



## Hamlyn Views School

# BULLYING PREVENTION POLICY

## 1. PURPOSE

Hamlyn Views School is committed to providing a safe and respectful learning environment where bullying will not be tolerated.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- explain the definition of bullying so that there is shared understanding amongst all members of the Hamlyn Views community
- make clear that no form of bullying at Hamlyn Views will be tolerated
- outline the strategies and programs in place at Hamlyn Views to build a positive school culture and prevent bullying behaviour
- support parents, teachers and the whole school community to be aware of the school's position on bullying
- ensure that Primary Prevention, Early Prevention and Intervention strategies and processes will be used to support and manage the maintenance of an anti-bullying environment
- ensure that incidents of bullying, including cyber-bullying, will be recorded on COMPASS by the first person the incident is reported to, providing incident records that are regularly reviewed, supporting a whole school response that will assist the creation of a bully-free school environment
- ask that everyone in our school community be alert to signs and evidence of bullying behaviour, and accept responsibility to report bullying behaviour to school staff
- ensure that all reported incidents of bullying are appropriately investigated and addressed
- ensure that support is provided to students who may be affected by bullying behaviour (including targets, bystanders and students engaging in bullying behaviour)
- seek parental and peer group support in addressing and preventing bullying behaviour at Hamlyn Views

When responding to bullying behaviour, Hamlyn Views School aims to:

- be proportionate, consistent and responsive
- find a constructive solution for everyone
- stop the bullying from happening again
- restore the relationships between the students involved.

Hamlyn Views School acknowledges that school staff owe a duty of care to students to take reasonable steps to reduce the risk of reasonably foreseeable harm, which can include harm that may be caused by bullying behaviour.

## 2. SCOPE

This policy addresses how Hamlyn Views School aims to prevent, address and respond to student bullying behaviour. Hamlyn Views School recognises that there are many other types of inappropriate student behaviours that do not meet the definition of bullying which are also unacceptable at our school. These other inappropriate behaviours will be managed in accordance with our 'Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy and 'Digital and Online Learning (Internet) Policy and Student Acceptable Use Agreement'. This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions.



### 3. DEFINITIONS

#### **Bullying**

In 2018 the Education Council of the Council of Australian Governments endorsed the following definition of bullying for use by all Australian schools:

*Bullying is an ongoing and deliberate misuse of power in relationships through repeated verbal, physical and/or social behaviour that intends to cause physical, social and/or psychological harm. It can involve an individual or a group misusing their power, or perceived power, over one or more persons who feel unable to stop it from happening.*

*Bullying can happen in person or online, via various digital platforms and devices and it can be obvious (overt) or hidden (covert). Bullying behaviour is repeated, or has the potential to be repeated, over time (for example, through sharing of digital records)*

*Bullying of any form or for any reason can have immediate, medium and long-term effects on those involved, including bystanders. Single incidents and conflict or fights between equals, whether in person or online, are not defined as bullying.*

Bullying has three main features:

- It involves a misuse of power in a relationship
- It is ongoing and repeated, and
- It involves behaviours that can cause harm.

Bullying can be:

1. *direct* physical bullying – e.g. hitting, tripping, and pushing or damaging property.
2. *direct* verbal bullying – e.g. name calling, insults, homophobic or racist remarks, verbal abuse.
3. *indirect* bullying – e.g. spreading rumours, playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate, mimicking, encouraging others to socially exclude a person and/or damaging a person's social reputation or social acceptance.

*Cyberbullying* is direct or indirect bullying behaviours using digital technology. For example via a mobile device, computers, chat rooms, email, social media, etc. It can be verbal, written and include images, video and/or audio.

#### **Other distressing and inappropriate behaviours**

Many distressing and inappropriate behaviours may not constitute bullying even though they are unpleasant. Students who are involved in or who witness any distressing and inappropriate behaviours should report their concerns to school staff and our school will follow the '*Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy*'.

*Mutual conflict* involves an argument or disagreement between people with no imbalance of power. In incidents of mutual conflict, generally, both parties are upset and usually both want a resolution to the issue. Unresolved mutual conflict can develop into bullying if one of the parties targets the other repeatedly in retaliation.

*Social rejection or dislike* is not bullying unless it involves deliberate and repeated attempts to cause distress, exclude or create dislike by others.

