

BULLYING POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Hellyer College

As at 24 February 2020 – Version 1

This policy relates to all students who are enrolled at Hellyer College.

Hellyer College exists for excellence in learning so that all students can develop their potential. Relationships are based on mutual respect so that all members of the College community can feel safe, cared for and supported.

Bullying is not tolerated at Hellyer College from students, staff or community members. Hellyer College will work with students, staff and the whole college community to promote respectful relationships. Bullying can happen anywhere. If a student's health is being impacted upon by bullying whether it happens before, during or after school then college staff will respond accordingly.

Hellyer College uses the national definition for bullying in 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.

<https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/>

The person bullying may display **power** through various means: physical size and strength, perceived confidence or status within a peer group. The perpetrator usually gains their power when the person being bullied feels they are unable to stop the bullying from happening. **Ongoing** bullying behaviour is not a random act and the person bullying may use different forms of bullying to establish power over their target. For example: a person may begin by physically pushing the victim in the hallway one day to establish fear and power. During the following days the person may give the target 'a threatening look' which makes them feel they could be physically threatened or hurt again at any time. The perpetrator is establishing power over the target. The person bullied can feel awkward about reporting such incidents as they feel they will not be believed if it is not obvious. Cyber bullying may be preceded by face-to-face bullying such as nasty comments or exclusion.

Ongoing bullying behaviour can be identified as:

- **Verbal** which includes name calling or insulting someone about physical characteristics such as their weight or height, or other attributes including race, sexuality, culture, or religion
- **Physical** which includes hitting or otherwise hurting someone, shoving or intimidating another person, or damaging or stealing their belongings

- **Social** which includes consistently excluding another person or sharing information or images that will have a harmful effect on the other person.
- **Online** which includes bullying that is carried out over the internet, mobile phone and other devices.

Bullying can be by direct or indirect means.

Direct bullying occurs between the people involved, whereas indirect actions involve others, for example passing on insults or spreading rumours.

Indirect bullying mostly inflicts harm by damaging another's social reputation, peer relationships and self-esteem.

Bullying can be easy to see (overt), or hidden from those not directly involved (covert).

Overt bullying involves physical actions such as punching or kicking or observable verbal actions such as name-calling and insulting.

Covert bullying can be almost impossible for people outside the interpersonal interaction to identify. Covert bullying can include repeatedly using hand gestures and weird or threatening looks, whispering, excluding or turning your back on a person, restricting where a person can sit and who they can talk with. Covert social or verbal bullying can be subtle and even sometimes denied by a person who claims they were joking or 'just having fun'.

Some bullying is both covert and indirect, such as subtle social bullying, usually intentionally hidden, and very hard for others to see. It includes spreading rumours, threatening, blackmailing, stealing friends, breaking secrets, gossiping and criticising clothes and personalities.

Indirect covert bullying mostly inflicts harm by damaging another's social reputation, peer relationships and self-esteem, that is, through psychological harm rather than physical harm.

Bullying has the potential to cause harm. **Physical harm** may include bruises and breaks. **Psychological harm** includes the harm to a person's social standing or reducing a person's willingness to socialise through bullying. The **fear of bullying** happening can create distress and harm. The ongoing nature of bullying can lead to the person being bullied feeling powerless and unable to stop it from happening.

People who witness bullying or know about bullying happening to someone else are called **bystanders**. Hellyer College encourages students to defend or support a student who is being bullied. The actions of a supportive bystander can stop an incident or help a student to recover from it.

All staff will be knowledgeable using the *Co-LATE model* and will use restorative practices to resolve bullying.

When a bullying instance has been identified, all staff will take this seriously and are to follow the following procedure:

Procedure

If a student witnesses bullying or is being bullied from a student or staff member:

1. Students are encouraged to speak with a teacher they trust or report online through the intranet.
2. The teacher gathers data to establish the level of bullying using the Co-LATE Model and determine level of risk and harm and if it needs to go further. (Check SSS. If either student is in contact with a member of the Support Team they may assist or provide more information).
3. If the student is in immediate distress, the teacher will involve an AP or the Support Team.
4. Staff must report all incidents of bullying to an Assistant Principal and document in SSS.
5. The Assistant Principal and teacher will meet with the student who raises the concern.
6. Parents/Carers will be contacted as bullying is being investigated. (document in SSS)
7. The Assistant Principal/teacher assist the student to resolve the issue independently (empower/problem-solve) *or* will use appropriate restorative approaches (The Shared Concern, Support Group or Motivational Interviewing methods) to determine solutions.
8. When necessary, the AP/ Principal will notify the Police officer on campus and/or a referral to the Support Team or external provider for ongoing emotional support. Document in SSS.
9. Teacher will monitor the situation regularly to determine if the matter has been resolved.

If a non-Hellyer community member is bullying a Hellyer student:

1. Students are encouraged to speak with a teacher they trust or report online through the intranet.
2. With permission of the student, alert the police officer on campus so they can investigate further.
3. When necessary, a referral to the Support Team or external provider for ongoing emotional support. Document in SSS.
4. Parents/Carers will be contacted as bullying is being investigated. Document in SSS.

Associated documents and resources

Useful resources on the staff intranet: Staff → Shared staff documents → bullying resources

National Safe Schools Framework

http://www.curriculum.edu.au/verve/_resources/natsafeschools_file.pdf

Respectful Schools Respectful Behaviour Policy

<https://publicdocumentcentre.education.tas.gov.au/Documents/Respectful-Schools-Respectful-Behaviour.pdf>

Respectful Student Behaviour Process

<https://tasedu.sharepoint.com/sites/intranet/Document%20Centre/Respectful-Student-Behaviour-Process.pdf>

Student Wellbeing Hub

<https://studentwellbeinghub.edu.au/>

Safe and Supportive School Communities Working Group

<https://bullyingnoway.gov.au/>

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