The Heights School Anti-Bullying Policy

Reviewed and updated February 2017

Policy Statement

Harassment, bullying and violence in all its forms have no place in The Heights School community. Our school affirms the right of all members of the school community to work, learn and play in a safe and secure environment.

Rationale

We believe that if our students are to learn effectively to achieve their best, and if all members of the school community are to contribute effectively to the learning process then the school must be free from all forms of harassment, violence and bullying.

Students are entitled to receive their education free from humiliation, oppression and abuse. Bullying affects everyone, not just those who bully and are bullied. It also affects those who may witness bullying, intimidation and the distress of the person bullied (including bystanders). It can damage the atmosphere of a class and even the climate of a school. We adopt a whole school approach in partnership with the wider school community (students, families, staff and community agencies).

A safe school is one in which harassment and bullying focussed on gender, race and ability is minimised. We expect positive relationships between students, parents and staff where diversity is embraced, all individuals are valued and positive behaviours are promoted.

We adopt a whole school approach to combat bullying in partnership with our school community as we believe that maintaining a safe school is everyone's responsibility.

Policy Context

This policy operates in conjunction with the following policies and is supported through our curriculum:

- National Safe Schools Framework
- Behaviour Management Policy
- Occupational Health, Safety and Welfare Policy
- DECD policies – Safer DECD Schools, Anti-Racism and Sexual Harassment
- The Child Protection Curriculum

What is Bullying?

***BULLYING**:

- Repeated physical, verbal, psychological or social 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 may be direct (or indirect
- A conflict or fight between equals; or single incidents are not regarded as bullying.
- Bullying in any form or for any reason can have long term effects on those involved, including bystanders.

***HARASSMENT:**

- *Behaviour* that targets an individual or group due to their identity, race, culture, religion, physical characteristics; gender; sexual orientation; ability or disability and that offends, humiliates, intimidates or creates a hostile environment. Harassment may be an ongoing pattern of behaviour, or it may be a single act.

***DISCRIMINATION:**

- When people are *treated less favourably* than others because of their race; culture or religion; physical characteristics; gender; sexual orientation; marital, parenting or economic status; age; and/or ability or disability.
- Often ongoing and commonly involves exclusion or rejection.

***VIOLENCE:**

- The intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against another person/s that results in psychological harm, injury or in some cases death. Violence may involve provoked or unprovoked acts and can be a single incident, a random act or can occur over time.

***CYBER BULLYING:**

- Bullying which uses e-technology as a means of victimising others. It is the use of an internet service or mobile technologies – such as e-mail, chat room discussion groups, instant messaging, web pages or SMS – with the intention of harming another person. Examples include communications that seek to intimidate, control, manipulate, put down or humiliate the recipient.

***SEXUAL HARASSMENT:**

- Unwelcome sexual conduct which makes a person (male or female, of the same or opposite gender, same-sex attracted, bisexual or transgender) feel offended, humiliated and/or intimidated, where that reaction to the conduct is reasonable in the circumstances.
- Sexual harassment can be a single incident, repeated or continuous, direct or indirect, and take various forms.
- Sexual harassment is a legally recognised form of sex discrimination.

Note: Behaviour of a sexual nature based on mutual attraction, friendship and respect, which is welcome or invited, consensual and reciprocal, does not constitute sexual harassment.

**Nationally agreed definitions as in 'Safer DECD Schools', 2011*

Examples of Bullying:

PHYSICAL BULLYING

- Hitting, pushing, kicking, touching, grabbing, looks, stares, facial expressions, gestures, spitting, taking/damaging property.

VERBAL/WRITTEN BULLYING

- Spoken/written insults, threats, suggestive comments, name-calling, unfair criticism, spreading rumours, using offensive language, verbal teasing.

SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL BULLYING

- Forming groups to leave out, ignore and disrespect; influencing, encouraging or organising someone else to be involved in any type of bullying/harassment, ganging up on a student, ruining friendships on purpose, sending poisonous notes, persuading others to exclude someone.

CYBER BULLYING

- Using email, voice, SMS, social networking sites, photographic and video images to bully/humiliate others.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

- Unwelcome touching, hugging, kissing, brushing up against a person, staring or leering.
- Suggestive comments or jokes; sexually explicit pictures, screen savers, posters, graffiti, letters, messages, magazines or any other visual or written medium
- Unwelcome invitations to go out on dates
- Requests for sex
- Inappropriate and intrusive personal questions about a person's private life or his/her body
- Insults, taunts, teasing or name calling of a sexual nature; or sexually explicit conversation
- Accessing sexually explicit internet sites
- Offensive telephone calls, letters, emails or mobile phone messages
- Posting filmed or photographed images or comments on social networking sites
- Behaviour that may constitute a criminal offence under criminal law and reportable to the police, such as physical or indecent assault, stalking, obscene communications, and sexual assault.

What can STUDENTS do about bullying?

