

# **EAST HILLS PUBLIC SCHOOL**



**2018**

## **ANTI-BULLYING POLICY**

## **STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

At East Hills Public School we value respect and show tolerance of others in a safe and supportive environment. We foster positive relationships through strong welfare programs. As part of our school's Student Welfare Policy, our Anti-Bullying Policy aims to deal effectively with and prevent incidences of bullying.

## **SCHOOL DEFINITION OF BULLYING**

Bullying is a pattern of repeated verbal, physical, social or psychological behaviour that is harmful and involves the misuse of power by an individual or group towards one or more persons. Bullying is intended to cause harm, distress and create fear. Bullying may be carried out overtly (e.g. face-to-face) or covertly (e.g. through repeated social exclusion or via technology). Cyber bullying refers to bullying through information and communication technologies.

The three different types of bullying:

**Overt bullying (face-to-face)** (sometimes referred to as direct bullying) involves physical actions such as punching or kicking or overt verbal actions such as name-calling and insulting.

**Covert bullying** (sometimes referred to as indirect bullying) is a subtle type of non-physical bullying which isn't easily seen by others and is conducted out of sight, and often unacknowledged by adults.

**Cyber bullying** occurs through the use of information or communication technologies such as 'instant messaging', text messages, email and social networking sites. It has many similarities with offline bullying but it differs in that the student or students who are bullying can be anonymous, it can reach a wide audience and the sent or uploaded material can be difficult to remove.

Our school considers the following behaviours as examples of bullying:

### **Face-to-Face:**

- Pushing or shoving
- Hitting or punching
- Kicking
- Throwing Objects
- Taking others' belongings or stealing from others
- Damaging others' belongings
- Spitting at others
- Intimidation - making someone do something against their will.

### **Verbal:**

- Threatening
- Name calling/teasing
- Swearing at others
- Ridicule (make fun) of another person because of their actions, appearance, physical characteristics or cultural background

**Indirect:**

- Spreading rumours
- Excluding others
- Writing notes
- SMS messages/email/social networking

**OUTCOMES**

- To raise the school community's awareness of bullying.
- To outline the responsibilities of students, parents and the principal and school staff in reducing bullying.
- To empower students with strategies for resolving conflict in a non-threatening way.
- To promote a culture of positive behaviour and citizenship.

As a school staff and a school community we have a responsibility to take positive and consistent actions to deal effectively with bullying.

**CYBER BULLYING**

Cyber bullying is causing hurt via modern technologies such as the Internet and other forms of social media, and through the use of smart phones and other mobile devices. Cyber bullying is a growing problem in society. Modern technologies empower the individual, even the most unlikely of individuals, with an immense capacity to cause harm. It is also an attractive means of bullying for it can, under certain conditions, be carried out with relative anonymity. Cyber bullying can be particularly damaging because of the capacity it has to humiliate, hurt and harm a person in front of a huge 'audience'. A dangerous feature of cyber bullying is that it can be done quickly and easily. On an impulse, a person can create emotional havoc for another and do so before the voice of reason hints at the inappropriateness of the action. A further problem with cyber bullying is that the bully is often unaware of the extent of the harm they are causing because cyber bullying seldom occurs face-to-face. The feedback is muted by distance so that the bully is protected from an understanding of the awfulness of their behaviour. Cyber bullying represents unlawful activity that may result in police laying charges. Cyber bullying has been linked to depression, self-harm and even suicide.

**Examples of Cyber bullying:**

- Sending hateful or threatening comments or pictures via MSN, mobile phone or the Internet and by social networking sites such as Instagram and Facebook.
- Using modern technologies to engage in the social exclusion of someone and in hate group recruitment.
- Posting rude, explicit or embarrassing messages or pictures about someone on the Net.
- Stealing someone's identity in order to harm them in some way.
- Putting pressure on a person to send revealing or compromising pictures of themselves.
- Covertly filming, recording or taking a picture of someone and posting the images on the Net to cause hurt.
- 'Outing' and disseminating confidential information about someone.
- 'Flaming' and multi-messaging to clog up a person's electronic system and to cause them distress.
- Using aliases and pseudonyms in chat rooms and on social networking sites in order to harass and upset.
- Engaging in cyber-stalking and the invading of privacy.
- Referring to your school in a negative or disparaging way on the Net.

