolerated.

Bullying of any form or for any reason can have long-term effects on those involved including bystanders.

Students, teachers, parents, caregivers and members of the wider school community have a shared responsibility to create and maintain a safe and happy environment, free from all forms of bullying.

Students have a responsibility to:

- behave appropriately, respecting individual differences and diversity in accordance with the Hunter River High School Student Welfare and Discipline Policy and our core values of Harmony, Respect, Honesty and Success
- positively participate in all strategies that are part of the Hunter River High School Anti-Bullying Plan; and
- respond to incidents of bullying according to the HRHS Anti-Bullying Plan.

Parents and caregivers have a responsibility to:

- support their children in all aspects of their learning;
- 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 HRHS Anti-Bullying Plan;
- support the school in implementing the HRHS Anti-Bullying Plan; and

Hunter River High School Anti-Bullying Plan – NSW Department of Education

- support all students of the school to deal effectively with bullying through the strategies of the Anti-Bullying Plan.

Teachers have a responsibility to:

- respect and support students in all aspects of their learning;
- model behaviour that promotes respectful relationships; and
- respond in an appropriate and timely manner to incidents of bullying according to the HRHS Anti-bullying Plan.

Through PBL lessons, anti-bullying presentations and the school curriculum, students learn about the laws relating to bullying, harassment, discrimination and vilification. They also learn the Department of Education stance on bullying and what happens at Hunter River High School in response to bullying and harassment. The aim is to have an inclusive school where students feel safe and happy at school without the fear of bullying and harassment.

If students believe they are suffering from bullying, harassment, discrimination or vilification they should:

1. Tell the person to stop and that you don't like what they are doing;
2. If they continue, tell them that it is harassment and you will report it;
3. If it continues – students seek assistance from their teachers, year advisors, head teachers or deputies;
4. The year adviser, head teacher welfare or the deputies will interview the other student(s); and
5. If it continues disciplinary or resolution action can be taken.

Note: If students have a problem in class, they should report the matter to their teacher and enable the teacher to deal with it.

Prevention

The school will engage in positive strategies that promote respect, tolerance, patience and dignity in relationships. To this end, anti-bullying messages will be embedded regularly in the school's routines, curriculum and communication where strong, ethical and affirming behaviours are modelled and expected.

HRHS believes that the most effective method for prevention of bullying is providing information to students and parents on what constitutes, and how to deal with, bullying, harassment, discrimination and vilification, and importantly, a quick response to all instances of bullying behaviour.

Prevention Strategies include:

- **Year 7 transition programs** that discuss expected behaviour and discuss anti-bullying strategies and procedures. These are reinforced at the Year 7 Camp and in year meetings.
- The **school handbook** provided to parents and students at enrolment meetings outlines the processes to respond to bullying, harassment, discrimination and vilification.
- Harmony, Respect, Honesty and Success **special days and lessons** occur for all years once per term and include anti-bullying messages.
- **School Assemblies** reinforce core values and school processes and regular **Year Meetings** reinforce core values and school messages.
- The **School Liaison Youth Police Officer** addresses Year Groups each semester on bullying and cyber bullying prevention, identification and response strategies.
- Utilisation of a range of **inter-agency and regional personnel** to run workshops and forums for students, teachers and parents that guide preventative behaviours.
- The Head Teacher Welfare and the Community Liaison Officer organises appropriate **external performances and presentations** to reinforce the school's anti-bullying program. **Brainstorm Productions** visit the school each year to present workshops on bullying.

- **Curriculum content** in the areas of English, Drama, Human Society and Its Environment, and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education support students in identifying, understanding and responding to bullying.
- An integrated **Religious Education** program in Year 8 and 9 complements the school's core values and programs.
- Students are regularly familiarised with the **support personnel in the school** who are available to support students, including: classroom teachers; year advisers; anti-racism contact officer; Aboriginal Education Officer; head teachers, especially the Head Teacher Welfare; school counsellors, and deputy principals and principal.
- **The Cultural Room** operates as a place of inclusion and acceptance. Students have access to the room and can seek safety and support from fellow students and from the staff
- **Roll call** is extended to 20 minutes daily to allow students regular contact with the same staff member who can support them in addressing issues around school organisation, bullying, harassment, discrimination and vilification.
- Staff are required to enter all incidents, allegations or responses to allegations of BHDV onto **Millennium**.
- **Year Advisers meet weekly with the Head Teacher Welfare** to discuss student issues. The Principal and / or a Deputy Principal also attend these meetings whenever possible;
- **Deputy Principals are allocated Year Groups** to supervise and monitor;
- **Deputy Principals review Millennium weekly**, and identify any obvious trends in bullying to the Learning Support Team and or School Executive;
- The **School Learning Support Team** meets weekly to review student needs and issues;
- The **School Executive** meet weekly to review student and school meta-data;
- The **School Attendance Team** meets once per cycle to review attendance data and student and / or system issues;
- The **School Self-Evaluation Committee** gathers data across terms 1 – 3 and identifies any patterns or trends to the appropriate personnel or group.