1. Prevent bullying

- Treat all others with respect – do not bully or harass other students or their teachers
- Follow our School Values and understand, be compassionate and empathetic about the effects of bullying, discrimination, racism and sexual harassment on individuals and groups within our society
- Take responsibility for our own behaviour
- Develop appropriate skills and behaviours in communicating and working effectively with all others
- Use the Friendship Garden to meet new friends.

2. Tell the person bullying to STOP if it's safe to do so. We can help ourselves to be safe.

3. Report bullying if it continues. It is not dobbing if you are reporting to keep yourself safe.
Bullying can be reported to any member of school staff, parents or other trusted adults. School staff includes:

- Class Teacher or Student Services Officer
- School Counsellors and CPSW
- Year Level Leaders
- Curriculum Leaders
- Junior/Middle/Senior School Leaders
- Deputy Principal
- Principal

4. Remember that you are a valued member of our school community and have the right to be safe.

- You do not deserve to be bullied. It is against our school policy.

5. Be a responsible bystander. If you witness bullying behaviour:

- Tell the person bullying to STOP if it's safe.
- Encourage and support the student being bullied to report it to a staff member.
- Give accurate information about the situation.

6. Accept responsibility for your behaviour. If you have been bullying others you need to:

- Listen to the effects of your behaviour on others
- Show that you are sorry for what you did
- Make suggestions to help repair harm or damage
- You may be required to participate in counselling and your parents may be contacted.
- Know that if you continue to bully others, including threatening students for reporting bullying, more serious consequences will occur.

What will STAFF do about bullying?

To reduce bullying behaviours at The Heights School, we use **prevention**, **intervention** and **post-intervention** strategies.

PREVENTION

- **Create a positive and respectful school climate** in which bullying is less likely to occur – model respectful behaviour, positive classroom and yard management; engaging learning curriculum, use of formative assessment strategies; cooperative learning activities; strong student supervision, promote belonging and connectedness to school.
- **Educate**: teach and model the School Values; Implement the Australian Curriculum Health, Child Protection Curriculum (P-12), Program Achieve (R-7), Pastoral Care, social skills. These teach students about rights, responsibilities, relationships and ethical behaviour, resilience, friendship, violence prevention, conflict resolution and managing strong feelings.
- **Celebrate**: Teach students the value of diversity with whole school celebrations eg Harmony Day, Reconciliation Week, peer awareness of difference.
- **Authentic student voice is encouraged:** Develop programs that promote authentic student voice and participation.
- Parents & students annually agree to the school's Code of Conduct.
- **Regular review**: Staff complete the National Safe Schools Framework safe schools audit tool annually; Students complete a bullying audit twice per year; policies which promote student safety are implemented and reviewed.
- **Professional Learning** is provided for staff, parents and students in addressing bullying effectively and respectfully.
- **School community reviews policy annually in Term 1**. Policy is discussed, agreed with and/or suggest changes then forward this information to the School Counsellors.

INTERVENTION

- **Respond to ALL bullying and harassment incidents** in the classroom and yard, even though they may not be responsible for students who are involved at that time.
- **Actively discourage bullying**: be observant, inform other staff, initiate procedures, provide advice and support, listen and be open to students (acting discreetly where appropriate), help access counselling.
- **Listen** and talk to the person who has been bullied and the person who has bullied others.
- **Use an appropriate restorative process** to help everyone involved repair and improve their relationships with each other and to feel a sense of justice.
- **Put appropriate, negotiated consequences in place**, relevant for the perpetrator/s and the situation. These may include Thinking Room//Time Out or removal of privileges and in extreme cases, suspension or exclusion from school.
- **Provide feedback** to students/parents/caregivers about the situation, processes used and outcomes of attending to bullying and harassment.
- Teach students how bullying affects all involved; how to be responsible bystanders.

POSTVENTION & COPING

- **Monitor** the situation between students to ensure that their safety and wellbeing are maintained.
- **Talk** with parents or caregivers about assertiveness strategies.
- Ensure all parties (students, staff, parents) are kept informed about the consequences of the bullying and harassment incidents.

Signs that your child may be being bullied

- Mood changes (being quieter, more attention-seeking or tearful than usual)
- Temper tantrums
- Changes in eating or sleeping habits
- Unexplained symptoms or head and stomach aches
- Reluctance to go to school
- Changes in academic performance
- Missing equipment or requests for extra pocket money
- Unwillingness to discuss or secrecy about their online communications (eg mobile phone texts, Facebook comments)
- Damaged clothing or bruising. Early contact is essential at this point.

What can PARENTS/CARERS do about bullying?

PREVENTION

- Talk with your child every day about what has happened at school.
- Encourage your child to be tolerant, caring, resolve conflict assertively and to report all incidents of bullying.

- Watch for signs of distress which may indicate that your child may be being bullied (see above)

INTERVENTION

- Be an advocate for all students by reporting incidents which threaten their safety and wellbeing.
- Keep a written record if the bullying persists. Find out: what happened, who was involved, where it happened, who else saw/heard/read it.
- Discuss positive strategies rather than 'getting even'
- Inform a staff member immediately if you think your child is being bullied. If the bullying continues make an appointment to see a Counsellor, Year Level Leader, Sub School Leader or other leadership.
- Go to the Sub School Leader if you feel your child is being bullied by a teacher.