*Single-episode acts* of nastiness or physical aggression are not the same as bullying. However, single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression are not acceptable behaviours at our school and may have serious consequences for students engaging in this behaviour. Hamlyn Views School will use its '*Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy*' to guide a response to single episodes of nastiness or physical aggression.



*Harassment* is language or actions that are demeaning, offensive or intimidating to a person. It can take many forms, including sexual harassment and disability harassment. Further information about these two forms of harassment, including definitions, is set out in our *'Inclusion and Diversity Policy'*. Harassment of any kind will not be tolerated at Hamlyn Views School and may have serious consequences for students engaging in this behaviour. Hamlyn Views School will use its Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy to guide a response to students demonstrating harassing behaviour, unless the behaviour also constitutes bullying, in which case the behaviour will be managed in accordance with this Bullying Prevention Policy.

## **4. POLICY**

### **BULLYING PREVENTION**

Hamlyn Views School has a number of programs and strategies in place to build a positive and inclusive school culture. We strive to foster a school culture that prevents bullying behaviour by modelling and encouraging behaviour that demonstrates acceptance, kindness and respect.

Bullying prevention at Hamlyn Views School is proactive and is supported by research that indicates that a whole school, multifaceted approach is the most effective way to prevent and address bullying. At our school:

- We adopt the School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support framework to support a positive school environment that provides safety, security and support for students and promotes positive relationships and wellbeing
- We support our staff, students and community to build positive relationships through the teaching of the Department's *'Rights, Resilience and Respectful Relationships'* program, supporting them to develop an understanding for one another and strategies accept diversity
- We strive to build strong partnerships between the school, families and the broader community that means all members work together to ensure the safety of students
- Teachers incorporate classroom management strategies that discourage bullying and promote positive behaviour
- A range of year level incursions and programs are planned for each year to raise awareness about bullying and its impacts
- In the classroom, our Personal and Social Capabilities learning curriculum teaches students what constitutes bullying and how to respond to bullying behaviour assertively. This promotes resilience, assertiveness, conflict resolution and problem solving
- Students are encouraged to look out for each other and 'speak up' when they witness incidences of bullying, experienced or witnessed
- We participate in the National Day of Action against Bullying and Violence

For further information about our engagement and wellbeing initiatives, please see our *'Student Engagement and Wellbeing'* Policy

### **INCIDENT RESPONSE**

#### **Reporting concerns to Hamlyn Views School**

Bullying complaints will be taken seriously and responded to sensitively at our school.

Students who may be experiencing bullying behaviour, or students who have witnessed bullying behaviour, are encouraged to report their concerns to school staff as soon as possible.

Our ability to effectively reduce and eliminate bullying behaviour is greatly affected by students and/or parents and carers reporting concerning behaviour as soon as possible, so that the responses implemented by Hamlyn Views School are timely and appropriate in the circumstances.



We encourage students to speak to (teacher/ES staff). However, students are welcome to discuss their concerns with any trusted member of staff including teachers, ES staff, wellbeing/inclusion staff, the school nurse or members of school leadership.

Parents or carers who develop concerns that their child is involved in, or has witnessed bullying behaviour at Hamlyn Views School should contact our Assistant Principal, Michele Marcu on 52155700 or by email directed to [hamlyn.views.school@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:hamlyn.views.school@edumail.vic.gov.au)

## Investigations

When notified of alleged bullying behaviour, school staff are required to:

1. record the details of the allegations in Compass; and
2. inform the student's classroom teacher, student Inclusion Co-ordinator/s, Assistant Principal as appropriate

The classroom teacher, or other staff member as appropriate, is responsible for investigating allegations of bullying in a timely and sensitive manner. To appropriately investigate an allegation of bullying, staff may:

- speak to those involved in the allegations, including the target/s, the students allegedly engaging in bullying behaviour/s and any witnesses to the incidents
- speak to the parents of the students involved
- speak to the teachers of the students involved
- take detailed notes of all discussions for future reference
- obtain written statements from all or any of the above

All communications with staff in the course of investigating an allegation of bullying will be managed sensitively. Investigations will be completed as quickly as possible to allow for the behaviours to be addressed in a timely manner.

The objective of completing a thorough investigation into the circumstances of alleged bullying behaviour is to determine the nature of the conduct and the students involved. A thorough understanding of the alleged bullying will inform staff about how to most effectively implement an appropriate response to that behaviour.

Serious bullying, including serious cyberbullying, is a criminal offence and may be referred to Victoria Police. For more information, see: [Brodie's Law](#).

