

Building Positive Community Relationships

A whole school approach

Anti Bullying Policy

The following policy outlines the school's response to:

- Countering Bullying
- Countering Racism

Aim

All members of Para Hills High School are committed to a safe and caring environment, which promotes wellbeing and positive outcomes for all.

Definition: What is Bullying?

Bullying is an act of aggression causing embarrassment, pain or discomfort to another:

- it can take a number of forms: physical, verbal, gesture, extortion and exclusion
- it is an abuse of power
- it can be planned and organised or it may be unintentional
- individuals or groups may be involved

Direct physical bullying – hitting, tripping, spitting and pushing or interfering/damaging property

Direct verbal bullying – name calling, insults, homophobic, or remarks of a sexist or racist nature.

Indirect bullying which is harder to recognise and often carried out behind the bullied person's back. It is designed to harm someone's social reputation and/or cause humiliation. It involves lying and spreading rumours, playing nasty jokes to embarrass and humiliate, mimicking, staring at, encouraging others to socially exclude someone, damaging someone's social reputation and social acceptance.

Technology/Cyber bullying, which involves: the use of email, text messages, chat rooms, instant messaging, MSN, Websites/Blogs (Web Logs). Sending threatening or offensive messages or images, blocking others from online chats to humiliate and distress.

Some examples of bullying:

There are many ways students and teachers or parents can be bullied in the school community. These can include when someone:

- uses physical violence such as hitting, pushing, spitting on others
- embarrasses you by joking or gossiping about you
- uses offensive names, teasing or spreading rumours about others and their families
- socially or professionally ignores or excludes you
- threatens you or uses their power unfairly to make you do something
- takes or hides your equipment
- discriminates against you on the basis of your gender, race, disabilities, age, pregnancy
- annoys or threatens you in a sexual way
- uses the internet to embarrass you
- writes offensive notes and graffiti about others
- makes degrading comments about another's culture, religion, or social background
- physically attacks people and their property
- excludes others from certain activities and the underestimates a person's ability and potential.

Bullying is harmful to the happiness, productivity, health, career prospects and morale of those experiencing it. Further, it also has a detrimental effect on the atmosphere in the work environment of the school community at Para Hills High School.

Our School is committed to:

- encouraging respectful relationships
- reducing the incidents of bullying.
- countering the view that bullying is an inevitable part of school life.
- creating a supportive climate and break down the secrecy surrounding bullying.
- providing staff, students and parents with options to respond to bullying
- a whole school understanding of the grievance procedures
- treating all expressions of concerns seriously and confidentially
- providing support to the complainant and the person about whom the complaint is made
- resolving issues in a culturally sensitive manner

What do we do to prevent bullying at Para Hills High School?

As a school community we will not allow cases of bullying to go unreported but will speak up even at risk to ourselves.

Responsibilities

Students: What can you do?

If a student feels they are being bullied/harassed or has witnessed bullying behaviour they should:

- refuse to be involved in any bullying situation
- take some form of preventative action
- report the incident or suspected incident and help break down the code of secrecy

When students speak out they help to reduce the pain for themselves and others. Students should:

- Tell the person that they are being a bully and to stop the behaviour.
- Support the person who is being bullied and request help from a teacher at the time of the incident.
- Report behaviour to Care Group Teacher or a teacher of student's choice.
- Refrain from bullying others.

Staff/Teachers

- Be role models in words and action at all times
- Be observant of signs of distress or suspected incidents of bullying
- Make efforts to remove occasions for bullying by active patrolling during supervision duty
- Arrive at class on time and promptly
- Listen and provide support by acknowledging the nature and seriousness of bullying behaviour.
- Find out the background and attempt to resolve the incident.
- Tell students it is OK to tell
- Fill out a report form if appropriate.
- Refer the incident to the Care Group teacher, Year Level Managers, Pastoral Care Worker if necessary
- Offer the student target the option of Peer Mediation.

Student Counsellor/ Year Level Managers/Teachers

- Provide support to students who express a complaint
- Record and monitor incidents of bullying behaviour.
- Put in place anti-bullying procedures as appropriate
- e.g. ask the perpetrator to acknowledge the behaviour and agree to stop it. (see Bullying Reflection form)
- Arrange a Restorative Justice Conference.
- Contact parent /s of the student who has been bullying another/ others
- Encourage target student to report similar behaviour if repeated.
- Keep Care Group Teacher involved.

School

- Dissemination of Policy and Procedures (Care Group Teacher)
- Inclusion in Curriculum
- Minimise the opportunities for bullying to occur school wide particularly when students are in the yard.

Parents and Caregivers

- Watch for signs of distress in their children e.g. unwillingness to attend school, a pattern of headaches, missing equipment, requests for extra money, damaged clothes or bruising.
- Encourage students to discuss the effects and consequences of bullying.
- Encourage students to report any incidents of bullying.
- Contact the school if you are aware that any child is being bullied or suspect that it is happening.
- Do not encourage your child to retaliate.

Working together towards a successful school environment

This policy is a component of the Supportive School Environment Framework and is consistent with:

- The National Safe Schools Framework. 2004
- State Government Anti - Discrimination Legislation.
- The Supportive School Communities Policy Framework 2003 - 2007
- Department of Children's Education - Standards of equity and merit
- Countering Racism 2007
- The Essential Learnings Framework

What to do if students experience bullying of any form or you notice someone is bullied.

If a student has experienced bullying and they have asked the person to stop and it continues students need to follow the school grievance procedures practice.

They will need to complete a written form which can be found with Student Counsellors and Year Level Managers and Teachers.

All complaints made are taken seriously and will be resolved in a timely manner ensuring that confidentiality, equity and due process applies

Restorative Conferencing

Recognises that bullying is a violation of people and relationships and aims to identify obligations and promote restoration and healing.

It is a way of responding to conflict which -

- supports those affected
- allows for understanding of the wrongdoing
- gives ownership of the problems created
- gives people the chance to fix things with support
- respects people and leaves their dignity intact.

Teachers need to do the background research into the incident/s and the offender needs to accept responsibility for their behaviour before a successful restorative conference can be held.

A conference is set up by Teacher / Counsellor / Peer mediator between the target and the offender.

The aim of the conference is:

1. to allow the target to express their feelings so that the impact of the behaviour is felt and understood by the offender.
2. to allow the person accused of bullying to acknowledge the behaviour, accept responsibility and agree to change it.
3. A resolution which has outcomes that satisfy all involved is the aim.

Bullying Formal Complaint

When making a complaint about instances of bullying that involves one of the following, physical, sexual, racial, technical/cyber Bullying

Details of Person Taking Report

Name: _____ Position: _____

Date of report: ____/____/____ Time _____

Details of Person(s) Reporting:

Name: _____ Care Group: _____

Names of witnesses (s)

Care Group (s):

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Brief Details:

What happened or is continuing to happen

When and where the incidents occurred or occurs?

How have you been affected by the bullying?

Do your parents know about the bullying?

Witness's Statement:

Have any of these people been named in a previous report? Yes/No (Circle)
Provide brief details.

Action taken by counsellor, teacher(s) :

Signature: _____

REFLECTION SHEET

Name: _____ Care Group: _____

What I did.

How my behaviour affected another person.

How could I make better choices next time?

I understand that my choice of behaviour is bullying.

If I continue with this kind of action, it may lead to my parents being contacted and ultimately suspension.

I understand that my behaviour will be monitored for the next two (2) weeks by: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____