Anti Bullying Policy

Programs and Practice

Anti Bullying Policy: Rationale

It would be foolhardy for any school community to deny the occurrence of bullying within its midst. Bullying is endemic and recurrent. It presents differently in different year groups, and requires a steadfast “No Tolerance” approach on the part of all members of the school community.

It is the responsibility of all staff, parents and students to understand the serious and harmful nature of bullying and its immediate and potential long term effects on students. The greatest attitudinal hurdle for students to overcome is the “Don't Dob” mentality. It is essential that all incidents of bullying and harassment are reported for immediate response and action.

What is Bullying?

Bullying occurs when a person or group of people harm or scare someone by repeatedly hurting, annoying, tormenting or putting them down.

Bullying may be:

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<th>physical</th>
<th>verbal</th>
<th>emotional</th>
<th>cyber</th>
<th>sexual</th>
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<td>hitting, tripping, punching, damaging property such as bags and possessions</td>
<td>insulting, making racist remarks and jokes, teasing, making threats and intimidating phone calls</td>
<td>excluding from a group, gossiping and spreading rumours, manipulating friendship groups</td>
<td>sending unwanted or abusive emails and messages or images via social networking sites, chat rooms, text message or any other electronic media</td>
<td>touching in a sexual way or making sexual comments</td>
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Whole School Strategies in Response to Bullying

Classroom

- Within the classroom teachers will respond and intervene when they observe harassment by naming the behaviour so that it can be acknowledged as inappropriate.

- Students should be warned of the consequences of repeating this behaviour which can be identified as bullying and could result in a student being placed on:
  - a classroom level
- a letter is sent home to parents, outlining the incident involved and stating the school’s policy that such behaviours are not to be tolerated or condoned within the school community. Parental support is requested to educate students that such behaviour is unacceptable. Parents should not encourage their child to retaliate. LETTER

- more serious escalation through the level system
- Ultimately continued bullying, deemed to be aggressive behaviour, can lead to suspension.

- Teachers are asked to report any incidents which reveal lack of respect for other students, utilizing the RISC program, so that patterns of behaviour might be recorded and tracked.

Where incidences of this nature are addressed firmly, instantly and openly by teachers, and the classroom environment is proclaimed a safe environment for all students there is less fertile ground for such anti-social behaviours to continue.

Playground

- Incidents of bullying in the playground should be reported to the teacher on duty.
- Teachers will be vigilant for incidents of bullying. Teachers will deal appropriately with the incident while on duty, if appropriate and will record serious incidents on RISC and alert a Deputy Principal.
- Students involved in serious incidents of bullying will be removed from the playground. Such incidents will be reported to the Deputy Principal.

Strategies for Student Interviews: Bullying

An interview may be held with Year Advisor, HT Welfare or Deputy Principals. Interviews may be with students involved as targets, perpetrators or observers.

- Students asked to write statements, and to consider what, if anything, they could alter about their actions.
- Use of the “No Blame” approach to interviews, as outlined by Michael Carr- Gregg, Help When You Need It, CD Rom Package.
- Participants in bullying are asked to identify with the feelings of the target person and then prepare a personal response which might improve the situation.
- When appropriate, reconciliation meetings between target and perpetrators may be mediated.

Other Strategies

- Prefects or other student leaders may be used as a resource within the school to speak to year groups; e.g. Year 12 male prefects addressed year 8 boys who were found to be playing roughly in the playground, discussing with them the concept of what it means to be a boy at Killara High School.
- New students to the school in every year are assigned a trained buddy to help their transition into their new peer group.
- A pamphlet is distributed to all new students and parents each year, entitled “Everyone Has a Right to Feel Safe at School”.
Cyber Safety workshops will be held during year meetings, home groups and at the time of distribution of year 9 laptops.

Sessions can be held with groups of students or individual students teaching resilience and strategies to help cope with bullies when confronted by them. Counsellor expertise is utilized and a five point strategy employed so that students can easily remember what they can do if placed in an uncomfortable situation. This set of strategies is also included in the Peer Support Program and is called Talk to the Hand!

**Talk to the Hand:**
1. Tell Someone
2. Block the thoughts
3. Reframe the bullying- laugh it off, see it as a weakness of the bully.
4. Walk Away
5. Be assertive- say “Leave me Alone”
   - “DOB Strategy”- Don't obey bullies! This strategy is explored as part of the peer support program in year 7 as delivered by year 11 student leaders.

**Anti-Bullying and Harassment Strategies for each Year: Programs and Initiatives**

**YEAR 7**

- **Year 7 Camp:** A priority at Year 7 camp is the building of bonds between the students in their new class groupings. Having fun together and meeting challenges together creates a new climate within the year.

- **Year 12 Prefects:** In order to create connections across the school Prefects are placed in Year 7 Roll classes for Term One, or for as long as is needed. Ideally this gives the year 7 students role models and helpers within the school to call upon if they are experiencing discomfort.

In addition, the Prefects make a visit to year 7 camp, running a disco for the year 7’s and helping to create an atmosphere of fun and safety.

- **Peer Support:** The peer support program specifically targets the issues of bullying, harassment and resilience. Students are encouraged to see themselves as having a role to play in making their school a safe and comfortable place for everyone. This involves encouraging all students to report anything that they see that might be detrimental to others sense of belonging, and to encourage the perspective that observers are equally as responsible as participants for allowing bullying to take place. No one can remain blameless if they have allowed a situation to occur unreported.
YEAR 8

- Bullying is a focus in the Stage 4 PDHPE syllabus.
- Educational session with the Police Liaison Officer on cyber safety and the law.

YEAR 9

- Year 9 camp provides a further opportunity for identifying as a year, with adventure challenging and small group work. The Welfare program is presented by teachers and focuses on friendships and support strategies.
- In addition, at year 9 camp, the School Counsellors, visit all groups of students discussing with them what constitutes harassment, what is appropriate and what forms of speech it is appropriate to reject and deflect.

YEAR 10

- *It's Your Life*, a week long program following the school certificate examinations addresses many issues of relevance to adolescents. A wide range of speakers is engaged including speakers about safety and disability, motivation and inspiration, self defence and assertiveness, presentation and self image.
- *Service Learning* is a component of the Year 10 program and involves all students working in the service of the community and others less fortunate than themselves. This raises student’s awareness and capacity for empathy.

YEARS 11 AND 12

- Body image issues and respect for others may need to be reinforced through meetings with the students.
- Cross Roads course at Year 11 camp explores relationship issues.

*Revised May 2010*