

Highgate Schools Anti Bullying and Harassment Procedures

At Highgate Schools we believe that everybody:

- has the right to be treated as a worthwhile, important individual
- has the right to come to school feeling happy, secure and comfortable
- has the responsibility to keep others safe and treat them with respect

Bullying is any action that is repeated, intentional and unwelcome, which causes distress.

Bullying stops people reaching their potential. It interferes with their learning and the way they feel about themselves and school. It impacts on their safety, health and wellbeing.

Forms of Bullying

Repeated and unjustifiable behaviour intended to cause fear, distress and/or harm to someone else. It may be physical, verbal or psychological/social or sexual in a direct or indirect manner. It is carried out by a more powerful group or individual, against a less powerful individual or group.

Physical	Hitting, slapping, punching, kicking, pushing, strangling, spitting, scratching, biting, pinching, throwing things Encouraging another child or adult to harm someone else.
Verbal	Mean and hurtful name calling Teasing Spreading rumours Demanding money or possessions
Psychological	Encouraging others to dislike someone-else Threatening and/or obscene gestures Deliberate exclusion from a group or activity Removing and hiding and/or damaging others' belongings Writing notes about others "Setting others up" Forcing another to act inappropriately against their will e.g. damaging property, stealing
Racial and Sexual Harassment	Sexual behaviour which is deliberate, uninvited and unwelcome Commenting about a person's sexuality Picking on someone because of their beliefs, values, customs or appearance.
Cyber-bullying	Using SMS or voice to harass/bully others Using MSN to exclude, write offensive messages or spread rumours Using digital recording devices (video/still) to violate the privacy of others Using social networking sites to post deliberate misinformation about others (eg, Myspace, Facebook) Using email to harass (text or graphics)

Procedures For Dealing With Incidences Of Bullying At School

When incidents are reported to them staff will:

- Listen and offer immediate support.
- Arrange a meeting with all concerned where:
 - Each person, in turn, tells what has happened to them. (Just facts)
 - Listen to others while they tell their story
 - Each person tells how they feel
 - Each person states what they need if the problem causing the conflict is to be solved.
 - The mediator helps both sides to work out strategies and reach an agreement.
 - If necessary, meet at an agreed time frame all concerned to discuss how things are going and what other strategies/or support is needed.
- Ensure that the follow up meeting occurs

Staff explicitly teach students to:

- Tell the bully to stop. State clearly that the behaviour is unwelcome and offensive.
- Ignore the bully and walk away.
- Seek help. Talk to a trusted person they feel confident will support them.
- Ask a peer to help you get help
- Talk it over openly with their parents.
- Not respond with physical or verbal abuse.
- Tell someone at school and their parents and walk home with a friend if they experience bullying on the way to or from school.

If bullying is happening to someone else students are explicitly taught to:

- Tell the bully to stop.
- Support the person being bullied.
- Encourage the person being bullied to tell someone.
- Seek help.
- Tell a trusted adult.

At Highgate we use the following:

Preventive strategies:

- Develop a school culture of trust and cooperation
- Explicit teaching in classrooms about bullying, conflict resolution, anger management, problem solving, emotional resilience and strategies to be used if bullied
- using the curriculum to teach students about respectful relationships, i.e. Program Achieve, Bounce Back, Friendly Schools and Families
- Teaching for and about diversity
- Restorative Justice program
- Quality Start Program
- Student Voice- developing programs to help students participate and have a say in their learning
- Grievance procedures
- Using student development plans and negotiated curriculum plans
- Providing professional learning for staff

Intervention strategies

- Counseling students who have been bullied
- Counseling students doing the bullying
- Talking with parents or caregivers about the situation
- Putting consequences in place for those who bully others
- Teaching students to provide support to others being bullied or getting help
- Teaching students strategies to use which do not support the bully
- Ensuring that all staff know how to address bullying effectively and respectfully.

Post-intervention strategies:

- Monitoring the situation between students to ensure their safety and wellbeing are maintained
- Communicating with parents or caregivers about strategies
- Reviewing yard duty procedures to ensure they are effective
- Being proactive in monitoring problem areas in the yard
- On going review and updating of behaviour codes and policies.

Response to Bullying at Highgate Schools

1. If a bullying incident occurs all students involved in the incident will be counselled by their class room teacher or the yard duty teacher. The student/s responsible for the bullying behaviour will be given the opportunity to resolve the problem and discuss the issue with the others involved. The situation will be recorded by the teacher concerned.
2. If the bullying persists the student responsible for the bullying behaviour will be referred to the principal or deputy principal for counselling and to develop a solution to the problem. The situation will be recorded.
3. If bullying continues consequences will be applied. These may include:
 - Letter or phone call to parents/parent interview
 - Counselling program
 - Natural consequences eg restricted play (physical bullying), loss of computer access (cyber bullying)
 - In school time out - recess and/or lunch time
 - Send home
 - Suspension
4. If bullying continues parents will be called to discuss further options. This may also include referral to ISBM (behaviour support consultant).

If the instance of bullying is deemed extreme by the principal / deputy principal then the response will be to move immediately to the consequence stage.