

## Anti-Bullying Policy



### Rationale

HBHS is committed to countering all forms of bullying and harassment. We believe that it is the right of every member of the school community to work and learn without fear of bullying or harassment of any kind.

Countering bullying is consistent with the school's efforts to ensure that HBHS is a safe and happy environment for all and to develop a school culture in which co-operation and acceptance are fostered.

**We value a strong and supportive culture where bullying is perceived as unacceptable.**

### Definition of Bullying

Bullying is when a student or group, with more power at the time, deliberately and repeatedly uses negative words, and/or actions, against another student which causes distress and creates a risk to their wellbeing.

Bullying can take a number of forms, either direct or indirect:

#### PHYSICAL

- pushing, hitting, kicking, spitting.
- Interfering with another's property by stealing.
- hiding, damaging, or destroying it, another person's property.
- forcing others to act against their will.

#### VERBAL

- name-calling.
- teasing, taunting, intimidating, gossiping, humiliating.
- name calling of a sexual or racial nature.
- using put downs, making fun of others' abilities and achievements.
- making offensive comments about another's sexuality, culture, religion or family background.

#### SILENT

- isolation, rude gestures.
- exclusion from group activities.

#### ELECTRONIC

- text messaging.
- unauthorised photography or videoing, creation of websites or placement on internet sites.

Bullying is a very serious issue. It is recognised to be the root cause of truancy, unhappiness, underachievement, and a decline in learning. It can relate to future criminality.

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Bullying can happen anywhere:

- at school;
- in sporting teams;
- during assembly;
- in the classroom;
- in the playground;
- in cyberspace;
- between classes;
- travelling to and from school and sport;
- Any extra-curricular activity.

### **Rights and responsibilities of members of the school community**

At HBHS students and teachers have rights and responsibilities. Students and members of staff have the right to feel safe and to be protected from bullying and harassment. The school acts rapidly and firmly against bullying wherever and whenever it occurs.

The school is responsible for the implementation of an anti-bullying policy. The central components are strategies which are in place for anticipated incidents. A structured approach when dealing with bullies:

#### **Level 1**

- An incident record is kept;
- Students are interviewed to ascertain the facts;
- Students are counselled;
- Appropriate school-based punishment is administered.

#### **Level 2**

- Parent Notification;
- Parent Interview.

#### **Level 3**

- Suspend the offender.

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### Pro-Active Strategies for Dealing with Bullies

Teachers will:

- Be role models, in word and action at all times;
- Be consistent, fair and understanding;
- Be observant of signs of distress or suspected incidence of bullying;
- Make efforts to remove occasions of bullying by active patrolling during playground duty;
- Arrive at class on time and move promptly between lessons, delivering Quality Teaching lessons;
- Take steps to help vulnerable students and remove sources of distress without placing them at further risk;
- Use the school curriculum to provide lessons and activities designed to develop knowledge, attitudes and skills that will help students deal more effectively with issues of bullying. The topics might include:
  - anger management;
  - assertiveness versus aggressiveness;
  - methods of conflict resolution;
  - bystanders' role in discouraging bullying behaviour;
  - the development of empathy and cooperation;
  - identification of prejudice and discrimination as they relate to racism, gender bias and homophobia.
- The PD/H/PE and Drama curriculum makes reference and provides opportunity for exploration of these areas;
- Teachers may request the assistance of inter-agency supports particularly the Community Youth Liaison Police when dealing with persistent or serious issues;
- Teach social skills including conflict resolution, eg role-play, skits, and promote resilience in all students;
- Encourage cooperative learning and group work;
- Encourage sportsmanship on and off the field;
- Assist students in anti-bullying poster campaigns;
- Raise self-esteem of students who have been bullied and teach assertiveness techniques;
- Train students to be peer mediators;
- Foster positive and supportive relationships among all members of the school community;
- Co-ordinate and monitor organised activities run by the SRC, and provide "safe places" for students eg chess club, library before school and during breaks;
- Publicise, around the school, 5Ts, particularly "don't Touch, don't Take and don't Tease";
- Display the School's Fair Discipline Code and Classroom Codes;

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- Promote resilience in all students;
- Keep parents informed regularly on any initiatives or actions taken by the school on bullying;
- Organise speakers to address parents on the latest research on bullying and how it applies to our school;
- Provide ongoing training in anti-bullying procedures.

### Students will:

- not be a bystander while bullying occurs;
- be confident and skilled in assisting victims;
- be expected to report any bullying incidents;
- follow the school's Fair Discipline Code and Classroom Codes;
- be selected to undergo Peer Mediation training;
- nominate for leadership positions (School Captain, Vice-Captain, Prefects and SRC members).

### Parents will:

- encourage their son to interact positively with others;
- instruct their son to report any incidents of bullying;
- Instruct their son not to reinforce bullying by being a bystander.

## Re-active Strategies

Depending on the severity, frequency, and duration of bullying some of the following strategies may be adopted. Both the victim and bully will require intervention.

- Assure students that the problem can be investigated and acted upon;
- Treat all involved with fairness;
- Peer mediation;
- Web links on school intranet regarding Anti Bullying Policies;
- Peer and teacher mentoring for victims and bullies;
- Use of Pikas method of shared concern and 'No Blame' approach;
- Restitution negotiated;
- Counselling by school counsellor for extra support;
- SWAT entry;
- Referral to Deputy Principals/Heads of Departments/Year Advisers/Learning Support Team;
- Detentions, and, for continued bullying, possible suspension;

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- Police counselling session arranged with the PYLO;
- Proactive Year Assemblies addressing issues.

### **Some suggested strategies that parents might consider and apply are:**

If your son is being bullied:

- Listen carefully to your son;
- Assure your son that it is not his fault;
- Stay calm;
- Get accurate details;
- Give your son some strategies to cope;
- Practise them with him;
- If your son is different in some way, help him to be proud of the difference;
- If the problem persists, seek assistance from any member of staff, school counsellor or executive member (Year Adviser, Deputy Principal or Principal).

### **Conclusion**

Homebush Boys High School aims for positive interactions between all members of the school community. We ensure that all students can be safe and happy at school. Student learning is our key objective.

The success of the policy will be reflected in

- Reduced bullying incidents;
- More effective response to bullying incidents;
- Analysing Year 12 Exit Survey Results and other surveys;

An increase in educational achievement within a quality learning environment. Year 7 “Wellbeing” analysed during Term 1 and Term 4.