Early Intervention

The school will implement early intervention strategies and programs for students who are identified as 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 or engaged in bullying behaviour. These strategies include:

- Pre-enrolment meetings and school information sharing sheets contain requests for information on previous bullying;
- Developing behaviour support plans to assist students at risk of being in conflict with their peers.
- Using the expertise of the school's counsellor to develop intervention strategies and provide opportunities for counselling sessions;
- Monitoring at-risk students using key personnel, for example, the Year Adviser or Boys and Girls Advisors or Head Teacher Welfare or Deputy Principals or a nominated person who can provide trust and support;
- Referring at-risk students appropriately to their Year Adviser, the Head Teacher Welfare, the Learning Support Team, or the School Counsellor;
- Ensuring students and parents know the school's Anti-Bullying Action Plan so that appropriate action can be taken by the school to support all parties;
- Seeking external agency support to further encourage resilience and self-esteem as necessary;
- Utilising the expertise of regional personnel to provide advice, support and guidance;
- Promoting responsible reporting to children and staff to encourage reporting of bullying incidents involving themselves or others;
- Reminding students and staff regularly to report incidents of bullying;
- Encouraging parents to contact school if they become aware of a problem;
- Publicly recognising and rewarding positive behaviour and resolution of problems as part of the schools level system. Positive phone calls to parents, Gotchas, commendations, PBL postcards and student of the week nominations are awarded for positive behaviour.

Responding to Bullying

The school feels it is important to note that conflict or fights between equals, single incidents, or even a collection of single incidents, are not necessarily defined as bullying. There is ample research to indicate that students need to

experience some conflict to develop resolution skills and resilience for development as normal healthy social beings.

Punitive action has only a limited effect on reducing the incidence and insidiousness of bullying because it perpetuates a cycle of power, potentially prolonging the problem. Additionally, punitive responses deal only with students who are known to bully others.

It is also important to understand that the problem of bullying is not easily proven or resolved. Therefore, the processes of addressing bullying and harassment may take time to have impact. However, the school's firm commitment is that all allegations of bullying, harassment, discrimination and vilification will be investigated.

Serious physical assault or bullying will be referred to the relevant Deputy Principal. The Deputies will follow DoE and school policies and procedures, especially the *Suspension and Expulsion of School Students*, and may recommend to the Principal referrals to appropriate outside agencies e.g. police, child wellbeing unit, DOCS.

Resolution of discrimination or vilification will be referred to the Anti-Racism Contact Officer (ARCO) in the first instance. If appropriate the Aboriginal Education Officer will be informed and involved. Resolutions or unsuccessful interventions will be communicated to the appropriate Deputy Principal.

Initial Response

Resolution of bullying and harassment should start with the classroom teacher, or, if occurring in the playground, the duty Head Teacher. Staff should attempt to address single incidents of conflict by mediation and negotiation, and record the incidents and actions on Millennium.

Ongoing Bullying

Students reporting ongoing bullying or harassment should report to the year advisors who will then deal with the issue and attempt to resolve the issues by taking statements from the student involved; counselling all parties; and/or mediating.

Once identified the students involved; bullying, being bullied or witnesses, will be interviewed. Students and staff identified by others as bullying will be informed of allegations and interviewed. Both those bullying and those being the target of bullying will be offered counselling and support.

Year advisers who find evidence of ongoing bullying and harassment may refer the matter to the Head Teacher Welfare, Learning Support Team or appropriate deputy principal for further investigation.

Serious Incidents

Incidents of serious physical bullying will be referred immediately and directly to the deputy principals. Deputy principals will: interview and take statements from the students involved and determine appropriate interventions.

At this level, appropriate interventions for the *student being bullied* may include: support by year adviser or Head Teacher Welfare; parental contact; mediation with the person bullying, identification of a safe place or safety strategy; identification of a buddy; referral to Learning Support Team; referral to School Counsellor; referral to child wellbeing unit; referral to DOCS; referral to external agencies.