POSTVENTION & COPING

- Remind your child they are loved and valued and assist them in maintaining a positive sense of self.
- Monitor your child's use of the internet and report bullying or harassment through: https://www.esafety.gov.au

Note: these steps are also useful if you think that your child:

- Has been involved in bullying or harassment of others
- As a bystander, may be affected by bullying or harassment of others
- As a bystander, has information and is concerned about other students being bullied.

Responding to bullying and harassment

Level 1 Bullying and Harassment (Low level)

Periodic thoughtless name calling, teasing, occasional exclusion or theft of belongings.

These incidents can be annoying and hurtful and can escalate and then involve more serious forms of bullying (Level 2 or 3).

1. Interview all involved individually
2. Inform person bullying about effects of bullying. The actions are not acceptable at The Heights.
3. Inform person bullied about ways to deal with bullying
4. Meet perpetrator & receiver together if appropriate
5. Impose appropriate consequence – logical where appropriate and/or formal warning
6. Monitor carefully what happens next and be prepared to intervene
7. Complete and forward an incident report to home group/class teacher.

Who Responsible: All teaching staff are responsible for dealing with bullying and harassment at this level.

Level 2 Bullying and Harassment (ongoing, medium level)

Bullying at this level may be systematic and malicious **over time**. It may include cruel teasing, continual exclusion, minor threats or relatively minor physical abuse such as pushing, tripping or theft of property. It can escalate into more serious bullying (Level 3).

Follow steps above and include:

1. Formal documentation
2. Contact parents/carers
3. Counselling and mediation
4. Attendance at a social skills workshop
5. Appropriate consequences include: Thinking Room, Detention

Who Responsible: Year Level and Curriculum Coordinators/ Counsellors supported by Leadership.

Level 3 Bullying and Harassment (ongoing, serious behaviour)

Bullying at this level **is cruel, malicious and intense**. It occurs over an **extended period of time** and is distressing to the person receiving it. It includes serious physical assaults and child protection issues, but is still considered severe if non-physical methods such as name-calling and exclusion are used.

Follow steps above and include:

1. Formal investigation and documentation
2. Meeting with parents/carers of those involved
3. Required educational activities (eg anger management)
4. Suspension/exclusion processes followed
5. Involve relevant agencies: eg DECD, CAMHS, Police, and report to the Child Abuse Report Line if required.

Who Responsible: A member of the leadership team will be responsible for this action.

Grievance Procedures

In addition to the above, all members of the school community have available the full range of options as set out in DECD policies on antiracism and sexual harassment.

THE HEIGHTS SCHOOL BULLYING REPORTING AND ACTION PROCESS

Bullying incident occurs

Bullied student or bystanders tell the person bullying to **"stop".**

Bullying stops.
Great! Let an adult know.

Bullying continues

Report bullying to teacher/adult as soon as possible

Investigation & Report by teacher:

1. What happened
2. Who was involved
3. Where it happened
4. If anyone else saw, read or heard it.
5. Bullying Report Form/Incident Report Form (online or paper) and discussed with Counsellor or other School Leader.

Low Level (Level 1)
All teaching staff members

If bullying continues

Ongoing/Medium (Level 2)
Counsellors/YTL/Leadership

If bullying continues

Ongoing/Serious (Level 3)
Counsellors/YTL/Leadership

1. **Restorative Process**
2. **Formal Warning or Consequence ***
   (Logical consequence/ Thinking Room/Time Out)
3. **Documentation**
   added to student file

Bullying stops

1. **Restorative Process**
2. **Consequence ***
   (Logical consequence / Thinking Room/Time Out)
   Formal warning issued
3. **Documentation**
   added to student file

Bullying stops

1. **Formal investigation & documentation**
2. **Restorative Process**
   if applicable
3. **Consequence ***
   Suspension/Exclusion
4. **Contact** Police 13 22 11
   and/or
   Child Abuse Report Line
   if required

Bullying stops

*In all instances staff dealing with the issues should keep the person reporting informed of the outcome.

For further information on practices promoting safety and wellbeing for our community, please contact the school:

Brunel Drive Modbury Heights SA 5092
Telephone 8263 6244 **Facsimile** 8263 6072
Email contact@theheights.sa.edu.au
Website www.theheightsschool.com.au

Documented Processes to be added to this

1. Incident Report Form/Bullying Report Form – online and paper format
2. Thinking Room Reflection Form – Junior School
3. Time Out Room Form – Middle and Senior School
4. Useful Websites
   www.bullyingnoway.com.au
   www.cybersmart.gov.au
5. Useful resources
   - Supporting Sexual Diversity in Schools: A Guide
   - Challenging Homophobia in Schools: A Guide for School Staff