## Cyber anonymity

Students need to remember that something sent electronically can never be entirely removed even with a press of the 'delete' button. The image may emerge at any stage in their future life and lead to serious consequences.

Using pseudonyms, passwords and avatars does not protect the identity of a cyber-bully. Technologies exist to identify those who misuse modern technologies to harm others.

**Do not engage in cyber bullying.**

**Do not post any image or comment that is designed to cause hurt. It is unacceptable and in many cases, it is also illegal.**

## PROTECTION

### RESPONSIBILITIES

**Principal and School Staff** will:

- Respect and support students.
- Model and promote appropriate behaviour.
- Monitor and track incidences of bullying.
- Teach co-operative learning, play skills and conflict-resolution strategies and skills.
- Communicate to parents incidences of bullying when necessary.
- Actively supervise and be observant for signs of harm, distress and or fear.
- Support students who speak out and report bullying.
- Seek advice and support to follow designated procedures.

**Parents** will:

- Be role models.
- Watch for signs of harm, distress and or fear in their children.
- Encourage their children to adopt learned strategies to deal with bullies.
- Communicate to their children that parental involvement is appropriate.
- Utilise language of the PBL program provided to all parents
- Encourage their children to **report incidents** of school-related bullying behaviour to the school.
- Instruct their children not to retaliate.
- Work collaboratively with the school to resolve incidents of bullying when they occur.

**Students** will be strongly encouraged to:

- Show respect for individual differences and diversity, as well as giving consideration and support to others.
- Refuse to be involved in any bullying situations, even as a bystander.
- Attempt to learn strategies to deal with bullying situations.
- Report to staff if they are being bullied or if they see someone being bullied – both at school and on the way to and from school.

## **PREVENTION**

### **WHOLE SCHOOL STRATEGIES:**

East Hills Public School is committed to a no tolerance approach to bullying.

The school has implemented the following programs to assist with this policy:

- Positive Behaviour for Learning (PBL) implemented school wide
- Explicit teaching of social skills by classroom teachers
- K-6 Social Skills Program with the school counsellor for targeted students
- Principal's conferencing with students.
- Student wellbeing programs.
- Class Learning and Positive behaviour reward certificates.
- Whole class positive behaviour reward system
- Discussion of anti-bullying strategies and learner dispositions at assembly and in class.

## **EARLY INTERVENTION**

Students who are identified as bring at risk of developing long-term difficulties with social relationships, or those students or have been identified as having previously experienced bullying or engaged in bullying behaviour, will be supported by all teachers and Learning and Support team (LaST).

Individual behaviour plans and modifications to the explicit teaching of social skills are to be implemented, with constant monitoring by all teachers. Behaviour plans will be reviewed termly.

## **RESPONSE**

The staff, students and community of East Hills Public School have no tolerance for bullying behaviour. As a whole school community, we aim to recognise and respond appropriately to bullying and harassment, and behave as responsible bystanders.

When a bullying incident occurs, students and/or carers are to report this to a teacher or the Principal.

When a bullying incident is reported or observed, the school will:

1. Conduct a thorough investigation of the incident, including talking to all involved parties, in a timely manner.
2. Take appropriate action e.g. mediation, in-class discipline steps, counselling of students involved
3. Report to parents major bullying incidences.
4. Possible in-school suspension or formal suspension.

The Child Wellbeing Unit or Community Services may be contacted when there appears to be a threat of harm to a student enrolled at East Hills Public School, including social, emotional or physical harm.

## **EVALUATION**

Incidents of bullying will be monitored on an ongoing basis. The Anti-Bullying Policy and other associated Student Wellbeing programs will be reviewed on an annual basis by all staff. The next review to be conducted in March 2019.

Community consultation will be sought on the Anti-Bullying policy in March 2020.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Police Youth Liaison Officer – Senior Constable Phillip Smith – Bankstown 97832261

Kids Helpline – 1800 55 1800