At this level, appropriate interventions for the *student(s) bullying* may include: counseling by deputy principal; parental contact; mediation; levels system monitoring card; withdrawal of privileges; exclusion from class; exclusion from playground; transfer to DP roll call for daily monitoring; ongoing counselling from school counsellor or other appropriate agency, referral to whole school detention; referral to Learning Support Team; school suspension.

If student bullying persists, parents will be contacted and consequences implemented consistent with the school's Student Welfare and Discipline policy, Anti-Bullying Plan and levels system.

If staff bullying persists the principal will commence formal disciplinary action consistent with the DoE Code of Conduct and Charter of Dignity and Respect. Consequences for staff will be individually based and may involve:

- counselling
- a period of monitoring
- a formal support group
- disciplinary actions

Hunter River High School Anti-bullying Plan – NSW Department of Education

The senior executive staff are responsible for reporting incidents of assaults, threats, intimidation or harassment to police. They will take advice from the School Safety and Response Unit, the Police Youth Liaison Officer, the School Youth Liaison Police Officer, and / or the Student Welfare Consultant.

All teaching staff are mandatory reporters of Child Protection issues and receive annual Child Protection training and are regularly reminded of their responsibilities and our procedures in relation to Keeping Them Safe and mandatory reporting requirements. Staff must report any concerns to the Head Teacher Welfare, Deputy Principal or Principal. The Principal has a responsibility to ensure that appropriate staff use the Mandatory Reporter Guide (MRG) and follow its recommendations in relation to school procedures, the Child Wellbeing Unit or the Department of Community Services.

Any appeal or complaint will be resolved in the first instance by reviewing strategies to support the student or staff member in an informal process or if unsuccessful or otherwise through the Department of Education Complaint Handling Policy.

Continuous Action

The HRHS Anti-Bullying Plan will be promoted and publicised through existing school communication systems such as staff Meetings, P&C meetings, student year meeting, school assemblies and the school newsletter. The plan will be available on our website.

Hunter River High School will report annually to the school community through the Annual School Report and the Annual General meetings of the P&C Association and School Council.

Hunter River High School will evaluate the HRHS Anti-Bullying plan every three years to update the plan in line with emerging trends, data and interventions and the new school strategic plan. This evaluation will occur through school self-evaluation processes which will include representation from students and student representative bodies, parents and community and parent representative bodies such as the P&C Association, school staff and interagency representatives associated with our school community.

Additional Information

Contact information for relevant personnel:

Constable Leanne Mann, Police Youth Liaison Officer
Raymond Terrace Police
Phone: 4983 0599

Constable Jalam Glossop, School Liaison Police Officer
Phone: 49266647 0437778869

Sandy Woolf, Home School Liaison Officer
Phone: 0421321322

Additional Resources

BullyEd, *Positive Behaviour for Learning Framework*
Anti-Bullying Program
www.bullyingnoway.com.au
Child Wellbeing Unit
Department of Community Services
Andrew Fuller, *From Thriving to Surviving*
Kids Helpline 1800 55 1800
www.kidshelp.com.au
Lifeline 131 114
Mindmatters 1800 1724 724
F. Pikas *The Method of Shared Concern*
K. Rigby *Stop the Bullying: A Handbook for Schools*
School Safety and Response Unit 1300 363 778
www.schoolclimate.org
www.stopbullying.gov
Keith Sullivan *The Anti-Bullying Handbook*
L. Worsley *The Resilience Doughnut*

Principal's comment

This Anti-bullying plan should be read in conjunction with existing school policies and procedures, including Student Welfare and Discipline, and Anti-Racism.

The plan has been developed by the team below after considerable consultation and input from the P&C Association, the School Executive, the Year Advisers, the Staff, the Student Representative Council and the Junior Aboriginal Education Consultative Group.

Deb Dibley, Principal
Kylee Beasley, Deputy Principal
Jeff Guider, Head Teacher Welfare
Pam Peterson, District Guidance Officer
Warwick Rolfe, HRHS ARCO
Tina Snow, President, P&C Association
Brooke Roach, Aboriginal Education Officer

Dated 19th July 2017

School contact information

Hunter River High School
Elkin Avenue, Heatherbrae. NSW 2324
Ph: 02 4987 2306
Fax: 02 4987 4076
Email: hunterriv-h.school@det.nsw.edu.au

Web: www.hunterriv-h.school.nsw.edu.au