## Responses to bullying behaviours

When staff have sufficient information to understand the circumstances of the alleged bullying and the students involved, a number of strategies may be implemented to address the behaviour and support affected students in consultation with the Principal, Assistant Principal, student Inclusion Co-ordinator/s and classroom teacher.

There are a number of factors that will be considered when determining the most appropriate response to the behaviour. When making a decision about how to respond to bullying behaviour, Hamlyn Views School will consider:

- the age and maturity of the students involved
- the severity and frequency of the bullying, and the impact it has had on the target student
- whether the student/s engaging in bullying behaviour have displayed similar behaviour before
- whether the bullying took place in a group or one-to-one context
- whether the students engaging in bullying behaviour demonstrates insight or remorse for their behaviour
- the alleged motive of the behaviour, including any element of provocation.



Hamlyn Views School may implement all, or some of the following responses to bullying behaviours:

- Offer counselling support to the target student or students, including referral to student Inclusion Coordinator/s or external provider
- Offer counselling support to the students engaging in bullying behaviour, including referral to Inclusion Coordinator/s or external provider
- Offer counselling support to affected students, including witnesses and/or friends of the target student, including referral to Inclusion Coordinator/s or external provider
- Facilitate a restorative meeting with all or some of the students involved. The objective of a restorative meeting is to repair relationships that have been damaged by bringing about a sense of remorse and restorative action on the part of the person who has bullied someone and forgiveness by the person who has been bullied
- Facilitate a mediation between some or all of the students involved to help to encourage students to take responsibility for their behaviour and explore underlying reasons for conflict or grievance. Mediation is only suitable if all students are involved voluntarily and demonstrate a willingness to engage in the mediation process
- Facilitate a Student Support Group meeting and/or Behaviour Support Plan for affected students.
- Prepare a Safety Plan or Behaviour Support Plan restricting contact between target and students engaging in bullying behaviour.
- Provide discussion and/or mentoring for different Personal and Social Capabilities learning competencies of the students involved, including School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support strategies, Rights, Resilience and Respectful Relationships expectations and Check-in, Check-out procedures
- Monitor the behaviour of the students involved for an appropriate time and take follow up action if necessary.
- Implement cohort/year group/school wide targeted strategies to reinforce positive behaviours as identified
- Implement disciplinary consequences for the students engaging in bullying behaviour, which may include restricted choices, time spent in a buddy classroom, suspension and/or expulsion consistent with our Student Engagement and Wellbeing policy, the Ministerial Order on Suspensions and Expulsions and any other relevant Department policy.

Hamlyn Views School understands the importance of monitoring and following up on the progress of students who have been involved in or affected by bullying behaviour. Where appropriate, school staff will also endeavour to provide parents and carers with updates on the management of bullying incidents.

The investigating staff member, whether that be Principal, Assistant Principal, student Inclusion Coordinator/s or classroom teacher, is responsible for maintaining up to date records of the investigation of and responses to bullying behaviour.

## **FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

- [Complaints](#)
- [Digital Technologies \(Internet, Social Media and Digital Devices\)](#)
- [Duty of Care](#)
- [Inclusion and Diversity](#)
- [Statement of Values and School Philosophy](#)
- [Student Engagement and Wellbeing](#)

The following websites and resources provide useful information on prevention and responding to bullying, as well as supporting students who have been the target of bullying behaviours:



- [Bully Stoppers](#)
- [Kids Helpline](#)
- [Lifeline](#)
- [Bullying. No way!](#)
- [Student Wellbeing Hub](#)
- [Office of the eSafety Commissioner](#)
- [Australian Student Wellbeing Framework](#)

## EVALUATION

This policy will be reviewed on a two year basis, or earlier as required, following analysis of school data on reported incidents of, and responses to bullying, to ensure that the policy remains up to date, practical and effective.

Examples of types of data that may be collected includes:

- discussion and consultation with students and parent/carers
- regular staff surveys
- [Bully Stoppers Data Collection](#) tool
- assessment of other school-based data, including the number of reported incidents of bullying in each year group and the effectiveness of the responses implemented
- Attitudes to School Survey
- [Parent Opinion Survey](#)

Proposed amendments to this policy will be discussed through consultation with student representative groups, parents groups, school council and the Hamlyn Views School Consultative Committee.

**This policy was reviewed and updated in December, 2019**

**Date of next Review: 2021**